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Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 89 (2013) 445 – 449

Procedia
Social and Behavioral Sciences

2nd Cyprus International Conference on Educational Research, (CY-ICER 2013)

Comparison of on-line teaching and face-to-face teaching

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Abstract

For many years, we have been using on-line courses in teaching German. Language. After several years of validation of courses that we created, we tried a small study, to demonstrate how effective the use of ICT in teaching is. To identify the relationship of students to ICT and to determine students' views on teaching supported by ICT, we used the method of questionnaire. All questions were closed and offered a choice of several options. Research was initiated in the school year 2008/09 and was carried out in two phases.

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Selection and/or peer-review under responsibility of Prof. Dr. Huseyin Uzunboylu, Near East University, Faculty of Education, Cyprus

Keywords: On-line teaching, face-to-face teaching, German language;

1. Introduction

For many years, we have been using on-line courses in teaching German. Language. After several years of validation of courses that we created, we tried a small study, to demonstrate how effective the use of ICT in teaching is.

Our courses represent the sum of learning materials to support students' motivation in learning a foreign language and to enable control of their own results in the study. The aim of these courses is to develop communication skills based on professional lexis. In the virtual learning environment materials can be quickly updated, added, varied and adapted to the conditions, students and the pace of students' progress.

To identify the relationship of students to ICT and to determine students' views on teaching supported by ICT, we used the method of questionnaire. All questions were closed and offered a choice of several options. Research was initiated in the school year 2008/09 and was carried out in two phases.

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2. Comparison of on-line teaching and face-to-face teaching

2.1. The research sample

The research sample was consisted of students of first year of FIM UHK in the course Professional German Language 1 and students of UTB Zlin in the course German Language 1. There are students of different ages logged to the subject; some have already completed several semesters of German at university.

The research sample was in the school year 2008/2009 consisted of these groups:

FIM 1 (30 students in school year 2008/9), the control group taught traditionally in face-to-face teaching

FIM 2 (30 students), experimental group 1, full-time students who have 90-minutes lessons once every two weeks supplemented by on-line course.

UTB (30 students), experimental group 2, UTB Zlin students who worked in the online course and had only the initial and final tutorial and a synchronizing on-line tutorial, ie teaching using eLearning.

The research sample in 2011/12 was consisted of the following groups:

FIM 2 (38 students), full-time students who had lessons once every 2 weeks through 90 minutes, supplemented by on-line course.

FIM 3 (6 students), part-time students who had three consultations per semester supplemented by on-line course. This group could not be added to the research until the year 2010/11, due to the fact that in the year 2008/9 students of K-FM did not learn German.

UTB (28 students), students of UTB Zlin who worked in the online course and had only the initial and final tutorial and one online synchronizing tutorial.

2.2. The aim of research

The aim of research was to identify the relationship of students to new methods of teaching, how often they use ICT to study the German language and finally to determine with what level of knowledge of German students come from high schools and how their knowledge improves after one semester. This was also to compare the achievement of students taught classically (FIM 1), students taught using blended learning methods (group FIM 2 and FIM 3) and students taught only by using on-line course (students UTB Zlin - group UTB). The aim was therefore to determine, based on the results of educational tests, the form of teaching in which students achieve better results.

In the first part of the questionnaire questions were generally oriented; we were interested in students' relation to ICT. In case of students of the Faculty of Informatics one could assume friendlier relationship than in case of students of the faculty of management, which was not confirmed already at the first investigation. Questions were also focused on the opportunity of student access to the Internet. It was expected that this circumstance will develop over the years because the accessibility of the Internet has changed significantly.

2.3. The relationship to computer

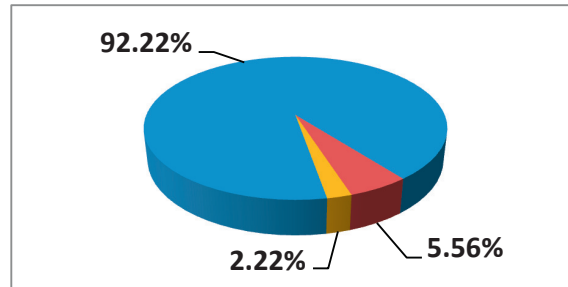
Their relationship to ICT students expressed in 2008/09 as follows:

In answer to the question how is my relationship to computers? Answers were offered:

- Clearly positive, I work with a PC every day
- Vague, I sometimes work with a PC, rarely
- Negative, I cannot work with a PC.

The vast majority of students in all groups voted for a), for daily work with a computer and absolutely positive attitude to ICT. There were no significant differences between groups. In-group FIM 1 86.67% of the students expressed their absolutely positive relationship to computers. In-group 2 FIM it was 96.67% and 93.33% of the UTB group. An average in all groups made 92.2%. Only two students from all groups (2.22%) stated that they are not able to work with a PC.

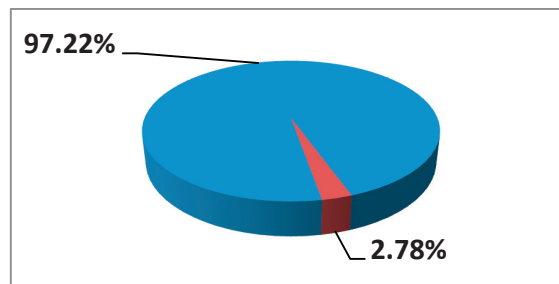
Chart1: My relationship to computers in 2008/09 - overall (all groups)



For comparison we introduce answers to the same question two years later, in 2010/11.

In-group FIM 2 97.37% of students state clearly positive relationship to computers and everyday work with a PC and only 1 student (2.63%) reported that he works with a computer only rarely. In the group of FIM 3 (combined study) everyone works with a PC every day and in-group of the UTB 96.43%. Adding up all the groups, we can conclude that 97.22% of students work with their computers daily.

Chart2: My relationship to computers in 2010/11



2.4. Question Frequency of use of ICT for the study

This question examined how often students use ICT to study. The two years significant changes occurred. Even here is not necessarily reflected the rapid spread of the Internet and the possibilities of ICT. While in 2008/09 only 24.44% of students surveyed used the ICT for the daily study, after two years, it was already 38.89% of students. We observe an increase of more than 14%. Also the number of students using ICT for the study several times a week grew - from 34.44% to 44.44%, an increase of 10%. Also important is the fact that in the year 2010/11 nobody between respondents who did not use ICT for the study.

Chart3 2008/09: I use ICT for study

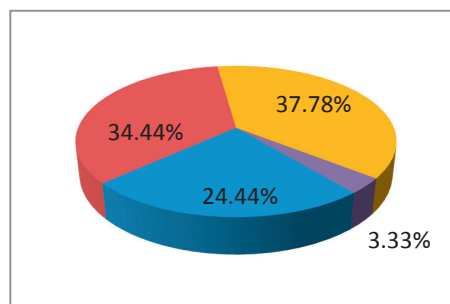
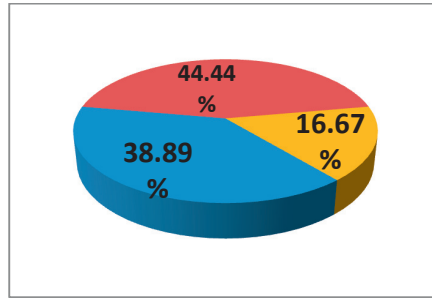


Chart4 2010/11: I use ICT for study

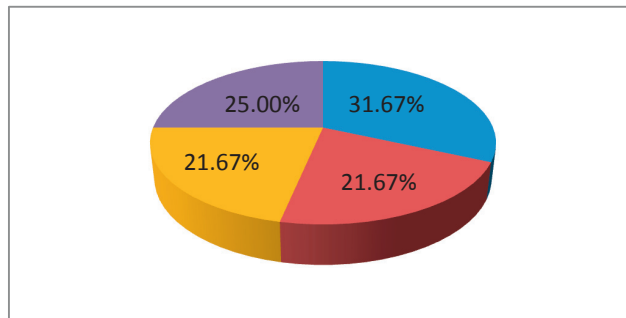


3. Work in the online course and its evaluation

3.1. The use of different parts of the course

We also focused on the frequency of usage of different parts of the course by students. Whereas the group FIM2 (blended learning) indicated grammar exercises at first place (33.33 per cent) and exercises focused on vocabulary training at the second place (26.67 per cent), the group UTB placed listening exercises on top (33.33 per cent) and the grammar exercises as second. The group FIM2 introduces the use of listening exercises at the end of the list (16.67 per cent). This could be explained probably by the fact that at the FIM UHK we often use listening exercises in face-to-face lessons and we use them for communication skills training; so the students of the group FIM 2 could consider such work sufficient. On the contrary students of UTB use listening exercises as a supplement for face-to-face lessons and conversation. We did not find a satisfactory answer to the question, why they use the vocabulary exercises relatively rarely.

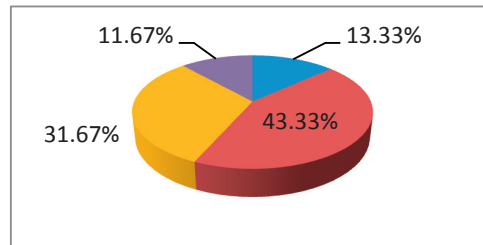
Total chart 2008/2009: In the course I most frequently use



3.2. Frequency of work with the course

In this part we tried to compare work of the groups FIM2 and UTB with the course. In the group of FIM2 56.67 per cent of students state that they work with the course once in two weeks. When questioning the work with the course within the teaching period of the semester it makes sense, because face-to-face lessons take place every two weeks and students have to access the course and work with it at least before each face-to-face lesson. The work with the course of the group UTB is more intermittent, although the students are also encouraged to more frequent and regular work.

Total chart 2008/2009: I work with the course

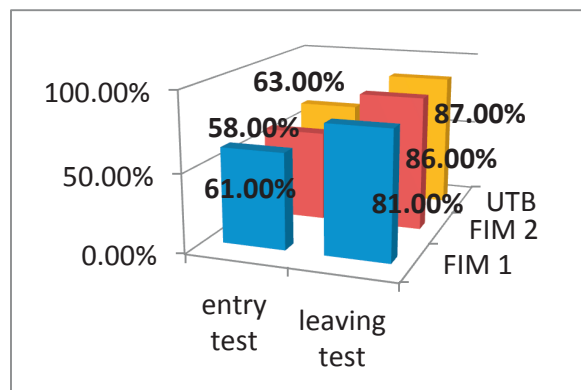


4. Conclusion - The evaluation of testing

In this case we focused on comparison of results of entry and leaving tests of students in different groups within two school years. Let us remind of that these students were not the same. The results of entry test in the school year 2008/2009 did not differ between the groups FIM1, FIM2 and UTB a lot. It is worth mentioning that students of the group UTB were a bit better in their results, which could be explained by the fact, that more advanced learners apply for NJ1 subject, which is voluntary for them. For students of the group FIM1 and FIM2 is equal subject professional German language (ONJ1) mandatory and their knowledge were of very different levels.

At the end of a semester a new testing took place. The biggest advance of 15 per cent made by the group FIM2 (the group taught by the blended learning method) in average score. The group UTB (eLearning) improved their results by 13 percent in average and FIM1 (face-to-face teaching) by 10 per cent.

Chart: The results of entry and leaving tests 2008/2009



On the grounds of didactical survey made and its results we can conclude that teaching the German language when using the blended learning method could be more effective than both face-to-face teaching and teaching by the method of eLearning.

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