ENHANCING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE THROUGH BLENDED ENGLISH LESSONS.

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Abstract: *In recent years, the concept of blended learning has gained significant attention in the field of English language teaching. This approach, which combines traditional face-to-face instruction with online and digital learning tools, has proven to be particularly effective in developing learners' communicative competence. Communicative competence involves not only grammatical accuracy but also the ability to use language appropriately and effectively in real-life situations. This article explores how blended English lessons can enhance communicative competence by integrating interactive technologies, learner-centered activities, and authentic communication tasks. The study highlights the pedagogical benefits of blended learning, including increased learner engagement, improved speaking and listening skills, and greater opportunities for meaningful communication. The article also discusses the role of teachers in designing balanced blended lessons and creating supportive learning environments that encourage active language use.*

Keywords: *Blended learning, communicative competence, English language teaching, digital tools, learner-centered approach*

The primary goal of English language teaching is to enable learners to communicate effectively in various social and academic contexts. In modern education, communicative competence is considered a key indicator of language proficiency, as it goes beyond knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. Learners are expected to express ideas clearly, understand others, and interact confidently in real-life situations. However, traditional classroom-based instruction often faces limitations such as limited speaking time, large class sizes, and insufficient exposure to authentic language use. With the rapid development of educational technologies, blended learning has emerged as a practical and flexible solution to these challenges. Blended learning integrates face-to-face instruction with online learning components, allowing learners to practice language skills both inside and outside the classroom. This approach creates more opportunities for interaction, collaboration, and independent learning. In the context of English language teaching, blended lessons can play a crucial role in enhancing communicative competence by

providing learners with diverse communication channels and authentic language experiences.

Communicative Competence in English Language Learning. Communicative competence is a multifaceted concept that includes grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Grammatical competence refers to knowledge of language structures, while sociolinguistic competence involves using language appropriately according to context and culture. Discourse competence focuses on coherence and cohesion in spoken and written texts, and strategic competence enables learners to overcome communication difficulties.

In traditional classrooms, the development of these components may be limited due to time constraints and a focus on textbook-based instruction. Learners often have fewer chances to practice spontaneous speaking or engage in meaningful communication. As a result, they may know language rules but struggle to use them effectively in real situations. Blended learning addresses this gap by extending learning beyond the classroom and encouraging continuous language use.

The Role of Blended Learning in Developing Communicative Skills. Blended English lessons provide a balanced combination of teacher-guided instruction and technology-supported learning. In face-to-face sessions, teachers can introduce new language, model correct pronunciation, and organize communicative activities such as role-plays, discussions, and group work. These activities help learners develop confidence and fluency in speaking. Online components, on the other hand, offer additional opportunities for interaction and practice. Learners can participate in discussion forums, complete speaking tasks using audio or video recordings, and interact with classmates through messaging platforms. Such activities promote active language use and allow learners to practice at their own pace. Importantly, digital tools enable repeated listening and speaking practice, which is essential for improving communicative competence.

Blended learning also supports authentic communication. Through online videos, podcasts, and real-world tasks, learners are exposed to natural language use in various contexts. This exposure helps them understand different accents, speech patterns, and cultural norms, which are critical aspects of communicative competence.

Learner Engagement and Motivation in Blended Lessons. One of the main advantages of blended learning is its positive impact on learner motivation. Interactive technologies, such as language learning applications, online quizzes, and multimedia content, make lessons more engaging and dynamic. When learners are actively involved in the learning process, they are more willing to communicate and take risks in using the language.

Blended lessons also promote learner autonomy. Students can review materials, practice speaking, and complete tasks independently outside the classroom. This independence encourages responsibility for learning and allows learners to focus on their individual weaknesses. As a result, communicative competence develops more naturally through continuous practice and self-reflection.

The Teacher's Role in Blended English Lessons. Despite the integration of technology, the teacher remains a central figure in blended learning. Teachers are responsible for designing meaningful activities, selecting appropriate digital tools, and guiding learners throughout the learning process. A well-structured blended lesson ensures that online and offline components complement each other rather than function separately.

Teachers also play an important role in providing feedback. In blended environments, feedback can be given both in class and online, allowing learners to reflect on their performance and improve their communication skills. Supportive and constructive feedback helps learners overcome anxiety and build confidence in using English.

Conclusion

Blended learning has proven to be an effective approach for enhancing communicative competence in English language education. By combining face-to-face interaction with digital learning tools, blended English lessons create rich and flexible learning environments that support meaningful communication. Learners benefit from increased exposure to authentic language, greater opportunities for speaking and listening practice, and higher levels of motivation and engagement.

The development of communicative competence requires continuous interaction, practice, and reflection. Blended learning addresses these needs by extending learning beyond the classroom and encouraging active language use in various contexts. When thoughtfully designed and effectively implemented, blended English lessons can significantly improve learners' ability to communicate confidently and appropriately in English.

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