Original Paper

The Use of Technology in English Language Teaching

Alqahtani Mofareh A[1*]

[1] King Khaled Military Academy, Civilian Studies, English Department, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

[*] Alqahtani Mofareh A, King Khaled Military Academy, Civilian Studies, English Department, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Abstract

The application of modern technology represents a significant advance in contemporary English language teaching methods. Indeed, Mohammad Reza Ahmadi (2018) maintains that electronic teaching programmes have become the predominant preference of instructors since they arguably boost positive student engagement with teachers and incentivize overall English language learning.

Most contemporary English language teachers now actively incorporate a range of technological aids designed to facilitate optimum teaching delivery. The current research therefore addresses various elements of the technology used in English teaching by devising innovative curricula which harnesses recent scientific and technical developments, equip instructors with the technological skills to ensure effective and quality subject delivery, provide technical media such as audio-visual and modern technical programmes, and create student-teacher platforms which maximize positive language learning outcomes.

For the purposes of this study, the relevant literature has been reviewed, technology defined linguistically and conventionally, and correlation with modern teaching skills fully evaluated. In light of this, the researcher outlines the fundamental research problem, elucidates the significance of the research objectives and hypotheses, and presents the findings. The paper concludes by offering a number of recommendations which may further contribute to the improvement of teaching methods by advancing the widespread application of modern technology.

Keywords

modern, technology, teaching

1. Introduction

The use of modern technology in teaching English is broadly understood to encompass an innovative application of methods, tools, materials, devices, systems, and strategies which are directly relevant to English language teaching and lead to the achievement of the desired goals. Thus, while technology is now generally accepted as an important educational and auxiliary tool across a range of teaching and learning contexts, it is particularly true of English language teaching since it affords a number of potential opportunities to enhance both the content and delivery of the pedagogies typically associated with traditional English language instruction. This is primarily achieved by enabling the student and/or teacher to revisit problematic content time after time until it is fully understood and assimilated.

Familiarity with the concept of using modern technology is not merely limited to the use of modern appliances and devices, but rather obtains to the introduction of innovative systems and methods of teaching which facilitate faster and more comprehensive learning progression. According to prevailing pedagogical theories, in utilizing the learning potential of technology students are better able to acquire and hone their language knowledge and skills. The use of technology in teaching English consolidates the integrated view of the modern means system and association with other components which benefits students by achieving the required results.

The use of modern technology in English language teaching has therefore become indispensable, especially in the wake of unprecedented developments across numerous fields and disciplines. It is essential that the education sector keep apace of the global technological revolution by adopting modern technological means such as computerization, multi-media devices, mobile phones, audio/visual effects applications, and social media, to optimize English language instruction and equip teachers to connect with classroom language learners in a systematic and advanced way. The Internet provides easy, immediate, and virtually unlimited access to software, applications, and a host of ancillary platforms and materials which can expedite English teaching and learning. While these affordances may be widely available to all, it is noted that teachers often play a key role in operating the different tools and teaching methods. Moreover, many such programmes are specifically designed to promote effective English teaching whilst simultaneously increasing learner understanding and attainment of English language skills.

2. Previous Research

Stepp-Greany (2002, p. 165) used survey data from Spanish language classes which utilized a range of technological approaches and methods in order to determine the importance of the role of teachers, the relevance and availability of technology labs and individual components, and the effect of using technology on the learning process of a foreign language. The results confirmed student perceptions of the teacher as the primary learning facilitator, and stressed the importance of regularly scheduled language labs and the use of CD Rom. Stepp-Greany recommended a follow-up study to measure the effects of relevant technology on the learning process of foreign language acquisition.

Warschauer (2000a) proposed two different ways to integrate technology into the class: a *cognitive approach* which gives learners the opportunity to meaningfully increase their exposure to language and thus make their own knowledge; and a *social approach* which gives learners opportunities for authentic social interactions as a means to practice the real-life skills obtained through engagement in real activities.

Bordbar (2010) investigated the reasons and factors behind language teachers' use of computer technology in the classroom. The study further explored teacher attitudes towards computer and information technology and the various ways they applied practical computer-assisted language learning experience and knowledge to their own language instruction delivery. The results found that almost all the teachers held positive attitudes towards the use of computers in the class. The results also underscored the importance of teachers' overall perceptions of technology, technological experience, skill, and competence, and the cultural environment that surrounds the introduction of IT into schools and language institutes and shapes attitudes towards computer technology.

Shyamlee (2012, p. 155) analyzed the use of multi-media technology in language teaching. The study found that such technology enhances student learning motivation and attention since it implicates students in the practical processes of language learning via communication with each other. Shyamlee recommended the use multi-media technology in classrooms, particularly as its positive impact on the learning process aligns with the ongoing efficacy of the teacher role.

The findings of the research support the proven futility of traditional English teaching methods, and confirm that learners are more enthusiastic and interactive when using modern technology to assimilate English. Statistical data reiterates that a high percentage of those learning English language skills do so via modern media such as smart boards, computers and screens, as compared to traditional teaching methods. Moreover, the study reveals that the interaction with teachers and overall responsiveness of students in the classroom is significantly improved when using modern techniques in English teaching. In fact, it is clear both that students are more likely to learn from electronic curricula and that English language teachers prefer to employ modern technology rather than traditional methods of instruction.

3. Purpose of the Study

The topic of English language teaching and learning has emerged as one of the central issues of contemporary educational debate as studies have consistently demonstrated poor standards of student achievement across all levels. Since the current era is epitomized by the ubiquitous use of technology, it follows that technology has penetrated the field of teaching on a worldwide scale. In fact, since most educational institutions have now absorbed such technology into current and future curricula, technological and/or media-based pedagogies have assumed considerable prominence due to proven enhanced learning outcomes, especially in comparison with traditional teaching methods. Obsolete teaching practices include a number of problems, as follows:

1) Traditional methods lead students through precise curriculum content and rely on outdated learning aids such as blackboards and textbooks. As such, the teacher merely relays the information without accounting for positive or negative results.

2) Traditional methods rely on simple strategies that do not meet the purpose of learning or basic needs in the process of teaching. Since such teacher-centred pedagogies situate the learner as a recipient, their overarching goal is the extent to which a student can replicate information without necessarily understanding it.

3) Students rely on received sounds and images as opposed to interaction and discussion with the teacher.

4) Student accreditation by means of set texts tend to foster boredom and loss of motivation and attention in attainment, as opposed to modern technological teaching methods which inhere numerous incentives that increase the likelihood of acquiring English language skills in a timely and positive way.

In light of the above obstacles, the present study was undertaken to ring-fence the causes at the heart of the problem and attempt to resolve the issue by introducing a range of modern technologies into the context of English language teaching.

4. Research Questions

Comprehensive investigation of the above issues and the bid to find logical solutions for these challenges rests on the following questions:

1) *Are there an adequate number of sufficiently qualified and suitably-trained teachers to use modern technology in teaching English language in the Saudi context?*

2) *How effectively do English language learners respond and/or interactive with the use of modern technology?*

3) *Is all modern technological means available to support a successful English language teaching in the Saudi context?*

4) *How effective is the use of modern technology in teaching English?*

5) *What are the expected outcomes or outcomes achieved on the ground through the use of modern technology in English language teaching?*

5. Significance of the Research

The study aims to advance knowledge in a number of significant areas. In the first instance it will identify traditional teaching practice challenges which retard or obstruct the process of effective language learning in order formulate a range of solutions to update them with technological methods and aids. The research will also evaluate the scale of the difficulties confronted by English teachers who use modern technology and determine whether additional IT skill training is required. It is hoped that the ensuing data may be used as a reference guide for future researchers in the same field and

171

context, along with a detailed analysis of the teaching and education sector as intrinsic to the infrastructure of any modern society.

Technology has become ubiquitous in all forms of contemporary life. Since the teaching process cannot be atomized from this global trend, this study further considers the impact of recent English teaching technology as compared to traditional practices which arguably render students passive, and prone to boredom. Indeed, this study demonstrates that the introduction of modern technological assistance yields timely learning progress and improved student proficiency across all English language skills including writing, reading, and conversation. Ultimately, the research provides key educative stake-holders and authorities with practical solutions to tackle the problems related to the use of modern technology in English language teaching for teachers and students alike.

6. Objectives

The research aims to identify the following:

1) the extent of the technological contribution to the development of the English language teaching process.

2) a suite of solutions to enable both teachers and learners to overcome the challenges which currently hinder the use of modern technology in English teaching.

3) possible alternatives and/or substitutes for traditional instruction in order to boost the efficiency of teacher and student potential to acquire English language skills.

4) appropriate IT training for English language teachers to meet the growing need.

5) the pros and cons of using technology in teaching English.

6) technological teaching programmes and aids which enable students to learn via an electronic curriculum.

7. Hypotheses

This study tested the following hypotheses:

1) *There are statistical differences indicating variations between traditional methods and modern technology in teaching English.*

2) *There are statistical indicators demonstrating the level of student assimilation of English language skills.*

3) *There are statistically significant indications of the efficiency of teachers in using of modern technology in terms of teaching English language curricula.*

8. Methodology

The researcher followed each of the following methodologies:

1) The researcher applied the descriptive method and experimental monitoring in order to fully interrogate the study questions and devise appropriate solutions.

2) Based on the determination of time and spatial period, the application of historical methodology based on an analysis of the elements and reasons which gave rise to the basic research problem and the attendant challenges further assisted an evaluation of present and future developmental impacts. In addition the collation, review and comparison of secondary data sourced from relevant records, reports and previous studies, were intrinsic to the design and scope of effective solutions.

3) The researcher also applied experimental methodology which is based on studying the impact of changes placed on the research problem where one variable is fixed. The study the impact of its existence rests on several variables; namely the laboratory experimental methodology conducted in the laboratory under certain conditions, such as studying the impact of technology on teaching English and the non-laboratory experimental methodology applied to a group of volunteer students beyond the scope of study.

Technical Terminology

MODERN: designed and made using the most recent ideas and methods.

TECHNOLOGY: methods, systems, and devices which are the result of scientific knowledge being used for practical purposes.

TEACHING: the concerted sharing of professional knowledge and experience, usually organized within a discipline: more generally, the provision of stimulus to the psychological and intellectual growth of a person by another person or artifact.

9. Results

The research results support the uselessness of traditional English language teaching methods. This is evident in the studies conducted, where it was found that between 75% and 85% of students confirm these results and 60% to 80% of students are dissatisfied with the traditional methods. In contrast, students are more enthusiastic and interactive when using modern technology to absorb English by more than 90%. Statistical data confirm that a high percentage of those who learn English skills interact with modern technology means such as smart boards, computers and display screens compared to traditional teaching methods. According to statistics conducted on random samples of students, including private schools that adopt the most modern means of technology and public schools that lack modern means were surveyed on a number of students in the classroom and others volunteers outside the perimeter of the interaction of most students from both the results of the analysis of students' performance showed that 75% to 95% achieve high results in their attainment in English, unlike those who are taught by traditional means, their achievement rates are very low. In addition, the study

173

revealed that interaction with teachers and the overall response of students in the classroom has improved significantly when using modern techniques in teaching English as the interaction with teachers using modern media reached more than 90%, unlike those who are taught by traditional means have less than 50% interaction with teachers, thus it is clear that studies, surveys have shown that students are more inclined to learn from E-curriculum and English teachers prefer to use modern technology rather than traditional teaching methods due to the students fast response and their interaction and educational attainment with high statistically rates.

10. Discussion

Despite the fact that modern technology is increasingly ubiquitous across all aspects of modern life, the scope and utilization of appropriate technology within the education sector in general, and within English language teaching in particular, has remained conspicuously limited. So much so, that recent educational studies have attributed poor levels of student achievement to an inadequate use of technology in education which is compounded by the continued prevalence of traditional teaching methods (Tamimi, 2014; Salama, 1999).

To date, very few educational Saudi institutions routinely use technology and/or Internet to teach English (Rahman, 2015) despite the fact it has become the dominant language of trade, industry, education, engineering, medicine, media, and almost all branches of practical and social life. In fact, current technology offers a vast array of affordances to enhance the efficacy, methodologies and interest level of teachers. Moreover, studies of teaching English with the addition of technological tools found it enabled students to be more pro-active and to learn in line with their particular interests and abilities (Roma, 2013).

11. Reasons for Using Technology in English Language Teaching

Jacqui Murray (2015) taxonomies the rationale for using technology in English language teaching as follows:

1) Technology allows students to demonstrate independence.
2) Technology differentiates the needs of students.
3) Technology deepens learning by using resources that students are interested in.
4) Students actively want to use technology.
5) Technology gives students an equal voice.
6) Technology enables students to build strong content knowledge wherever they find it.

11.1 Merits of Using Technology in English Language Teaching

English-language students are highly implicated in and motivated by the use of the modern technology such as radio, TV, computers, the Internet, electronic dictionary, email, blogs, audio-visual aids, videos, and DVDs or VCDs (Nasser, 2017) as follows:

174

1) The use of technology in teaching English is deemed interesting and motivating as the student reacts with the subject.

2) Technology plays an important role in the process of teaching English by enhancing timely understanding, and thereby enabling students more learn more efficiently.

3) Teachers perform more effectively when using modern technology since they can communicate with the students through a variety of ways.

4) The use of modern technology enables both teachers and students to access a wealth of books, publications, and references which are directly relevant to the English language curriculum.

5) Modern technology encourages student self-sufficiency which better equips them for the future.

6) Unlike traditionally passive teaching methods, modern technology teaching and learning aids incentivize both teacher and student.

11.2 Drawbacks of Using Technology in English Language Teaching

1) Many teachers and students have limited access to modern technology.

2) The role of the teacher can be relegated in cases where students become over-reliant on modern technology.

3) It can reduce student social activities by consuming most of their free time.

12. Findings

The answers to the core research question are summarized as follows:

1) Studies confirm there are not enough English language instructors trained in the use of relevant technological teaching aids.

2) The survey found greater student response and interaction with the use of modern technology than traditional methods.

3) The study also showed that the language teaching process was hampered by the unequal availability of relevant technology across educational institutions.

4) Studies confirm that up-to-date sound and visual effects and tablet display devices are more effective in teaching English language skills due to their immediacy and user-friendly English content, which reflects real-life situations as opposed the traditional means that student find contrived and boring.

5) As anticipated, the study confirms that the use of modern technology leads to enhanced learner outcomes including better student motivation, improved achievement levels, and increased interaction between student and teacher. Improved student self-learning, self-reliance, positive self-talk were also observed, as were maximum utility of time and effort for both the teacher and student.

Going forward, it is evident that the various modes and sources of modern classroom technology have proven their reliability and effectiveness in the comprehensive, relevant, and timely instruction of contemporary English language skills.

13. Hypotheses Findings

The following indications relating to the study hypotheses have been determined: There are statistical differences indicating variations between traditional methods and modern technology in teaching English.

No statistical differences were found to indicate significant variations between traditional methods and modern technology in teaching English.

There are statistical indicators demonstrating the level of student assimilation of English language skills.

No statistical indicators were found which demonstrated levels of student assimilation of English language skills.

There are statistically significant indications of the efficiency of teachers in using of modern technology in terms of teaching English language curricula.

No statistically significant indications of the efficiency of teachers in using of modern technology in terms of teaching English language curricula were identified.

14. Recommendations

In light of the findings, the researcher suggests the following:

1) Substitute modern technology for obsolete English language teaching methods.

2) Provide appropriate training for all teachers to use modern technology in English language teaching.

3) Adopt complete electronic curriculum projects in line with modern requirements.

4) Urge English teachers to encourage students to use modern technology as a means to develop their language skills.

5) Establish Internet networks within educational institutions to equip teachers to properly avail of modern technology.

6) Provide appropriate student training in all forms of available technology in order that they maintain pace with the requirements of the electronic curriculum.

7) Establish an English language teaching portal school-home connection to enable students to learn in their free time.

8) English teacher development of classroom dialogue and discussion programmes which use modern technical means such as screens, projectors, and smart panels in order to promote student mastery of the English language.

15. Conclusion

In summary, it is clear that despite genuine efforts to modernize traditional methods of teaching English, residual obsolete practices should be phased out and replaced by the use of the available technology on offer via computer, smart devices, display, audio-visual materials, and electronic approaches. This study underscores the vital educative potential and numerous benefits of technology in the language classroom for positive learning outcomes in the language classroom and the wider world, the financial implications of setting up the infrastructure, and encouraging teachers to overcome their anxieties around of teaching technologies. Of course, the purpose of both traditional and modern technologies is to maximize students' English skills and provide a space where learning can be best facilitated. One of the ultimate goals of using modern technology is to actively engage them students in language learning and motivate them to acquire English language skills in a practical and realistic way. This can be achieved through an open learning context which fosters openness and access to the subjects and information through modern technology means, wherein students are motivated and directed to communicate with each other. In terms of future development, it is clear that multimedia will be integral to the student-centred process of teaching English to modern standards. As such, the quality of teaching and application of students to modern educational foundations would benefit from an extensive survey of English language skills in to improve overall communication proficiency.

In conclusion, we believe that this process can fully enrich student thinking and practical language skills and promote improved efficacy in overall teaching and learning. Indeed it is evident that many routine learning issues that can be overcome through the effective incorporation of technology and appropriately trained teachers, while funding ramifications can be addressed through ministerial planning and the establishment of an infrastructure which prioritizes the interests of effective learning.

References

Ahmadi, M. R. (2017). The impact of motivation on reading comprehension. *International Journal of Research in English Education*. https://doi.org/10.18869/acadpub.ijree.2.1.1

Alsaleem, B. I. A. (2014). *The effect of "WhatsApp" electronic dialogue journaling on improving writing vocabulary word choice and voice of EFL undergraduate Saudi Students*. Harvard: 21st Century Academic Forum Conference Proceedings. Retrieved from http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images /lesson782/Rubric.pdf

Arifah, A. (2014). *Study on the use of technology in ELT classroom: Teachers' perspective* (M.A. Thesis). Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Aydin, S. (2013). Teachers' perceptions about the use of computers in EFL teaching and learning: The case of Turkey. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *26*(3), 214-233. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2012.654495

Baytak, A., Tarman, B., & Ayas, C. (2011). Experiencing technology integration in education: Children's perceptions. *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, *3*(2), 139-151. Retrieved June 17, 2018, from https://www.iejee.com/index.php/IEJEE/article/view/233

Beatty, K. (2003). *Teaching and Researching Computer Assisted Language Learning*. New York: Longman.

Becker, H. J. (2000). Findings from the teaching, learning, and computing survey: Is Larry Cuban right? *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *8*(51). https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.v8n51.2000

Beijing foreign Language Teaching and Research Press. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.onestopenglish.cIl

Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by principles as interactive approach to language pedagogy*.

Bush, M., & Roberts, T. (Eds.). (1997). *Technology-enhanced language learning*. NatiComp Textbook Company: Illinois.

Carlson, S. (2002, October 11). Are personal digital assistants the next must-have tool [Electronic version]? *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *49*(7), A33.

Dudeney, G., & Hockly, N. (2007). *How to Teach English with Technology*. Essex: Pearson Longman. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccn045

Eastment, D. (2005). Blogging. *ELT Journal*, *59*(4), 358-361. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/cci073

Egbart, J., Paulus, T., & Nakamichi, Y. (2002). The impact of CALL institution on language classroom technology use: A foundation for rethinking CALLteacher education. *Language Learning and Technology*, *6*(3), 108-129.

Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Erban, T., Ban, R., & Castaneda, M. (2009). *Teaching English Language Learners Through Technology*. New York: Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203894422

Gallego, J. C. (1992). Learning languages via satellite: A report on a tele-class language exchange. *Foreign Language Annals*, *25*(1), 51-58. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1992.tb00513.x

Hirvela, A. (2006). Computer-mediated communication in ESL teacher education. *ELT Journal*, *60*(3), 233-241. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccl003

Jacqui, M. (2015). *13 Reasons for Using Technology in the Classroom*. Retrieved from https://www.teachhub.com/13-reasons-using-technology-classroom

Johns, T., & King, P. (Eds.). (1991). *Classroom Concordancing*. Special Issue of ELR Journal 4, University of Birmingham, Centre for English Language Studies.

Kern, R., & Warschauer, M. (2000). *Network-based language teaching: Concepts and practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524735

Kessler, G. (2007). Formal and informal CALL preparation and teacher attitude toward. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *20*(2), 173-188. https://doi.org/10.1080/09588220701331394

Levy, M. (1997). *Computer-Assisted Language Learning*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Malcolm, D. (2004). Why should learners contribute to self-access center. *ELT Journal*, *58*(4), 346-354. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/58.4.346

Maniruzzaman, M., & Rahman, M. M. (2008). The use of audio aids in the EFL Class at t tertiary level: A plus or a minus? *Daffodil University International Journal of Business and Economics*, *3*(1), 121-137.

Nahum, R. (2013, April 11). *Use of Technology in English Language Teaching and Learning*. Publicado hace.

Parvin, R. H., & Salam, S. F. (2015). The effectiveness of using technology in English language classrooms in government primary schools in Bangladesh. *FIRE: Forum for International Research in Education*, *2*(1), 47-59. https://doi.org/10.18275/fire201502011049

Patel, C. (2013). Use of multimedia technology in teaching and learning communication skill: An analysis. *International Journal of Advancements in Research & Technology*, *2*(7), 116-123.

Peregoy, S., & Boyle, O. (2012). *Reading, writing and learning in ESL: A resource book for teachers*. New York: Allyn & Bacon.

Pourhossein Gilakjani, A. (2013). Factors contributing to teachers' use of computer technology in the classroom. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *1*(3), 262-267.

Pourhossein Gilakjani, A. (2014). A detailed analysis over some important issues towards using computer technology into the EFL classrooms. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *2*(2), 146-153.

Şahin-Kizil, A. (2011). *EFL teachers attitudes towards information and communication technologies (ICT)*. Proceedings of the 5th International Computer & Instructional Technologies Symposium, Firat University, Laziğ Turkey.

Salaberry, M. (2001). The use of technology for second language learning and teaching: A retrospective. *The Modern Language Journal*, *85*(1), 41-56. https://doi.org/10.1111/0026-7902.00096

Simpson, J. (2002). Computer-mediated Communication. *ELT Journal*, *56*(4), 414-415. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/56.4.414

Singhal, M. (1997). The Internet and Foreign Language Education: Benefits and Challenges. *The Internet TESL Journal*, *3*(6).

Sura, M. N. (2017, April). *Use of Technology in English Language Teaching and Learning University of Baghdad*.

Tazrin, R. (2015, June). *BRAC Institute of Languages (BIL)*. BRAC University (14th Floor) 66, Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212.

TESOL. (2008). *TESOL Technology Standards Framework*. Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc., USA.

Warschauer, M. (1997). Computer-mediated collaborative learning: Theory and practice. *The Modern Language Journal*, *81*(4), 470-481. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1997.tb05514.x

179

Warschauer, M., & Meskill, C. (2000). *Technology and second language learning*.