



THE ACCEPTABILITY OF TECHNOLOGY FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

The provided article explores the effectiveness of modern technology in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). It argues that technology, encompassing not just devices but also innovative methods and systems, is crucial for improving the language learning process. The use of tools like computers, multimedia, mobile applications, and the internet provides students and teachers with vast resources, making learning more comprehensive and engaging. Technology helps learners acquire and improve language skills by consolidating various components of the learning system, thereby helping to achieve desired educational outcomes. The internet, in particular, offers immediate, unlimited access to software and platforms that can accelerate English teaching and learning. The article also notes that the teacher's role is essential in effectively integrating these tools and that many applications are specifically designed to boost both teaching effectiveness and student understanding. The article is the significant difference in learning environments and motivation between EFL students in Uzbekistan and ESL students in the United States. Uzbek students have minimal exposure to English outside the classroom and often learn through outdated methods, which can lead to low internal motivation. For them, technology like TV and the internet serves as a primary source of authentic language materials.

A comparative study mentioned in the text found a major difference in motivation levels between Uzbek EFL learners and US ESL learners, concluding that technology integration can significantly boost student motivation. Furthermore, the article highlights that while research on technology's effectiveness in language education has been limited in scope—often focusing on higher education and specific language skills—the existing studies consistently show a pattern of positive effects.

Keywords: Technology, multimedia, a comparative study, technology integration, innovative methods, foreign languages.



Introduction

It is known that the usage of modern technology in teaching English helps to encompass an innovative application of methods, tools, materials, devices, systems, and strategies which are directly relevant to English language teaching. It also leads to the achievement of the desired goals of teaching process. That is why, while technology is now generally accepted as an important educational tool across wide range of teaching and learning contexts, it is particularly true of English language teaching since it affords a number of potential opportunities to improve both the content and delivery of the pedagogies typically associated with traditional English language teaching. This is primarily achieved by enabling the student and teacher to reveal problematic content day by day until it is fully understood and assimilated. The concept of using modern technology is not only limited to the use of modern appliances and devices, but also it obtains to the introduction of innovative systems and methods of teaching which facilitate faster and more comprehensive learning progress.

According to several modern pedagogical theories, in utilizing the learning potential of technology students are better and easier able to acquire and hone their language 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 desired results. The use of modern technology in English language teaching has become indispensable, especially in the wake of unprecedented developments across various disciplines. It is vital for teaching process that the educational sector keep apace of the global technological revolution by adopting modern technological means such as computerization, multimedia devices, mobile phones, applications, and social media, websites to optimize English language instruction and equip teachers to connect with classroom language learners in a systematic and advanced way. The Internet provides us with easy, immediate, and virtually unlimited access to software, applications, and a host of innovative platforms and materials which can expedite English teaching and learning. While these affordances may be widely available to all, it is a fact that teachers play an essential role in conducting the different tools and modern teaching methods. Moreover, many such programs regarding game based applications and websites are specifically designed to



promote effective English teaching whilst simultaneously increasing learner understanding and attainment of English language skills.

The early usage of technology for educational purpose goes back to the 20th century with the introduction of educational films. According to Grace and Kenny (2003), the concept of visual instruction was established by the beginning of 1920. The University of Pennsylvania has used the first electronic computer in 1946. Then, computer-based education was influenced throughout the world after 14 years. At that time, the learners could access to resources through the use of linked computer terminals that the University of Illinois launched in language classroom. That was done while listening to the lecture that was recorded by linked devices like a television or audio device. After ten years, the mouse, hypertext and groupware were invented by Engelbart who created also the hypermedia, multiple-window screens and electronic mail system. Between the 1970's and 1980's microprocessors and electronic books have also been introduced to the world. Personal computers (Ps), video-cassette recorders and CD were available at that time. Multimedia tools and audio-visual aids are used at schools. Later, digitalized communication took place in schools. Institutions started to use computer networking to make distance learning courses easier. In 2005, laptop computer and network textbooks were introduced in education. The internet is accessed through wireless and pocket computers. Later, many technological devices were available in school, college and universities. Educational technology refers to various materials used to improve the learning process and make teaching enjoyable. It facilitates learning by employing appropriate technological processes and resources.

However, the introduction of technology in Uzbek education system goes back to the 2002 year. The resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers, "On measures for further development of computerization and introduction of information and communication technologies" dated June 6, 2002, determined the implementation of information and communication technologies in the educational process and the long-term plan for their performance. The official websites of all universities are connected to the Internet to meet the needs of students and teachers. At the initiative of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, a project of the "National Network of e-education" has been realized, and a network based on fiber-optic communication lines, that is connected all universities of the country, has been



created. These lines are also equipped for video conferencing. Regular video lectures, training seminars, and courses of remote training of teaching and managerial personnel of higher education institutions are being organized on the basis of an electronic network. As a result of this project, nearly 80 university facilities were connected to the network in 2011. Next year, 84 facilities of secondary special and professional education are connected to an "e-education" single corporate network. The Centre for the Implementation of e-learning in Educational Institutions at Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan is equipped with technologies. It was established in accordance with the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of 25 July 2012. Since that year, it has been developing day by day.

Educational technology is a field that involved in the facilitation of human learning. It concerns the development, organization and utilization of learning resources. Technology can easily satisfy the visual and auditory senses of language learners. Educational technologies take three main aspects into consideration concerning the levels of students, the interests and training of the teacher, the goals of the lesson. With this modern way of teaching, schools are connected to the internet to enhance learning process more effective. Moreover, activities such as video conferencing make it possible to bring creative atmosphere into the classroom. Thanks to the globalization process, English has become a universal language that is used in different domains. For this reason, it is taught in all countries either as a second language or a foreign language. At first we have to clarify the notion teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). It means teaching English in countries where English is not the first language. The English language can be taught any person besides one's age. This language can be learned for specific or academic purposes. EFL teachers can be native and non-native speakers of English language. Technology has influenced the methods of EFL teaching. It makes not only learning process interesting, but also teaching more productive. An EFL classroom is in a particular country where English is not a dominant language. Students may share the same language and culture. The teacher may be the only native English speaker they have exposure to learn. Outside of the classroom, students have few opportunities to speak in English. For other learners, learning English may not have any obvious practical benefit. Students have limited exposure to English-speaking culture in their daily life,



most often through a distorted lens like TV or music. Based on these facts, there are important distinctions in the student population. Effective lesson planning must take them into consideration at first. Educational technology supports EFL teaching by presenting real situations and contexts. Furthermore, technological materials such as computers, language labs, projectors and other audio-visual aids are useful for EFL teaching and learning process. Technology helps the teacher to assist his teaching well. In addition, its use may lead the students to be more motivated and active. The use of technological materials is essential instrument of instructor in EFL classes. It makes the learning process interesting and teaching more productive. Educational technology can be used as a tool of creativity. It can provide many devices which make the teaching and learning process more effective. Technology can help students to learn the language faster if technology is used properly. Not all the technology can be useful, so English Language instructors need to be aware which technology to use and how to use it and evaluate the outcomes of the used technology. Eady and Lockyer (2013) state that not all the information in multimedia can support language learning. According to the authors, for learning to occur the resources themselves need to be designed using sound educational principles and need to be well-integrated into the learning experience by the teacher. Educational theory provides direction for both the effective design of the resources and how a teacher can best use those resources with language learners. Cognitive load theory, developed by Sweller (1988), states that learning resources must be designed to reduce the load on our working memory in order to be able to construct schema. Effectively designed digital learning resources should include the following features:

- Exclude information and activities that are not directly related to schema construction.

- Focus on information and activities that directly relate to schema construction.

- Clearly identify the complexity of learning materials and experience of learner.

These principles guide teachers in evaluating the digital learning resources that they might want to use in their class. Teachers can assess resources for how directly they cover the topic being taught, how clearly the information is conveyed, and how directly activities within the resources support student learning progress. Teachers can ensure that the lessons they design using these resources are focused on the topic and take their students' abilities and experience



into main consideration. Eady and Lockyer (2013) state that teachers use digital resources for a variety of purposes or ways, including:

- As a way to introduce students to a topic;
- As part of a teacher lecture or demonstration;
- As a stimulus to group or whole-class discussion;
- To provide students with access to different text types;
- To engage students in activities that are not possible in the classroom;
- To allow students to work at their own pace as a review or extension activity

It is essential not to use technology for its sake, but rather to embed technology appropriately. Here what can be seen that teachers draw upon their expertise and experience in what to teach and how to teach it. A teacher has many considerations and influences in designing learning experiences for learners, and the appropriate use of technology is only one of those considerations. As it is fact that as teachers keep up to date with curriculum developments, new educational policies, and advances in the art and science of teaching practice, they need to keep up to date with the technological tools that are available to them. That means that sometimes experimentation and trial and error are just as important as experience in what influences teachers' lesson plans.

Teachers may face various challenges to teach learners via modern technologies regarding resource limitations, teacher knowledge and skills, and teacher attitudes and beliefs. Hew and Brush (2007) said that resource barriers are being overcome with the help of an increasing number of computers and software applications and faster, more reliable networks in schools. However, instructors tend not to use technology if they become frustrated when it does not work properly or when there is a lack of technical support in their school. Teachers also report having limited time to review and learn about new technology tools that they can use in their lessons. Teacher's knowledge on technology is important in the teaching process. Lack of specific technological skills is a common reason teachers give for not using technology (Hew & Brush, 2007).

However, those teachers who take the opportunity to get skills through professional development activities are much more likely to integrate technology into their classroom than those who do not. Teachers may easily realize that the knowledge and skills they need to be able to use technology in the classroom goes beyond understanding what functions are under the focus item and what buttons



to press. Using technology effectively to promote student motivation means thinking about innovative learning strategies and effective classroom management. Teachers might face with challenges and barriers any time. The role of technology in society causes teachers to consider various implications for them in their role as educator and as lifelong learners themselves. What is the main challenge for teachers that drawing upon their continually developing knowledge and skills about what to teach and how to teach.

Internet usage enhance the motivation level of students. Students can use technology in their learning processes via computer and the internet to learn effectively. It helps learners to develop their higher level of thinking skills when they are utilizing technology. It is very important to draw the attention of learners to English languages, the true combination of the multimedia and teaching methodology. Warschauer (2000) described two different perspectives on how technology can be integrated in a classroom. At first, with the cognitive approach, students have the opportunity to maximize their language exposure and build their own individual knowledge in a meaningful setting. The text reconstruction software and multimedia simulation software are examples of these types of technologies. Multimedia simulation software enables learners to enter computerized microworlds in a meaningful audio-visual context, with a focus on particular language and culture. The programs may allow learners to control and interact much so that their linguistic input can better be manipulated. Secondly, the social approach underlines the social dimension of language learning, where linguistic learning is seen as a socialization process. In context, learners need to be able to practice real-life skills by genuine social interactions. This can be done through authentic tasks and projects in collaboration with students.

A key element of language learning is pronunciation of certain words. However, it is difficult to provide helpful feedback. A teacher who may or may not be good at first assessing the student's statement frequently provides comments and modeling in traditional instructional contexts. To give a simple feedback students should repeat the pronunciation or explain how the sound should be produced abstractly. The feedback can be received in more efficient ways by advancing speech recognition technology (Zhoa, 2013). The use of technology in English as a foreign language classrooms can provide an innovative and attractive approach to linguistic study. It motivates the students and makes them easier to talk, read,



listen and write. However, technology is not enough to teach learners alone. It needs a teacher with clear targets, who knows the curriculum and effective education strategies and can provide children with learning experiences to increase and encounter with previous knowledge. Lin and Yang (2011) investigated a research with Wiki page. The study revealed that Wiki technology can improve the written skills of students. At first, to conduct the research, the students were invited to join a Wiki page to write passages. Then they read and answered their classmates' passages. Learners agreed that using this kind of technology might benefit the immediate feedback they received. Additionally, students learned vocabulary, spelling, and sentences by reading their classmates' work. A research work of Perego and Boyle (2012) demonstrated that using technology in language class can improve the reading and writing skills of learners. According to the results of this study, the tools used in technology enhance the ability of learners to write and read, because they are user friendly. Moreover, another result of this research was that learners learn more efficiently by using technology tools instead of traditional teaching methods, because the Internet provided a conducive learning environment for learners and provided a new platform for students who can access learning lessons in a convenient way. Technology assists students and teachers in their quick access to course materials. Technological advances have an essential role to play in preparing students for what they learn to find their way into the global workforce in any subject. Technology facilitates learning for learners and serves as a real learning tool. Zhao's work (2013) can be given as an example. He conducted a study to assess the potential of technology for improving language education. The research has found that existing literature on the effectiveness of technology use in language education is very limited in four aspects:

- the number of systematic, well-designed empirical evaluative studies of the effects of technology uses in language learning is very small;
- the settings of instruction where the studies were conducted were limited to higher education and adult learners;
- the languages studied were limited to common foreign languages and English as a foreign or second language;
- the experiments were often short-term and focused on one or two aspects of language learning (e.g., vocabulary or grammar).



Nevertheless, the limited number of studies indicates a pattern of positive effect. Feruz Akobirov (2004) investigated the influence of technology on language learning. He tested the motivation levels to learn English language between Uzbek EFL learners and United States ESL learners. He wrote that teaching English Language in Uzbekistan is different than it is in the United States. Students learn English as a Foreign Language rather than an L2. It is clear that there is no social interaction outside of the classroom. People speak two different languages in Uzbekistan, but not the English language. Uzbek students do not have exposure to English outside of the classroom unless they go to the English Club or the English Language Center. The only means that students use is technology such as TV and the Internet. It is considered that TV as a kind of mass media technology can provide language learners with authentic materials.

In Uzbekistan, most people have a minimal need to speak English on a daily basis, so English is instructed as a foreign language (EFL), and learning happens without any immediate opportunity to use English for actual communicative functions. In addition, EFL teachers in Uzbekistan continue to use outdated lecture and memorization methodologies. These environments generally do not include meaningful interactions with native speakers of English or authentic materials that relate to the target culture. The result is that students are often not internally motivated to pursue their study of English, resulting in lower proficiency. The motivation of the students in using technology is also considered the other important factor. Many the students in the English Department have accounts in Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube. Using these social media accounts, students prepare their homework, interact in English language, and create short presentations. The interest in using a particular type of technology in language learning is convenient and effective nowadays. The university requires that both teachers and the students use educational technology while preparing for their class assignments, proposal defenses, and oral presentations. Just six or seven years ago, technology integration was not required at the university, but with the emergence of the Internet and other software materials, it has become important that students use these means. The environment of education in United States differs from Uzbekistan. The researcher chose Kansas Collage learners for his experiment. He described that ESOL, English for speakers of other language, classes at Kansas City College are designed primarily for students who need to



improve their English skills for studying at a college or university. Many of the students will begin their academic study at that college when they have fulfilled the ESOL requirement. Students in advanced-level ESOL classes can take college classes during the same semester in Kansas City. Other students are attending ESOL classes to strengthen their English skills for personal or professional reasons. At the end of research, he concluded that there is a big difference between Uzbek EFL and United States ESL learners' motivation level. The study proved that using technologies in teaching and learning process can increase learners motivation level to learn.

The use of technology in the teaching concepts has found that there has been a significant increase in the motivation of students. Before students had internet access at school, they were confined to social studies in classroom books and those which could be found in school library. Open Internet access offers students the tools for research today and for deeper learning (Gustad, 2014). It also changed the teaching methods of English considerably by offering so many options for the advancement of education to be interesting and productive. The use of multimedia texts in class helps learners to learn the language structure and vocabulary. It also develops students' linguistic knowledge by using printed texts, film and Internet. The use of print, film and Internet allows students to get information and offers various materials for language analysis and interpretation as well as contexts (Arifah, 2014).

Technologies in education are not limited only to the space of the classroom but have the ability to reach out beyond the walls of the classroom and change many free time activities into educational activities. Last but not least, they provide the option to use one's time more efficiently because we can carry our own small classroom anywhere we go in our mobile devices. The use of the internet enhances the motivation of learners. Using film in teaching helps students to understand and develop their knowledge with enthusiasm. Learners can learn vocabulary easily when technology is used through computer and internet in the process of learning. It helps students develop their higher-quality thinking skills when they learn technology. In conclusion, what can be concluded that technology is very important for students to focus on English learning through the real combination of multimedia and teaching methodologies.



In conclusion, the article highlights how technology is a transformative force in language education, redefining the roles of teachers and students, making learning more engaging and effective, and necessitating a systemic commitment from educators and policymakers to adapt to a new, technologically-rich educational landscape.

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