

TECHNOLOGY-ASSISTED ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

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Abstract

Technology-assisted language learning (TALL Henceforth) has become a core part of the learning process inside and outside classrooms. Al-Timimi (2018) emphasized on the major role of played by technology in enhancing foreign language learners' four skills with the help of technology. The aims behind using technology are to help and enhance English language learning. The use of technology enables teachers to adapt classroom activities and helps learners to do homework inside and outside classrooms respectively. Since technology facilitates language learning for their learners, thus, this study focuses and tries to show the role of using instructional technologies in learning English as a second/foreign language. In the current article, the researcher defined the term technology, explained the necessity of using technology in language classroom, previous studies on using technologies in improving language learning skills is also reviewed, recommendations are stated at the end of the study.

Keywords: technology, and English language Teaching and learning.

Introduction

At present, "English plays a key role in the world and it is known as an international language which enables people to connect all around the world and English can be called as a global language because it is helpful in the processes of globalization" (Al-Abdali and Maniam, 2020, p.1015). By the same token, Ibrahim and Maniam (2020, p. 1065) argued that it is very necessary for EFL and ESL learners to start learning a language through technology. As a language is a tool for international communication, EFL and ESL students need different methods and approaches, for example, instructional technologies, to learn a language. Furthermore, Bataineh and Al-Abdali (2014) stated that "The new forms of communication is becoming an integral part of modern life finding their place in the language classroom, offering new exciting modes of communication for engaging learners in authentic language learning experiences" (p. 160). Means et.al. (1993 cited in Young, 2008) stated that "Technology brings about changes to the classroom roles and organization, especially as it allows students to become more self-reliant. Students may use peer coaching, and teachers may function more as facilitators rather than lecturers" (p. 14). Means (1993) added that "Students are allowed to work on their own, at their own pace, when working on computer projects. These students may not be afraid to fail when their failure is personal instead of in a large classroom discussion" (p.14).

In addition, Ahmadi (2017) stated that "one of the important elements for learning is the method that instructors use in their classes to facilitate language learning process". Using instructional technologies in teaching foreign and second language is empower the educational system with vital tools and a lot of options to enable learners as well as teachers developing learning and teaching a language successfully (Al-Abdali, 2016). Raiskinmäki (2017) stated that "Technology provides new possibilities for language teaching. All the new language learning applications, e-dictionaries and e-books offer both teachers and students endless opportunities for learning. Open-access resources allow the teachers, and also the students, to easily share material in online platforms" (p. 6).

According to Becker (2000), computers, as one tool of the instructional technological tools, are regarded as an important instrument in language classes in that help teachers have convenient access and freedom to the curriculum. Elttayef (2016) emphasized that "With the rapid development of technology, foreign language classes are in need for adopting and utilizing different kinds of technology, in other words, technology should be brought into our classes as effective tools for second language learning and acquisition" (p.39). Bull and Ma (2001) stated that technology offers unrestricted resources to learn a language. According to Harmer (2007) and

Gençter (2015) stressed that teachers of English should encourage learners to enhance their learning through using technology in order to achieve successful learning. Using technology in teaching and learning English cannot be avoided nowadays (Al-Abdali, 2016).

Using technology in education in general and in teaching English language in particular has been the goal for many educators for many years. Technology can be regarded as effective tools in teaching and learning English as a foreign language (Al-Abdali, 2014). Similarly, Clements and Sarama (2003) affirmed that instructional technological aids are beneficial for learners. Tomlison (2009) and Gençter (2015) emphasized that instructional technologies through internet, i.e., computer, provide learners with information that motivate learners towards learning materials. Furthermore, Abbas and Elttayef (2019) concluded that utilizing technology in education is essential developing EFL learners' communicative language. For Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) technology can experience to the learners' environment and motivated them. Accordingly, technology-aided learning is regarded as an important part of teaching and learning environment. By using technology, EFL and ESL teachers facilitate learners' learning.

Bataineh and Al-Abdali, (2015) stated that technology has changed teacher's role from the class-solely-controller and the lonely source of information into the facilitator and observer. Classes became student-centered rather than teacher-centered. According to Solanki and Shyamlee1 (2012) and Gilakjani (2017) technology has been changed language teaching methods. By the same token, Al-Temimi (2017) stated that technology is necessary for learning and teaching development. Technology changed views towards teaching and learning English. Al-Abdali and Al-Temimi (2018) maintained that "Technology aided language learning has become a popular method of English classes, since it replaced the traditional teaching and learning with digital touch screen methods. Mobiles are the forms of the new teaching and learning methods. This opened the door for learners to get their learning outside and inside classrooms" (p. 143).

According to Lam and Lawrence (2002) and Gilakjani (2017), "technology assists learners in adjusting their own learning process and they can have access to a lot of information that their teachers are not able to provide". Technology Assisted Language Learning is a reliable means to develop EFL learners' knowledge of language skills (Ahmad, 2016). Similarly, Al-Abdali (2017) expresses that "over the past few years, new different types of methods-technology based had brought into FL classes by many teachers depending on results of a number of researchers that emphasizing the important and the necessity of using technology in classrooms" (p.273).

Previous Studies

Ahmed (2016) aimed at investigate the effect of using instructional technologies, i.e., exciting videos, web-based interactivity and customizable language software, email, discussion forums, Skype, Twitter, apps, Internet mobiles, Facebook and YouTube, on students' performance and competence. Findings revealed that technology has a direct impact on the learning process. It also has motivated students to learn English.

Bataineh and Al-Abdali (2015) investigated the use of web-cam chat and its effect on the sociocultural competence of the learners. Results showed that web-cam chat has a great effect on the experimental group due to using the new method of teaching.

Gunuç and Babacan (2017) aimed at showing the importance of technology tools in the teaching and learning English language skills. It is concluded that the integration of technology in English teaching and learning is of great importance and impact on the students' learning process.

Kurniawan, and Sabaruddin, (2017) the article aimed at teaching technology as a tool of teaching English subject at the English. Results revealed that technology is essential in teaching and learning English.

Parvin and Salam (2015) investigated the importance and value of digital technologies in language learning. Results showed that the use of audio-visual content has an effect in enhancing interactive language classes. Previous work showed that technology has a great impact in the process of teaching and learning English. Traditional methods of teaching are now outdated. EFL classrooms need integrating new methods specially those based on technology as technology nowadays became an essential part on people's daily life.

Mofareh (2019) technology offers a contemporary teaching methods. Most English language teachers integrate different types of technological aids in classroom to facilitate and support teaching process. Results showed that methods of teaching English can be improved using modern technology.

Young (2008) investigated the impact of using the technology of computer in classroom had on students' grades, motivation, attitude and attendance. Surveys were used to measure teacher use, student use of technology.

Results revealed that teachers' and students' use of technology use motivated them and developed their experience.

Coley (1997) investigated through a meta-analysis to show the effect of technology on students' achievement. Findings revealed that “the use of technology as a learning tool can make a measurable difference in student achievement, attitudes, and interactions with teachers and other students”.

Conclusion

After reviewing the literature review, it indicated that technology cannot be avoided in the process of teaching and learning English. Additionally, EFL and/or SEL teachers need support and more training programs on how to integrate technology into language teaching. Results also revealed that appropriate use of technology lead to a lot of advantages to teachers and learners respectively. In addition, the review of the previous studies showed that technologies play a significant and crucial role in language learning since they create motivation for learners to learn language skills effectively. Results showed that learners' trip of learning English was improved using variety of instructional technologies into EFL and/or ESL classroom. Learners felt free, interesting, motivated, and enjoyable with the use of technology. Technology facilitates their learning outside and inside schools. It opened the door for unlimited sources and open access knowledge. To conclude, instructional technologies provide interaction between teachers and learners inside and/or outside classrooms, provide authentic input and output, help learners to develop language skills using different instructional technologies.

Recommendations

Some recommendations are provided by the researcher for learners to use technology to improve their language skills:

1. Teachers should implement instructional technologies into EFL classrooms as a significant part of teaching and learning programs.
2. Training should have an adequate training program so as to be able to learn and use technology to teach it effectively.
3. Curricula designers should plan to include instructional technologies in EFL and/or ESL the curriculum materials. Those curricula designers should create lesson materials based on technology. Lesson materials should focus on teaching and learning, not on technology itself.
4. Teachers' role will not be neglected by using technology. Teachers' role will be as a guide that direct students towards successful learning.
5. Teachers should encourage and motivate students to use technology to enhance their language abilities towards effective communicative style.

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