# The Use of Information Technologies and Audiovisual Media in ELT: The Department of English in El Jadida, Morocco, as a Case Study[1]

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**ABSTRACT**: Within the framework of the New Reform evaluation, this article addresses the issue of the use of Information Technologies and Audiovisual Media in English Language Teaching at the university level, with a particular emphasis on a set of language courses in the 'DEUG' cycle in the Department of English in El Jadida. A semi-structured interview was used to elicit the students' and teachers' attitudes towards these technologies, the ways they use these technologies to serve their teaching goals and learning needs, respectively, and the problems they face in their attempts to implement such technologies. The aim is to find out whether the attitudes teachers and students have and the discourse produced about the perceived effects of these technologies match with the actual practices. The results obtained indicate that both teachers and students have positive attitudes towards these technologies, but they neither frequently nor regularly use them due to factors related to students' lack of motivation, the unavailability of these technologies and the related infrastructure. We conclude that, despite the little use of such technologies, the positive attitudes that both parties have are a factor that could lead to their frequent, regular and fruitful use.
**Key words:** New ITs, English Language Teaching, Evaluation of the New Education Reform.

**El uso de las TICs y medios audiovisuales en la enseñanza del inglés**

**RESUMEN:** En el marco de la evaluación de la Nueva Reforma, este artículo versa sobre el uso de las nuevas tecnologías de la información y la comunicación en la Enseñanza de la Lengua Inglesa a nivel universitario, con un énfasis particular en un conjunto de cursos de idioma en el ciclo del 'DEUG' del departamento de inglés en EL Jadida. El objetivo es descubrir si las actitudes que los profesores y los estudiantes tienen y el discurso producido sobre los efectos percibidos de estas tecnologías son adecuadas con las prácticas reales. Una entrevista semi-estructurada fue utilizada para revelar las actitudes de los estudiantes y de los profesores hacia tales tecnologías, las maneras en las que utilizan estas tecnologías para responder a sus metas de enseñanza

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y necesidades de aprendizaje, respectivamente, y los problemas a los que hacen frente en sus intentos de llevar a cabo dichas tecnologías. Los resultados indican que los profesores y los estudiantes tienen actitudes positivas hacia estas tecnologías, pero ni las utilizan regularmente ni con frecuencia debido a los factores relacionados con una falta de de motivación de los estudiantes, la indisponibilidad de dichas tecnologías y las infraestructuras relacionadas. Concluimos que, pese al uso limitado de dichas tecnologías, las actitudes positivas que profesores y alumnos tienen es un factor que podría conducir a su uso frecuente, regular y fructífero.

**Palabras clave:** Las TICs, la enseñanza de la lengua inglesa, la evaluación de la nueva reforma.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The integration of the Information Technologies and Audiovisual Media in education is a prominent issue in the recent debates on the New Educational Reform in Morocco[2]. Many researchers emphasise the drastic changes that the use of these technologies can bring about in the teaching and learning of a foreign language such as English. This article aims to contribute to this debate by addressing the question of the implementation of Information Technology (henceforth IT) and Audiovisual Media (henceforth AM)[3] in the teaching and learning of a select number of English language courses in the 'DEUG' cycle in the Department of English in El Jadida, Morocco. Rather than celebrate the use of IT and AM a magical solution to the problems that both teachers and learners face, this article aims to provide a diagnosis of the ways in which these technologies are actually being used inside and outside the classroom and the extent to which current practices on the part of teachers and learners match with their attitudes and the theoretical claims made in the literature about these technologies. It seeks to investigate the hypothesis that discourse does not match with reality and that positive attitudes towards the use of IT and AM do not necessarily guarantee frequent and effective use of these technologies.

This article is based on the assumption that IT and AM are technologies that have the potential to make a positive contribution in education settings. In fact, research has shown that the appropriate implementation of the new technologies 'allows for a more thorough integration of language, content, and culture than ever before and provides students with unprecedented opportunities for autonomous learning' (Warschauer and Meskill, 2000; see also Kelm, 1992; Kern, 1995; Meskill, Swan and Frazer, 1997; Warschauer, 1996, 1999). The article is also based on the assumption that IT and AM are becoming increasingly widespread but not necessarily available for every teacher and/or learner.

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[2] Since 2000, the Moroccan government has adopted a policy that aims to reform the public education system. However, the extent to which this policy has succeeded in improving the quality of education, the teachers' working conditions and the infrastructure is still being evaluated, and the present article is a contribution to this debate.

[3] The term 'Information Technology' is used in this article to refer to the implementation of various computer and Internet technologies in language teaching and/or learning. As for 'Audiovisual Media,' it is used to refer to the use of tape recorders, videos and VCD or DVD players inside or outside the classroom for the purpose of language teaching and/or learning.

An interview was used to elicit the attitudes of teachers from the Department of English in El Jadida toward the use of IT and AM and explore the ways in which they actually integrate these technologies in their teaching practices and the problems that hinder the regular and adequate use of such technologies. Students in this department were also interviewed to gain insights into the ways in which IT and AM are currently being used and highlight their needs and expectations in this respect.

This article is made up of three main sections. The first section provides a background for the topic at hand and a review of the state of the art on the use of the IT and AM in the teaching and learning of English. The second section offers a discussion of the design of the research; whereas the third section provides a discussion of the teachers' and students' attitudes towards the use of IT and AM as well as their uses of these technologies and the problems they face in their implementation. The article concludes with a set of recommendations for the people in charge at the local and national levels.

## 2. PERCEIVED EFFECTS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND AUDIOVIDUAL MEDIA

In increasingly information-based societies, where economic activity and the daily transactions are based more on the exchange and interpretation of information, the ability to read, write, and communicate effectively over computer networks is essential for success in almost every walk of life (Warschauer and Healey, 1998). In these societies, a major goal of language instruction is to provide students with the computer literacy skills needed to function in such a networked context and to have access and respond to the huge mass of instructional material available online in the form of text, graphics, sound, animation and video.

IT, in turn, can be used as a means to enhance teaching and facilitate learning. IT makes the learning environment more authentic and allows the integration of the different language skills and different aspects of the language within a single activity (Warschauer, 1996). Thanks to its interactive nature, IT enables teachers to present language items in a game-like and problem-solving manner and allows learners to adapt the material to their learning needs, pace and proficiency level and to get immediate feedback; hence the increase in their motivation to learn.

Moreover, IT fosters independent learning and enables students to have more control over their learning. Because a computer can make instructional material available for students at anytime and can present instructional material on an individualised basis, students can proceed at their own pace and choose the material that best enhances their learning, taking advantage of the possibilities offered by the simulation techniques and hypermedia (Warschauer, 1996; Warschauer and Healey, 1998). In fact, as Lee (2000) argues, the use of IT in second language instruction not only enhances student achievement, increases authentic materials for study and encourages greater interaction between teachers and students and students and peers but it also emphasises the individual needs, allows independence from a single source of information and enlarges global understanding. Indeed, '[c]omputers can be effectively applied to language acquisition because of their versatility, provision of the immediate feedback, individually paced learning, appeal to intrinsic learner motivation, ease of materials modification, and ease of scoring and analysis of answers'(Kenning and Kenning, 1985: 24).  Thus, the use of IT gives

support to the current theories of education which are based on the philosophy of learner-centeredness and which emphasise what learners have learnt rather than what teachers have taught and how they have taught it.

The spread use of IT has led to a change in the teachers' and learners' roles: teachers are no longer the source of information but rather facilitators of learning. One major task of the teacher nowadays is to know how to use various multimedia resources and also help learners put them to good use. Likewise, students' training no longer consists in the memorisation of information but rather in knowledge of how to find, critically interpret and use web-based information and in mastery of the effective search strategies and adequate tools of learning (Warschauer and Healey, 1998).

Thanks to the Internet, teachers can also design and post assignments wherever they are and at any time of the day, and students can perform them wherever they are and whenever they wish and still obtain prompt feedback. IT can thus help teachers and students keep in touch, exchange messages, post and respond to queries (Warschauer and Healey, 1998). It can also facilitate communication between learners within the same class and with other learners all over the globe around the clock; thus, they can have access to the authentic input of the native speakers through the exchange of written and/or oral messages (Warschauer, 1996; Warschauer and Healey, 1998; Meloni, 1998). Learners can equally have access to huge amounts of authentic target-language data or publish their own multimedia information for other Internet users all over the world (Warschauer and Healey, 1998).

Indeed, it has become an established fact in research on the use of CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) in ELT that the use of e-mail in ELT, for instance, encourages learner autonomy (Warschauer and Healey, 1998). A study by Wang (1993) cited in Warschauer and Healey (1998), for example, has shown that a group of ESL students who have used the e-mail to exchange their dialogue journals communicated more regularly, asked and responded to more questions and used various language functions in comparison with a group of students who used just paper and pencil. Of course, the use of e-mail to serve this end depends largely on the easy access to IT as well as the teachers' willingness to devote time and effort to reading and responding to students' e-mail messages (Warschauer and Healey, 1998). It also depends on students' attitudes, purchase ability, sense of responsibility and motivation to learn. This is because 'those who expect to get magnificent results simply from the purchase of expensive and elaborate systems will likely be disappointed. But those who put computer technology to use in the service of good pedagogy will undoubtedly find ways to enrich their educational program and the learning opportunities of their students (Warschauer, 1996).

As for AM, they are crucial for learners to get exposed to authentic language produced by native speakers in real-life situations. This consists in understanding the speaker's accent or pronunciation, stress and intonation patterns, grammar, vocabulary and meaning (Saricoban, 1999). AM also help students gain access to some non-verbal communication and learn paralinguistic features of the target language. Indeed, AM 'bring[] language to life in the classroom': students are shown how language is used in real-life settings, and, thus, they learn aspects of the target culture such as 'facial expressions, gestures…the body language of a situation, how far apart people stand, [and] how the characters react to emotional situations' (Flynn, 1998). The use of AM also adds variety to the classroom: the course becomes interesting and the learning styles of auditory and/or visual learners are taken into account (Flynn, 1998).

Listening, for instance, is a very important communicative activity in our everyday life. However, although 'we listen twice as much as we speak, four times as much as we read, and five times as much as we write,' research has shown that little emphasis in school curricula is put on developing this skill, and, oftentimes, it is given only peripheral attention (Burely-Allen 1995 cited in Miller, 2003; see also Hyslop and Tone, 1988; Miller, 2003; Nunan, 1997). Therefore, because proficiency in listening comprehension makes a crucial contribution to the learner's overall development of competency in the language, importance has to be restored to this skill in order to ultimately enable learners to be both independent and confident when listening to the target language in a real world context. This a goal requires the use of authentic material, which consists in any spoken text that has been spontaneously taken from a real-life interaction and which is delivered through the radio, television, video, a VCD or DVD player (Miller, 2003; Morley, 1999).

Needless to say, the implementation of both IT and AM is not necessarily conducive to good language teaching and learning. These technologies can help teachers achieve the desired results only if they are integrated into the curriculum and if they fit with the goals and objectives of the course. In addition, the necessary equipment has to be made available for teachers, who, in turn, should be motivated to elaborate or select the appropriate materials for their students. Equally important is the class size which must be small to allow for an adequate use of these technologies. Furthermore, both teachers and students have to be willing and enthusiastic to make of the integration of IT and AM a fruitful and enjoyable experience.

## 3. METHOD

To collect data relevant to attitudes towards the New Information and Communication Technologies and the ways they are being used to enhance teaching and facilitate learning, a semi-structured interview was used with a randomly selected sample of six teachers and twenty-two students from the Department of English in El Jadida[4]. The teacher cohort consists of teachers who have taught at least one course among the following[5]:

**Table 1:** *A list of the courses surveyed in terms of whether or not IT and AM are used in their teaching and learning[6]*

| Semester I | Spoken English and Listening Comprehension<br>Grammar |
|---|---|
| Semester II | Advanced Listening and Speaking<br>Grammar |
| Semester III | Communication Skills<br>Cross-Cultural Communication<br>Public Speaking<br>Grammar |

[4] See appendix 1 and appendix 2 for copies of the teacher and students interview schedules.
[5] Reference is made here to the programme taught in the Department of English, Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Chouaib Doukkali University, El Jadida.
[6] The decision on surveying theses courses in particular was made in line with the aim of this article which is to investigate the use of IT and AM in languages courses. Such a decision is therefore based on the belief that these are the major courses in the DEUG cycle that aim to develop students' language skills and prepare them for subsequent academic or content courses.

As for the student cohort, eight interviewees (three males and five females) were Semester II students (that is, they have taken two of the courses under survey: «Spoken English and Listening Comprehension» and «Grammar»). Besides, fourteen interviewees (five males and nine females) were Semester IV students (that is, they have taken all the courses being surveyed). Both teachers and students were interviewed in March 2007 on their attitudes, practices and suggestions with regard to the use of IT and AM in the teaching and learning of the courses cited in Table 1 above, respectively.

The data collected through the teacher and student interviews were qualitatively analysed although frequencies are at times reported. The concern is not with the ways the data vary with the variables of the teachers' teaching experience or the students' sex or the semester they are enrolled in. Rather, the aim is to draw a general picture and provide a diagnosis of the current state of affairs in order to subsequently take up some other related issues for further research[7].

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1. Teachers

#### 4.1.1. Attitudes, practices and constraints

All the teachers interviewed have expressed positive attitudes towards the use of IT and AM based on their conviction that 'the use of such technologies can make the teaching and learning of English more effective and more enjoyable,' pointed out one interviewee. IT is 'an interesting tool [which] increases students' motivation and concentration,' stated another. However, the utility of IT depends 'on the nature of the subject taught,' warned a third teacher.

Most of the teachers interviewed (5/6) believe that the use of IT and AM can help them improve their teaching practices in several ways. IT can help them to show their students how to write an e-mail, a fax or a business letter in a course such as «Communication Skills». This also applies to the teaching of grammar, in which 'it is [more] convenient to make assignments and exercises available online,' and in which the interactive exercises can be more efficient than 'the dry lecturing method,' noted one teacher. IT can also help teachers improve their 'delivery methods' and the assessment system, for it can be used to concept-check the language items and aspects of the culture that they have taught. One teacher, however, warned that IT helps improve teaching 'but do[es] not replace' the teacher.

However, although 2/3 of the teachers are not sure whether the use of IT can help students learn English more effectively and call for more research in this area, 2/3 of them believe that IT can improve their teaching practice. They believe that, if appropriately implemented, IT can help students practise the language items, structures and functions as well as aspects of the target culture they are exposed to in the classroom. Indeed, and in line with the results of previous research, teachers believe that IT can also help students learn a great deal on their own rather than rely on the teacher all the time; thus the classroom 'should no longer be the only place where learning takes place,' stated one teacher.

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[7] One area which can be explored in further research and which is related to the present piece of research relates to the uses that students of English in El Jadida make of the Internet outside the context of the classroom and how these uses vary across departments and levels.

The teacher interviewees also believe that the use of AM is crucial for the improvement of students' listening and speaking skills and the development of their cross-cultural awareness. This a goal can be achieved only when students listen to the native speakers' talk and have access to the paralinguistic features and aspects of the target culture as they watch videos. In fact, because a picture is worth a thousand words, AM can make teaching both easy and enjoyable. In the «Spoken English and Listening Comprehension» course, students can 'listen to dialogues, engage in discussions with their classmates and teachers or join a forum where they can speak and write in English,' reported one teacher. As students watch some aspects of the English culture live, they are likely to assimilate the message in a much easier fashion, and, thus, their listening and speaking skills improve. In «Public Speaking» or «Communications Skills», students 'can watch videos of public speaking competitions and take part in live discussions about public-speaking issues,' stated one teacher. Also, instead of lecturing, a teacher could play a video where some deal is going on and let them decide for themselves which method to use.  In «Writing», students 'can interact directly in real situation (by e-mails) and for sure they will improve their writing in English,' stated one teacher, as well as 'their professional correspondence skills,' noted another.

When asked about whether they actually use IT and AM in the classroom, all the teachers interviewed stated, however, that they either had never used them (1/3) or had done so on very few occasions (1/3). Most of them are therefore dissatisfied with the frequency of using IT and AM, and they believe that these technologies should be frequently used in the classroom to facilitate both teaching and learning and ultimately help meet their students' learning needs. Teachers attribute this sense of dissatisfaction to the lack of IT and AM equipment and its unreliability when it is available as well as to the lack of administrative support (1/3). Some teachers also blame students for their lack of cooperation and motivation to learn (1/3). As a result, teachers tend to lose motivation because they feel that most of the students for whom they work hard are careless about learning.

More specifically, in «Spoken English and Listening Comprehension» and «Advanced Listening and Speaking»[8], most teachers affirmed that they rely heavily on classroom talk. As a result, students listen to native speakers only twice or three times a semester, according to one teacher. Still, the same teacher stated that if asked to teach these two courses again, he 'will definitely use the tape recorder, VCD or DVD player to enhance students' listening and pronunciation skills.' No teacher ever used a video in the classroom, however. Teachers attribute the fact that IT and AM are not used on a regular basis in teaching this course to the fact that the equipment such as tape recorders, television sets, videos and VCD or DVD players is not readily available. To be able to use a tape recorder or a data show, one has to go through a whole tiring process: s/he has to contact the vice dean or the person in charge of the equipment and make arrangements beforehand[9]. What is more, the listening material or software that can be used in class is not available, and teachers have to purchase it or use their own material.

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[8] The aim of these courses is to give students the opportunity to develop their speaking, pronunciation and listening comprehension skills.

[9] During the completion of this article, the author learned that a decision was made by the Faculty Council to the effect that a room with data show is to be allocated to the Department of English.

There are conflicting views about the use of IT and AM in the teaching of «Grammar I» and «Grammar II»[10]. One teacher has designed a website with online exercises, but he is not satisfied with the ways IT is currently being used in the classroom due mainly to some technical problems such as the 'unavailability of web space' and 'lack of [coordination and] colleague cooperation.' However, another teacher believes that although it is important to use IT, he has doubts about its utility in the «Grammar» course. In his view, 'the teaching of grammar does not require IT' because 'grammar is more structure based!' This view is not well-grounded, however, because IT can be used to teach and/or learn almost every aspect of the language. For instance, IT can be used to teach grammar through the elaboration of interactive exercises which students can do either inside or outside class.

With regard to «Communication Skills»[11], a teacher who used IT and AM in this course was discouraged by the outcomes. The lack of curtains, the bad positioning of the overhead projector and the echoes made it difficult for any learning to take place to the extent that the teacher decided to give up using these technologies once and for all. Another teacher used IT to keep in touch with students, asking them to send him/her assignments via e-mail, and a third teacher admitted he had never used these technologies in the classroom but believed that he 'should have done so.' The same teacher used material from the web in the form of hand-outs and encouraged students to use the Internet to learn more about how to write an e-mail, curriculum vitae, a cover letter and a report.

As for «Cross-Cultural Communication»[12], many a teacher who taught this course stated that s/he had never used IT and AM in the classroom, but one teacher reported that students used the Internet while preparing their presentations on cross-cultural communication issues. Still, the same teacher was not satisfied with the way IT was used because it seems that students failed to make good use of it. They merely plagiarised articles and papers rather than critically select what was relevant to the topic they were researching.

Finally, one teacher used videos in «Public Speaking»[13] to expose students to a number of speeches, asking them to watch the speech and evaluate it through the use of a checklist. The aim was to rate the speakers and learn from the mistakes that they make in order to ultimately encourage students to prepare, rehearse and deliver their own speech. Still, the same teacher was 'not satisfied at all' with the way IT and AM were used in the classroom due mainly to students' lack of easy access to IT and AM both inside and outside the classroom.

### 4.1.2. Suggestions

In short, all the teachers interviewed have positive attitudes towards the use of IT and AM in the teaching and/or learning of English. This is a positive factor that can lead to making IT and AM an integral part of their teaching practices. The case is particularly so since previous research has shown that the underlying belief systems of the individual teachers shaped the

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[10] These courses aim to enable student to master the rules that govern the use of the English language.

[11] This a course aims to develop students' ability to use English accurately and appropriately in number of social and business contexts.

[12] This course is concerned with developing students' awareness of cross-cultural issues such as politeness and tolerance.

[13] The goal of this course is to develop students' ability to speak in public and convince an audience.

nature of their teaching and learning activities, and teachers used IT to put into effect their own beliefs about language teaching and learning (Warschauer, 2005).

However, teachers' positive attitudes do not match with their classroom teaching practices. Indeed, IT and AM are only occasionally used in the teaching of the English language at the DEUG level due mainly to the unavailability of equipment and listening material and/or software and the students' lack of motivation. Still, it is our conviction that it is our duty as conscientious teachers to make personal efforts and use these technologies to help students improve their proficiency in the language while at the same time making complaints, levelling criticism and militating for changes and improvements.

## 4.2. Students

### 4.2.1. Attitudes, practices and constraints

Only a few students (18% of the twenty-two interviewed) affirm that a tape recorder or a data show or overhead projector was used in the classroom twice or three times in a whole semester. They said that one teacher used some listening material in the classroom, and another used a data show to encourage students to speak and express themselves. One student reported that a CD ROM was once used to show students a public-speaking competition, and a classmate of theirs once used the overhead projector when giving a presentation. Still, students pointed out that their teachers encouraged them to use the Internet on their own to learn more about what had been taught in the classroom in courses such as «Public Speaking» and «Communication Skills» or to prepare their presentations. However, 9.5% of the students admitted that when asked to give a presentation, most of their peers tended to plagiarise and uncritically use material from websites.

Very few students were happy that IT and AM were used by their respective teachers although they were only occasionally used. However, almost none of the students interviewed, however, expressed satisfaction with the limited number of times and the limited ways in which IT and AM were being used in the classroom. A student wondered 'why the laboratory is always closed!' and suggested that it should be used at least with first-year students to help them improve their listening skills. The same student thinks that the blackboard, chalk and hand-outs are no longer sufficient and they are outdated for such language tasks. Two students wondered why IT and AM were used in high school and in some private language centres but not at university, where they expect them to be used, and they held both the people in charge and teachers responsible for that.

Almost all students interviewed (95%) believe that IT and AM should be frequently used. They can both help teachers save time and energy in the classroom for other activities and also motivate students to learn English and develop their listening, speaking and pronunciation skills through exposure to the native speakers' talk. The use of these technologies creates an enjoyable and anxiety-free atmosphere in the classroom and helps students keep up to date with, and draw benefit from, the work and experience of learners from all over the globe. Few other students believe that it is good to use those technologies in the classroom although there is no pressing need for them since they are available outside class.

Because IT and AM are not frequently used in the teaching of the courses under survey and because almost all of the students interviewed (95%) believe in the utility of these technologies,

almost all of them have stressed the fact that it is their duty to make personal efforts to use modern technologies outside the confines of the classroom. These students affirm that they actually made personal efforts, although with varying degrees, to use IT and AM to meet their learning needs. Some students used the Internet to get information for the presentation they would give in class. Others chatted with English-speaking people in order to improve their writing skills and develop their awareness of cross-cultural issues. Still others used some websites to practise listening to dialogues, but they only rarely did so due to either lack of interest or inability to locate the relevant websites. Few other students used CD ROM-based dictionaries to check the meaning and pronunciation of words. One student also used an 'msn' service to record his voice and rehearse a presentation for his «Public-Speaking» course. Few other students stated they do not afford to go to a cyberspace or buy a Personal Computer: 'it is a question of money,' stated one student. It is noteworthy, though, that some students feel overwhelmed by the huge amounts of information and number of websites and feel that material on the web is different from what they study in class, which raises the issue of students' poor information literacy skills.

Interestingly enough, quite many students state that in their leisure time or when they are at home (that is, not on-campus) they watch different programmes, especially movies, on English-speaking TV channels such as Al Jazeera International, BBC news, CNBC, Euronews, Huda TV, MBC 2, MBC 4 and One TV in their respective order of frequency. Their aim is to get entertained and also enrich their vocabulary and improve their pronunciation. Few other students tried to develop the habit of listening to songs, paying particular attention to the lyrics.

### 4.2.2. Suggestions

Students' positions range from total indifference to the use of IT and AM to ardent advocates of the view that these technologies should be frequently used in the classroom to facilitate their learning process and help them improve their proficiency in speaking, listening and pronunciation. These students suggest that teachers should be a little more active and not rely too heavily on the blackboard and classroom talk in the form of discussions and presentations, which leaves room for students to plagiarise information rather than develop their language skills and critical thinking. They also blame the administration and suggest that the people in charge should reduce class size and provide teachers with the tools they need in order to allow them to use IT and AM technologies on a more regular basis. Further, the students interviewed suggest that the people in charge should allocate the necessary budget to the purchasing of the necessary technology so that students' learning needs using that technology can be catered for. Almost all the students interviewed call for a cyberspace at the Faculty where they can have access to computer technology and the Internet and thus improve their language skills. Students admit that there is a computer room where «Computer Skills» is taught as a course, but they do not seem to learn much therein, since there are sometimes four students per working station. A student cynically noted that there are not enough computers even in the administration, which results in the errors in students' grades. A few students equally insist that they should be given the necessary training to be able to use modern technology appropriately. This raises the issue of the relevance of the «Computer Skills» course and questions the ways it is taught. One student refrained from making any statement in this respect, however, as she believes that her 'voice will not be heard!' Few students, on the other hand, suggested that IT and AM need

not necessarily be used in the classroom since students can use them on their own outside class and independently of the teacher.

## 4.3. Discussion

By and large, and in agreement with the literature reviewed in the first section of this article, the teachers and students interviewed have positive attitudes towards the use of IT and AM in the teaching and learning of English in the courses under survey, respectively. Both parties believe that the use of these technologies is likely to bring about positive effects in the teaching practices and learning processes, respectively. They create an anxiety-free atmosphere, shift the focus from the instructor to the learner and help students develop, *inter alia*, their speaking, listening, pronunciations and writing skills.

However, the results obtained through the teacher and student interviews confirm the hypothesis postulated earlier to the effect that 'discourse does not match with reality and that positive attitudes towards the use of IT and AM do not necessarily guarantee a frequent and adequate use of these technologies.' In fact, none of the teachers interviewed uses IT and AM in the teaching of any of the courses under study on a regular basis. What is more, none of the students interviewed systematically and regularly makes personal efforts to use IT or AM outside the classroom to improve his/her mastery of English or enrich their knowledge in one of the courses under study. Despite this mismatch between the perceived effects associated with IT and AM and given the fact that teachers and students have positive attitudes towards these technologies, there is hope that the situation will improve and that positive attitudes will positively change teaching practices and lead to the frequent and adequate implementation of IT and AM.

For teachers, students' lack of motivation and their difficulty in gaining access to the necessary equipment and listening materials and/or software hinder their regular use of IT and AM. It is true that the teachers' duty is to make personal efforts and use all the resources available to help their students develop their language proficiency through the use of IT and AM. Still, the mission of providing students with a high-quality education and training can only be accomplished if our students are cooperative enough and show enough interest in learning. This mission also requires the fact that the people in charge at the local and national levels have to allocate the necessary budget to the purchasing of the necessary equipment, listening material and software. The people in charge at the local level have the additional task of devising ways of making the equipment readily available to the teachers – that is, somewhere in the department office. Such people also have to set up computer rooms for students so that the latter can gain access to the computer and Internet technologies. The adequate and purposeful use of these technologies remains a serious problem and requires further investigation and practical solutions, though.

In this respect, it is noteworthy that the tenth pivot of the National Charter of Education and Training, «Using the New Information and Communications Technologies» emphasises the importance of using IT as a means of improving the quality of education and helping slow learners while not relegating the role of the teacher and the human relationship between

teachers and learners to a secondary position. The Charter stresses the fact that equity must be ensured to all Moroccan learners in terms of access to multimedia and sources of information through equipping universities with the means of modern technology starting from the academic year 2000-2001. However, this goal has not yet been achieved. Up till now, computer rooms are not yet available to the students in most universities.

As for students, although few of them are indifferent to the use of IT and AM in the classroom, most of them are strongly supportive of the view that they should be regularly used to help them improve their proficiency in speaking, listening and pronunciation. Most students make personal efforts to use IT and AM to satisfy their learning needs, but they do not do so on a regular basis, nor do they always put these technologies to good use since they spend so much time chatting and playing games rather than doing research and learning English. Students hold the administration responsible for the irregular use of IT and AM and suggest that in the same way that teachers should try to incorporate these technologies in their teaching practices, the people in charge should take the necessary measures to reduce class size and provide teachers with the necessary tools.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This paper has addressed the issue of the use of IT and AM in the teaching of a select number of language courses in the Department of English in El Jadida. The results of the teacher and student semi-structured interviews have confirmed our initial hypothesis that the discourse produced about these technologies and the attitudes expressed about their perceived effects both in the literature and in the interview data do not match with the ways they are being used in current teaching and learning practices. Still, teachers and students' positive attitudes towards the use of IT and AM are already an enabling factor that could lead to a positive change with respect to the implementation of these technologies.

Several obstacles hinder the frequent, regular and fruitful use of IT and AM for the purpose of English teaching and learning, and these are mainly related to the difficulty that teachers face in having these technologies available for use in the classroom and to most students' lack of motivation and the difficulty that some of them face in gaining easy access to these technologies outside class. They are also related to the lack of the necessary training on the part of both some teachers and students so that these technologies can be adequately used. The provision of the necessary IT and AM infrastructure as well as a computer room and a cyberspace for students are therefore among students' top-priority needs and a prerequisite for an effective teaching and learning to take place.

Finally, based on the initial assumption that IT and AM have the potential to bring about positive effects in the teaching and learning processes and given the fact that these technologies are not regularly used, we can conclude that students in the Department of English in El Jadida are deprived of the various possibilities that the New Information and Communication Technologies could offer their users. Still, given the positive attitudes that both teachers and students have about IT and AM, we can be optimistic that these technologies are likely to become part and parcel of the teaching and learning process in the Department of English in El Jadida.

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