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USING MODERN ENGLISH TECHNOLOGIES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LESSONS

Abstract: The thesis talks about new ways of teaching and the materials used in teaching languages. It also mentions different educational trends and methods, as well as the importance of technology in teaching English. Teaching English has changed a lot in the past, with more focus on communication and technical skills. It's important to prepare students for the global job market. However, the English curriculum hasn't changed much in a long time, which can be frustrating for students.

Educators play a vital role in leveraging modern English technologies effectively. Moreover, how teachers can harness technology to facilitate differentiated instruction, track student progress, and foster a learner-centered approach. It also discusses the importance of digital literacy and ongoing professional development for educators in utilizing these technologies optimally. The integration of modern English technologies in foreign language lessons offers exciting possibilities for language learning. Educators can harness the potential of technology to create dynamic and effective language learning environments, empowering students to develop their English language skills in a meaningful and engaging manner.

Key words: Technology, learning English, the effectiveness of using technology, English skills, communication skills, educational environment.

INTRODUCTION

Moreover, using the old way of just memorizing words and grammar doesn't work well. Sometimes students may not feel motivated to learn English because they find it difficult or have other reasons. But this study covers the issues one of which if teachers use new and interesting resources, it can help students feel more motivated and excited about learning English.

Teachers who used to teach English by writing on the blackboard and relying only on the blackboard to teach communication skills and the details of the English language are still teaching. They also used projectors in the classroom. These teachers believed in a certain way of teaching. Before, researchers paid a lot of attention to real and meaningful conversations. They also focused on adults learning a new language as a similar process to learning a foreign language. In other words, the teachers would talk and the students would listen. The students didn't have a big role in the learning process. But over time, many teachers and students realized that this traditional way of teaching didn't work well for teaching or learning. This way of teaching was used for a long time because it focused on using English in a practical way. But it wasn't effective. It took a long time, a lot of money, and small classes for things to start changing. But even that wasn't enough. So they tried a different method called audio-linguistic. Then they started using audiovisual tools to teach a foreign language directly.

Literature review

1. Definition of Technology and Technology Integration

Various researchers have provided definitions of technology. According to İŞMAN (2012), technology refers to the practical application of knowledge, particularly within a specific area. It involves employing technical processes, methods, or knowledge to accomplish tasks. The use of technology encompasses not only machines (computer hardware) and instruments but also involves structured interactions with other humans, machines, and the environment.Hennessy, Ruthven, and Brindley (2005) and Pourhosein Gilakjani (2017) define technology integration as the manner in which teachers utilize technology to enhance the effectiveness of familiar activities and how such usage can reshape those activities. Dockstader (2008) defines technology integration as the use of technology to improve the educational environment. It supports classroom teaching by creating opportunities for learners to complete assignments on computers rather than using traditional pen and paper.

2. The Utilization of Technology in English Language Classes

Technology serves as a valuable tool for learners and should be incorporated as an integral part of their learning process. Teachers should demonstrate the use of technology to support the curriculum, enabling learners to develop their language skills through authentic technology use (Costley, 2014; Murphy, DePasquale, & McNamara, 2003). Technology can enhance learners' collaboration, which is crucial for effective learning. Through technology, learners can collaboratively work together, create tasks, and learn from each other by reading and reviewing their peers' work (Keser, Huseyin, & Ozdamli, 2011).

Previous research has examined the benefits of incorporating technology into English language teaching and learning. Hennessy (2005) noted that the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) acts as a catalyst, motivating teachers and learners to engage in new ways. It promotes learner autonomy and encourages independent thinking and action. The application of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) has been found to change learners' attitudes toward learning and boost their self-confidence (Lee, 2001).The utilization of ICTs in teaching and learning has several advantages. Firstly, learners become active participants, which aids in better information retention. Secondly, follow-up discussions involve more comprehensive information, allowing learners to become more independent. Finally, learners can engage with new learner-centered educational materials, leading to an improvement in their language learning skills (Costley, 2014; Tutkun, 2011).The use of technology has shifted teaching methods from being teacher-centered to learner-centered. Teachers now act as facilitators and guides in their learners' learning process, which is beneficial for learners in enhancing their learning (Riasati, Allahyar, & Tan, 2012). Gillespie (2006) highlighted that technology promotes learner cooperation in learning tasks and facilitates information gathering and interaction with resources such as videos.

3.1. Research Context

For this study, I utilized both questionnaires and interviews as survey methods. I developed 19 questions for the questionnaires and 10 questions for the interviews. The first four questions in the questionnaire pertain to the first research question, while the remaining questions address the second research question. In the interviews, the first question corresponds to the first research question, and questions 2 to 10 relate to the second research question.

3.2. Data Collection

Data collection took place at Van Lang University over the course of one week. I distributed 288 questionnaires to third-year students in the Faculty of Foreign Languages, and I received 288 completed responses. Additionally, I conducted interviews with 10 students for this research.

3.3. Procedure

I developed questionnaires and interview questions based on two research questions:

- What technologies (social media, computer software, audio tools, and educational apps) do learners use to learn English?

- What positive outcomes have been observed from using technology in English language learning?

Once I finalized the questions, we printed 300 copies of the questionnaires and prepared ten interview questions. These were then distributed to third-year undergraduates in the Faculty of Foreign Languages. The distribution took place from November 9th to November 14th, 2020. After completing the data collection, I analyzed the gathered information on November 15th, 2020.

3.4. Data Analysis

Upon collecting the evaluation data for the study, I proceeded with the following steps:

- Summarized and categorized the data.

- Presented the data through graphs, indicating the number of examples and question percentages.

- Utilized descriptive statistics to describe the data.

- Employed inference statistics to compare and analyze the data.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Demographic Data of Participants

A total of 288 students from Van Lang University's foreign language departments participated in the survey on the effectiveness of using technology in learning English. All participants were third-year students enrolled in the first semester of the academic year. The decision to select junior students for the survey was based on the researchers also being junior students at the university, which facilitated the ease of arranging time and obtaining opinions.

4.2. Research Question

The first research question aimed to investigate the technologies (social media, computer software, audio tools, and educational apps) utilized by learners in their English learning. Questions 1 to 4 in the questionnaires were designed to address this research question. Question 3 specifically explored the types of technologies students commonly use in their English learning. Questions 2 and 4 delved into the participants' sentiments when employing technology for studying English. Question 1 aimed to uncover the approaches students typically adopt when learning English.

The data from questions 1 to 4 in the study indicate that the use of technology in learning English is increasingly common and beneficial for learners. Technologies such as educational apps, smartphones, and tablets are frequently employed by learners due to their usability.

However, using technology in English learning has some drawbacks, such as advertisements and the need for a stable internet connection. Data from questions 5 to 12 suggest that among the four English skills (listening, writing, speaking, and reading), listening abilities show the most improvement, while writing skills have not progressed as much. Speaking and reading skills have also been enhanced through the use of technology. The study also explores respondents' beliefs regarding the use of technology in the classroom (questions 13 to 19) and evaluates its impact on English language learning. Researchers highlight specific programs and pay attention to learners' feelings to identify the most effective approaches.

It is emphasized that searching and analyzing data play a crucial role in research. However, the current study did not encompass all English students at Van Lang University, with only 288 questionnaire responses and 10 interviews. The research was conducted by third-year students and did not involve students from other disciplines or years. Therefore, future research should aim to include a broader range of participants from different disciplines and years to obtain diverse and objective insights. Researchers should focus on relevant questionnaire items related to technology use in English learning and conduct direct interviews with 15-20 students at the school. If possible, the questionnaires could also be distributed to students from other schools to enrich the database.

When technology is used appropriately, it can offer numerous advantages to both teachers and learners. It serves as a valuable resource for learners, helping them overcome learning difficulties and find effective and meaningful ways to apply what they have learned. Technology allows learners to progress at their own pace, promotes self-understanding, maintains interaction with teachers, and fosters high motivation for language skill development.

Moreover, the use of technology plays a pivotal role in enhancing learners' language skills. It stimulates their creativity and provides engaging and enjoyable alternatives for language study. Technology facilitates interaction between teachers and learners, promotes comprehension of input and output, develops critical thinking skills, encourages student-centered learning, supports learner autonomy, boosts confidence, and increases motivation to learn a foreign language.

Conclusion

In summary, this literature review highlights that technology in language learning facilitates meaningful engagement, supports learners in various ways, and enhances the effectiveness of language teaching. It underscores the importance of integrating technology into language classrooms and emphasizes the positive impact it can have on learners' language skills and motivation.

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