

OBSTACLES IN INTEGRATING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INTO FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Annotation: The integration of technology into the teaching of foreign languages has introduced numerous effective strategies into the learning process. Utilizing technology in instruction facilitates a more proficient grasp of the target language. However, this article explores the challenges that arise when incorporating information technology (IT) into the instruction of foreign languages. It discusses various hurdles such as technical issues, access disparities, and concerns regarding the quality of online resources. The author highlights the importance of addressing these obstacles to ensure effective integration of IT tools in language education.

Key words: Digital divide, resistance to technology, digital distractions, technical support, Interactive teaching methods, Conducive learning environments.

In today's swiftly transforming educational environment, the incorporation of information technology (IT) into different aspects of teaching and learning is becoming more widespread. Specifically, in the field of foreign language education, educators are consistently seeking new and creative methods to utilize technology in order to improve the learning process. Nevertheless, despite the numerous advantages that technology brings, there are numerous challenges and obstacles that need to be addressed.

Integrating information technology into foreign language teaching offers numerous benefits but also presents various challenges.

- **Digital Divide:** Socioeconomic disparities can result in unequal access to technology and internet connectivity among students. This can create a divide where some students have access to online language learning resources while others do not, limiting the effectiveness of technology integration efforts.
- **Resistance to Technology:** Both educators and students may resist incorporating technology into language teaching and learning due to a lack of familiarity, discomfort with using new tools, or skepticism about the effectiveness of technology in language education.
- **Quality and Appropriateness of Resources:** Finding high-quality, language-specific online resources and tools can be challenging. Many technology applications are not tailored to language learning, which may result in a mismatch between the needs of language learners and the available resources.
- **Engagement and Motivation:** Sustaining student engagement and motivation in online language learning environments requires dynamic and interactive instructional approaches. However, maintaining interest over extended periods can be challenging, especially when students are learning remotely and face distractions from other digital sources.
- **Privacy and Security Concerns:** Integrating technology into language teaching raises concerns about data privacy and security, particularly when using online platforms or collecting student data. Educators must navigate these issues to ensure that student information remains protected.
- **Digital Distractions:** The ubiquitous nature of technology can also be a double-edged sword, as students may face distractions from social media, gaming, or other non-educational content during online language learning sessions. Managing these distractions while maintaining focus on language learning goals is essential for effective integration of technology. Jones (2004) and Keong et al. (2005) identified that insufficient technical support acted as a hindrance to the effective incorporation of ICT in teaching. The absence of adequate technical assistance dissuades educators from embracing and integrating technology. Becta (2004) similarly concurred that the insufficiency of technical support within schools, coupled with challenges in technical maintenance, represents a primary obstacle to integrating ICT in

classrooms. Consequently, numerous factors continue to impede the incorporation of ICT into educational lessons. Hare (2007) further emphasized the absence of a policy framework, insufficient infrastructure, high expenses, and inadequate training in integrating ICT into education as additional barriers. Carmen et al. (2003) also asserted that the integration of ICT tools in teaching has the potential to improve students' learning abilities and offer avenues for communication.

The integration of information technology into foreign language instruction presents a range of advantages and hurdles. While technology offers the potential to enrich language learning and facilitate communication, numerous challenges must be overcome. These include disparities in technology access, resistance to technological adoption, the need to ensure resource quality and suitability, sustaining student engagement, addressing privacy and security concerns, and managing digital distractions. Successfully tackling these obstacles demands a holistic approach involving equitable technology access, educator training, resource curation, interactive teaching methods, data protection measures, and fostering conducive learning environments. By surmounting these challenges, educators can leverage information technology to create more engaging and effective foreign language learning environments.

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