Authentic Resources in Technology-based ESP Learning

Vilhelmina Vaičiūnienė, Daiva Užpalienė

Abstract. The authors of the article aim to present ESP students’ attitude towards and impact of different authentic materials on their motivation, to identify advantages and disadvantages of using these authentic resources for learning purposes, to discuss the need for new ways of information finding and to research ICT tools used by students to access online materials. The article also focuses on the significance of technology in ESP learning which encourages students to come across different authentic materials related to their study subject, develop interaction and critical thinking skills and become more autonomous and responsible for their own learning. The ESP teachers’ considerations and observations how to use the web resources to promote ESP learners’ motivation are based on the research findings obtained through the questionnaire survey. To support this view the authors present the analysis of the survey findings that reflect students’ ESP learning needs and motivation. The respondents of the survey were the first year students of the two Bachelor study programmes: Finance and Economics and Business Informatics at Mykolas Romeris University. The findings obtained through the questionnaire reveal that the respondents from both study programmes indicate similar benefits offered by authentic resources: educational and communicative value, development of professional knowledge, valuable source of language input. The web-based learning environment has great potential to support students’ performance of tasks and enhance their learning outcomes. However, the collected data indicate that ESP students still prefer the safe world of textbooks ranking profession-based Internet sites and general Internet sites in the second and third position.

Key words: English for Specific Purposes (ESP), authentic resources, web resources, ICT, motivation, autonomous learning.