INNOVATION IN TEACHING ENGLISH FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT: A TECHNOLOGY-INTEGRATED APPROACH

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Abstract. Nowadays, innovation is seen as a process of change, whose implementation is supposed to bring about more effectiveness in those organizations that envision such reformative initiatives. In language education, innovation is often related to the emergence and experimentation of both pedagogical and technology-integrated approaches to teaching and learning. The technology-based language teaching refers to the integration of modern technology into the language class, either as a tool or as a resource. From this perspective, the article starts with an overview of the literature regarding key-concepts we operate with throughout the paper and is organized in several subsections attempting first to define what innovation in language education is, then to clarify what English for Law Enforcement is against the distinction between English for Specific Purposes as opposed to General English. Further the paper focuses on the use of ICT in English language teaching, enumerating and illustrating how the technology-based approaches can be employed in language classes. This section makes the shift to the next one, which discusses a concrete case of teaching English for Law Enforcement students in Romania, exemplifying the "what" and "how" of the use of technology in such a language learning environment, pointing out both its benefits and drawbacks for both teachers and learners.

Keywords: innovation, language teaching and learning, English for Specific Purposes, Law Enforcement English, ICT, technology-integrated language classes.

Introduction: Innovation in language education

Innovation has often been identified as a process of change. The underlying purpose of innovation, seen as change, is to make education more effective for the students. As such, innovation is viewed by some authors as an attempt to produce educational improvement by doing something which is perceived by implementers as new or different (Carless, 2013). Similarly, Rogers (2003) defines innovation as "an idea, practice or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption".

The adoption of innovations is often due to the fact that, in the globalised world, societies feel the need to keep up with the effective changes that others have already implemented. In keeping with this idea Rogers (2003) notes that an innovation does not have to be "objectively" new, but rather perceived as new.

This means that the adoption of a certain innovation is rather a subjective process, which involves a selection of what particular method, tool or process will be implemented as innovation.

However, when deciding upon implementing an innovation in language teaching and learning one should take into account the potential rate of success that innovation might have, the effectiveness of that innovation or, differently put, the extent to which students make more learning progress than before the innovation was implemented (K. Van den Braden, 2009). Moreover, innovations need to be designed in ways which are receptive to and respectful of both local classroom realities and wider national cultures. In this respect, Wedell (2009) claims that we need to put people and contexts at the core of the innovation process and, in the same note, Carless (2011) supports the case of "contextually grounded approaches" to pedagogic innovation. Therefore, we need to adapt the innovations in language teaching and learning to the realities of the specific context we teach English in. For instance, the realities might refer to the availability or unavailability of technology, the technology literacy of both teachers and learners, or the context to the variety of English we teach, for instance ESP (English for Specific Purposes). As such, there needs to be a balanced approach in the implementation of innovations in language education.

It was earlier mentioned that innovation is seen as change. As a matter of fact, change is also the goal of teaching English. This change consists, primarily, in producing "fully competent English knowing bilinguals rather than imitation of native speakers", and, secondly, "English is not viewed as an end in itself but a means to learn content" (Penny Ur, 2009), especially in an ESP context, where the language teacher's aim is to help students learn both the content and the language in what is called a CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) approach to language education.

In fact, innovation in language education may unfold on two dimensions, which are the pedagogical and the technological. The pedagogical facet refers to new teaching approaches such as task-based learning, CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), CBI (Content Based Instruction), learner-oriented teaching etc., changes to teaching materials from course-books to the use of alternative teaching resources such as authentic materials, video or audio recordings, other online resources. The technological dimension of innovation refers to the technology-based language instruction which resorts to the integration of technological developments into the language class, including tools, techniques, methods or approaches, such as: computers, notebooks, mobile phones, the internet, online teaching, e-learning, computer assisted language learning, to name but a few of the possibilities.

Among the new trends in language teaching there is also the shift of focus from the teacher on the learner. Dewey (1938) was apparently the first to coin the term "learner centeredness", which became popular in ELT. Such an approach has the goal of making the language teaching more flexible and responsive to students (Tudor, 1996) and also brings along a series of new roles of the teacher. In the literature there are various opinions as to what are the teacher's roles in this approach to language teaching. According to Richards and Rogers (1986) the teacher's role is part of a "design", a component of a method, while Little Wood (1981) considers that the teacher is a facilitator of learning, an overseer, a classroom manager, a consultant or adviser and a cocommunicator. To Harmer (2012), a teacher plays a role of controller, organizer, assessor, promoter, participant, resource, tutor and observer. Depending on the language class circumstances, the teacher might take on each of these roles in turns or make use of a mixture of them simultaneously. One of the teaching approaches that rely on learner-centeredness is TBLT (task-based language teaching). Nunan (2004) considers that the underlying principle of TBLT is "experiential learning or learning by doing". As such, the learners take on a more active role, whereas the teacher becomes the facilitator of learning through what Vygotsky (1978) calls "dialogic communication". That is to say that the teacher's role is limited as he is expected to be merely a guide standing by the side.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP). English for Law Enforcement (LEE)

It is generally conceded that there is a difference between GE (general English) and ESP (English for Specific Purposes). As Anthony (1997) puts it, "some people described it as simply being the teaching of English for any purpose that could be specified. Others, however, were more precise, describing it as the teaching of English used in academic studies or the teaching of English for vocational or professional purposes". On the other hand, Dudley-Evans and St. Johns (1998) argue that "ESP requires the careful research and design of pedagogical materials and activities for an identifiable group of adult learners within a specific learning context". The concepts most frequently used in defining ESP are: context, situational practice, cross-cultural issues, authenticity of communication and materials, and needs analysis (Dudley-Evans & St. Johns, 1998).

Therefore, the most common issues associated with teaching ESP refer to the tasks an ESP teacher has to carry out before entering the class and teaching. These tasks include the identification of the learning needs of the group of learners the teacher is supposed to teach, which is performed through *needs analysis*, then, once the learners' needs have been determined, the teacher starts

the process of *research* and *documentation* in the target field (in our case, law enforcement), so as to be able to *select* appropriate *material*, which will be *evaluated* and, subsequently, *developed* into effective teaching sequences. Needs analysis is not unique to language teaching, but it is often seen as being the foundation of ESP and leads to a focused course (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). In other words, a needs analysis is the process of determining the needs for which a learner or group of learners requires a language and arranging the needs according to priorities (Richards & Platt, 1992).

In addition, if the development of an extensive language course is envisioned by the ESP instructor, then they might consider deciding on *course content* – in terms of most relevant topics that the course will cover – as well as formulating course objectives. Generally, the content of any ESP course should only be determined by a comprehensive needs analysis, as this first step is seen as being absolutely crucial if ESP practitioners wish to design a course that will maximally benefit their learners (Wright, 2001). As to materials development, Hutchinson & Waters (1987) suggest starting from looking for appropriate input, examining language and content in it, and then devising tasks in which the language aspects and content will be used, an approach that we also embraced. Depending on the teacher's choice of the preferred teaching approach, the course may contain activities focused on the development of all productive and receptive skills, focused solely on the communicative approach to language teaching or rather on a tasked-based approach.

When it comes to English for Law Enforcement, the attempt to define it should also start from the understanding of the concept of ESP. English for Specific Purposes (most commonly referred to by its acronym: ESP) is a branch of EFL/ESL (English as a Foreign Language/English as Second Language) system, which is an essential part of ELT (English Language Teaching). ESP can be further divided into two main sub-branches, which are EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and EOP (English for Occupational Purposes). As such, English for Law Enforcement is a variety of ESP, encompassed by EOP.

ESP is a more focused approach to language learning, whereby the content and method are based on the learner's particular needs to learn the language (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Being part of the ESP family, LEE borrows its characteristics. Thus, as the ESP literature posits, the content is of paramount importance in learning a language as it reflects the learners' needs for learning that language. Therefore, it is considered that if the learners' English language needs are adequately identified through an accurate needs analysis then the content of the language program will be designed so as to meet these needs (Munby, 1978). Therefore, when planning and designing a language program that aims to meet the needs of an ESP target group (in our case, law enforcement students), extreme attention should be paid to various facets of the language

learning process so as to meet the specific English language needs of the target group and produce a learner-centred course.

In an ESP context, the learners' needs will always be related to aspects such as learning specialized lexis pertaining to a particular profession, which is not taught randomly, but in contexts specific to that particular professional area. This means that the language program learners attend will expose them to contents that reflect or duplicate job-related situations. On the other hand, the learners' needs may echo their desire to improve various aspects of the language, which may refer to grammatical structures, language functions or development of the language skills, both receptive and productive (reading, listening, speaking, writing). Therefore, in teaching LEE both content and language are at the core of the language program, as the content is a vehicle for learning the language, and the language the means to understand the content.

Information and Communication Technology in English language teaching

The advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a dimension of globalization, which is inseparable from English language teaching. In fact, the access to technology and the internet has allowed the enhancement of the language learning programme through a wide array of materials and resources made available, as well as innovating teaching methods and making the language learner autonomous. As such, English teachers regard internet as one of the alternative media to teach language (Warschauer, 1996).

Students can use the internet for self-study purposes, without the help of a teacher, in order to research for a particular topic, to practise various language skills to improve their language competence, to have access to audio or visual resources, or to reading material etc. The use of the internet with the purpose of improving their English proficiency allows them to decide upon the materials or resources they use and also to set their own pace for learning. Thus, the internet enables learners to become autonomous, which is one of the skills students need to develop today (Felix, 2005). However, some theorists warn that the use of technology itself does not bring autonomy and the students need appropriate support, guidance or training to become autonomous learners (Arno-Marcia, 2012). Indeed, the use of technology might not lead to any improvement when it comes to the students' language proficiency, if their learning is not placed in an educational setting and facilitated and guided by the teacher standing on the side to oversee the process.

The literature makes reference to some of the technology-based language teaching approaches, which include examples such as: *computer mediated English, computer assisted language learning, web-based learning* and *the new age technological devices* (V. Parab, 2015). *Computer mediated English* refers

to the language that is created and used per convenience, not by convention, for example when resorting to a shortened communication via electronic devices, tools or applications (for example, in e-mails or messenger) that usually consists in using acronyms or letters instead of words or emoticons (TGIF – Thank God is Friday; u – you; ur – you are etc.)

Computer assisted language learning (CALL) is a method that consists in the computer being not only a mere tool, but also a tutor that gives stimulus to the learner. It can be used to make students' learning autonomous by centring it on resolving various language tasks. The students can use the computer to research on a particular topic for a project, to access online dictionaries or audio or visual resources, to practice pronunciation, to improve their grammar or vocabulary, and also to self-assess their progress.

Web-based learning, also called technology based learning, distance learning, online education or e-learning, provides opportunities to create a well-designed, learner-centred, affordable, interactive, flexible e-learning environment (Khan, 2005). In such an approach to language learning, language skills, both productive and receptive, can be practised and improved by the use of a variety of web-based activities. The most common technologies available for this kind of education are communication tools or platforms such as: e-mails, blogs, skype, smart phones, ipads, ipods etc.

The latest technological devices include: smart phones, e-readers, notebooks, video projectors, voice recorder devices, flash drives, portable scanners, 3D printers etc.

When it comes to teaching ESP, technology in its various forms has long been used in ESP and its impact on ESP has been more profound (Arno et al., 2006a). ESP teachers have always used it to develop materials and create situations relevant to their students' needs (Arno-Marcia, 2012).

However, the role of technology in language learning in general, and in ESP in particular, has changed over time and significantly so in recent years (Arno et al., 2006a). The view of learning changed with time from the behaviourist to communicative and then to an integrated approach (Warschauer & Healey, 1998) and that is why technology has also evolved and pervaded everyday life, and particularly the professional world. Such a shift has affected how technology is employed in ESP classes. Today, technology has become integrated into the classroom physically and pedagogically rather than being just an add-on. Computers are viewed as a tool to accomplish certain tasks or to communicate (Warschauer & Healey, 1998). For this reason, Garrett (2009) sees CALL as "the full integration of technology into language learning".

But technology has brought about the internet as well. Apart from the significant role that technology has had on ESP teaching, the internet has had a considerable impact. As ESP focuses on meeting the needs of the learners and

on the use of authentic materials and tasks, technology has become a very suitable tool for ESP teaching (Arno et al., 2006a), as it allows learners to collaborate and engage in authentic communication in their professional environment and also to access up-to-date information relevant to their profession. Relative to the above mentioned ideas, we note that N. Kern (2013) identifies three roles of the internet in ESP, which are: a source for authentic, specialized material; a place for authentic communication; a collection of tools for sharing ideas, knowledge or materials.

In today's globalised society, the internet has gained a huge ground both in our private and professional lives and it gives people the opportunity to have a fast and efficient communication and collaboration, as well as to exchange information. This is why ESP teachers are pressured to prepare their students to "deal with global communicative practices online, in all their complexity" (White, 2007). Furthermore, as Zhong (2008) argues, the internet and the various tools it provides can help learners become more autonomous and also allow them to monitor their own learning. As such, the role of technology in language learning is that the learners have the opportunity to select and decide upon the content, the methods and the pace they want to use to meet their own learning needs. The use of the internet as a learning resource is appropriate in ESP contexts, as in such settings the students are rather experts of a discipline (Arno et al., 2006b), that is they master the content and, thus, they can as well become proficient in the language through the medium of the internet.

For ESP teachers the internet can be both a resource and a tool they might use in their classes. It can be employed to access to various audio and video resources, to find materials and ideas for their lessons, to give students online homework or further references. The internet may be used as a vehicle for online teaching, for attending webinars or conferences, for connecting with peers, writing or reading on online forums or platforms etc. Moreover, the technology has enable ESP instructors to expand and develop new roles such as materials designer, researcher, collaborator, communicator and assessor. The internet facilitates the collaboration and communication with field-experts or makes available a multitude of multimedia resources that will support the ESP teacher in designing appropriate materials or courses that meet their learners' needs (Arno-Marcia, 2012).

The use of technology in English for Law Enforcement (LEE)

In Romania the training of prospective law enforcement officers falls within the remit of the Police Academy, a state budgeted higher education institution, part of the national academic system, which is subordinated to The Ministry of Home Affairs, as sole beneficiary of the graduates trained here. The

students enrolled at the academy specialize in several strands of law enforcement such as police, border police, penitentiaries, gendarmerie, firefighters and archives.

Furthermore, those who attend Police Faculty usually undertake further specialization in various areas of policing such as criminal investigations, fraud and financial crime investigation, countering organized crime, forensic science, traffic police, public order, transport police etc. as specified in the curriculum. Therefore, due to the students' specialized police training within the academy, a language teacher has to adjust the foreign language syllabus so as to both facilitate the acquisition of specialized law enforcement vocabulary and to practice and develop the students' language skills.

In teaching English for Law Enforcement, as a variety of ESP that involves the introduction of police-related content and language, technology can be used both as a tool and a resource. The tools available consist in any technological devise, method or application both teachers and learners might use such as computers, notebooks, video recorders or projectors, tablets, mobile phones, emails, messenger, video and audio platforms etc., whereas the internet may be viewed as a resource.

In an ESP class, technology in the form of internet facilitates the replication of real-life professional situations. As such, audio or visual support resources extracted from *youtube*, for instance, can help a teacher of Law Enforcement English to introduce their students to the topics such as the use of firearms, shooting stances and shooting sessions, by teaching them with the help of the video material how to handle, load, unload, use a handgun, name its components or how to behave when taking part in a shooting session in a shooting range (for instance, a related video is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oZfSgcKuzY8 or a visual material at https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/army/fm/3-23-35/chap2.htm). Such a resource has proven very useful in my class, familiarizing my students with the English version of the vocabulary related to the components and use of firearms, while enabling them to practise these field-specific terms.

In addition, the internet as a source for authentic materials can provide the LEE teacher a wide array of official documents specific to police as an organization (usually available on web pages of police forces across the world), which can effectively be use in class to guide students in their learning how to fill in or draft such documents, such as a police media release, a suspect's description form, a crime incident report or a complaint, as well as a witness or a victim statement, and even arrest or search and seizure warrants. Examples of such police documents that we have used in class with a wide degree of effectiveness can be found at various web sites such as:

https://police.uiowa.edu/sites/police.uiowa.edu/files/Witness-Statement.pdf,

http://formupack.com/pdf forms/Federal/Courts/FederalCourts_AO442_20111026.pdf, http://formupack.com/pdf-forms/Federal/Courts/FederalCourts_AO093_20100702.pdf https://www.pdffiller.com/47451600-Suspect-Description-Worksheetpdf-Suspect-Description-Form-703-691-2131-First-Notify-POLICE-Various-Fillable-Forms, https://www.template.net/business/report-templates/sample-police-report-template/.

Moreover, the internet can give appropriate input for practising role-plays of professional situations or for problem-solving in a LEE course. For instance, the teacher may research and find suitable lead-in input for stimulating the students to discuss or to act how they would enforce police powers. The input may consist in suggesting a policing-related context, the situation and the students are required to demonstrate what police powers will be used, when and how (for instance, situations such as the following can be documented using the internet and proposed to the students as problem-solving tasks: police officer vs. hostage taker or vs. abuse husband or suspicious-looking man, or vs. law-breaking driver). Similarly, students may be asked to explain how they would deal with offenders in other particular situations or how they would solve a case.

The technology in all its forms, as tools and resources, can facilitate both teachers and learners in a LEE class the access to dictionaries to look up word or various online resources such as audio support for listening tasks or police-related games that allow them to solve cases, while practising and developing detective skills (for instance, www.detective-games.online/crime_investigation_games.html, http://forensics.rice.edu/, etc.). In addition, the internet can provide extensive information for various professional tasks police officers have to carry out and, therefore, the LEE students (enrolled in forensic studies) might research on the use of different equipment, for example, the crime scene kits used when investigating a crime scene or on evidence processing (video resource at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1FxKwmq5HJw or informative input at https://www.nij.gov/topics/law-enforcement/investigations/crime-scene/guides/Pages/equipment-csi.aspx).

For the LEE teacher, technology serves as source for authentic materials, which can be used as such (for example, police official documents) or can be developed into task-based activities or field-specific language courses. The experience as teacher and materials developer has taught us that the internet can be an invaluable source of relevant material related to various professions, including the police officer job. As such, we have been able to develop a language course for law enforcement students, a course which was designed as a resource that allows students to practice and develop all language skills due to its task-based approach, as well as expose students to contexts in the target language.

The materials included in the course had been carefully collected from a wide array of authentic sources, both written and visual, in order to fit the topic

areas relevant for the students' lexical needs as they had been identified by the needs analysis. Then the materials went through a thorough process of selection at the end of which only those texts that adequately met the course objectives were kept. Therefore, the course for law enforcement students and professionals is the result of an extensive process of documentation and selection of police-specific resources followed by the development of English language learning activities. The course includes broad topics arranged in an easy-to-follow sequence, from general to more specific topics organized in study units such as: police organisation and ranks, police career sand training, police uniform and equipment, law enforcement weapons and vehicles, police ethics, police powers and procedures, police duties and responsibilities, types of crimes and criminals, punishments and the prison system, police investigations, international police cooperation, police force and the media etc.

Among the tasks we have developed starting from authentic materials collected form the internet the course includes both pedagogical and real-life tasks. Examples of pedagogical tasks are: filling in the gaps, matching words definitions. pairing words into collocations, comprehension questions/multiple choice questions/true-false questions/short questions, expressing opinions, contrasting answer and comparing things/situations, translating words/sentences/short texts, brainstorming, word formation tasks, solving crossword-puzzles, finding synonyms/antonyms etc. The category of real-world tasks encompasses activities such as: interpreting role plays (police officer recruitment interview, enforcing police powers and procedures, executing an arrest warrant, carrying out an intimate/vehicle search or a crime scene examination etc.), writing a police job application form/ a police report (incident/crime scene report)/ an action plan/ a media release, designing a police recruitment campaign poster, problem-solving, filling in a suspect's description form etc.

Benefits and drawbacks of using technology in ESP

The technology available today allows teachers in their classes to provide authentic contexts in which English is used, and thus expose students to different varieties and accents of English, as well as give the students the opportunity for listening practice. Moreover, technology, in the form of video or internet resources, gives the ESP learners access to specific language they need to communicate appropriately in their profession. In fact, apart from the availability of contexts that duplicate real-life situations and the varieties of English the internet can make easily accessible nowadays for both ESP teachers and learners, there are also incommensurable resources of authentic, real-time

information related to various professional fields that teachers may resort to when designing ESP teaching materials.

In ESP, the teacher's goal is to teach the language specific to a particular professional field, that is the purpose of ESP is to improve the learners' language proficiency through the use of the language in professional contexts. In the same line of thought, Butler-Pascoe (2009:1) argues that there is a "hybrid nature of ESP", which involves both teaching the language and "field-specific content". For this reason, the same author (2009:2-3) claims that technology offers numerous advantages for ESP, among which the most significant are: stimulus for interaction and communicative activities specific to a particular field; exposure to and understanding of socio-cultural aspects of a certain field or profession; authentic field-specific input; use of task-based activities mimicking tasks in field-specific contexts or situations; support of cognitive abilities and critical thinking skills; facilitation of practice with a view to developing the four language skills; student-centeredness; a myriad of methods for practising and developing various learning styles; stimulus for students' motivation and autonomy, as well as the exposure to the target language.

Besides the benefits of using technology in ESP classes, there are also some challenges that teachers or educational institutions may face such as (White, 2007): unavailability of technology, various degrees of competence in using technology of both teachers and students, time-consuming development of technology-integrated courses, difficulties in handling the new methods of managing technology-integrated classes or of dealing with technical issues, the need to constantly adapt oneself to one's ever-changing roles as teachers or students in online courses, for instance.

Taking into account these drawbacks that still exist and somewhat hinder the wide-implementation of technology in language classes in general, and in ESP courses in particular, the decision-makers have to think of and find the best possible solution to overcome such challenges. As a matter of fact, at this point, at least in Romania, technology is not broadly introduced in language classes as a result of an educational organization's teaching and learning strategy, but rather technology is used randomly by language teachers depending either on their propensity for technological novelty or on their actual need to used it because they cannot do otherwise. As mentioned before, in teaching ESP, one cannot do without the use of technological devises or the internet, as the ESP teacher needs to research in the field-specific area, to find and select authentic materials and even develop teaching resources.

Conclusions

As society evolved, technology has become an integral part of both our personal and professional lives. As such, it has become a desideratum of contemporary life that people should be competent in using technology as nowadays some professional aspects, especially, cannot be dealt with but by using technology. That is why the educational sector has to keep up with this societal exigency. In an ESP context, for instance, teachers as well as students have to acknowledge that technology is a valuable add-on to their teaching and learning, which will act as a beneficial tool for them in attaining their overall goal, which is to teach or learn the target language.

It is not actually a matter of choice, I might say, as, whether they like it or not, both teachers and learners have to overcome those hindrances that might prevent them from becoming technology literate, as it can bring about numerous benefits such as: offering tools for students to practice real-life, authentic situations and thus acquiring professional skills, the opportunity to communicate internationally with their peers and thus crossing cultural borders by using various media and also to become autonomous learners; for teachers, providing the possibility to keep up with the latest information and developments in the target field, and also to experiment various technologies in their courses.

However, the ultimate goal the ESP teachers have to keep in mind is that the use of technology in their classes has to enhance the effectiveness of their students' target language learning.

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