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Investigating the Role of ICT for Teaching English at Elementary Level

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Abstract

Today's world is an ultra-modern world where new ways of communication are being explored continuously. Technology continues to play an important role in ELT. ICT has become part and parcel of the educational systems of the nations. As computers are coming rapidly into the classrooms, parents feel the necessity of computers in education and don't want their children to be left behind. The present study explored the teachers' opinions about ICT use at the elementary level. It tried to explore the possibilities of using computers effectively to teach English. The study seeks out the availability of ICT facilities for the teachers at the elementary level and investigates the problems about accessing ICT. The study was descriptive type in nature. Fifty teachers from the Bahawalpur region participated in this study. The results showed respondents' positive attitudes toward the ICT implementation and integration of in-class activities. The results affirmed that using computers in an EFL classroom helps students better comprehend the English language than the traditional methods of teaching the English language. The recommendations are provided at the end.

Keywords: ICT, role, facilities, attitudes, investigate.

1. Introduction

English is an international language and also a storage bank of world information and knowledge. It is a medium of international communication and also an upholder of standard terminologies. The impact of ICT on teachers' motivation and engagement has significant. Teachers claimed that female students used more ICT than males (Iqbal, Shah, Usman, &Shahzad, 20202). The advancement in higher-level firmness and of English language is necessary a real most all the knowledge is available in English language. The ICT in every walk of life is a miracle of the twenty-first century. The ICT role has expanded in all sectors to improve employee productivity. The role of ICT in education is yet to explore to improve students' performance (Nayar &Kumar, 2018). Due to a lack of resources, teachers are hesitant to use technology in classes (Carnoy, 2005). A change is needed at tertiary education regarding ICT use (Ben Youssef & Dahmani, 2008). Lack of professional development and leadership support are the main challenges (Rabah, 2015). Technology's actual persuasion is needed between teachers and learners (Yusuf, 2005). According to (Cerretani, Iturrioz, &Garay, 2016), the use of ICT four hours a day for study and five hours for entertainment has been proven. Many teachers are using digital skills and ICT in classes (Siddiq, Scherer, &Tondeur, 2016). ICT use has expanded the learning experiences of English language students with enhanced performance. Female students performed better ICT use than males (Pruet, Ang, & Farzin, 2014). The learning motivation and technology use has improved students' satisfaction (Amornkitpinyo &Wannapiroon, 2015). Considering the state of this language is the language's state of the teachers. It is very important for an EAn English language teacher needs to have the English language. Our world is an ultra-modern world where new ways of communication are being explored continuously. Integration of ICT in education is a worldwide issue (Pelgrum, 2001). Communication in Computer education involves multidimensional interactions that are basically divided into face-to-face, writing-reading communication, and visualizing observations. Machines support either of these types. The most innovative of these is the computer, known as man's thinking machine. A computer is a machine, which computer programmed

to accept raw data (input) and put it into useful information (output). The present study's main aim is to explore the possibilities of using computers effectively to teach English. Computers are coming rapidly into the classroom at every level of arts and science (Tebbutt, 2000). No one can deny the impact that technology continues to have on almost every aspect of our daily lives, nor the speed with which we adopt new developments. The mobile phone is ubiquitous, and not just for any time anywhere voice communication. Broadband data connectivity brings to access to the internet and our personal and business communications (Pachler, Bachmair, &Cook, 2010). GPS can give us geographical guidance. A camera gives us a video as well as image and sound recording capability, and local storage continues to get ever larger and ever cheaper. Technology matters for students' achievement (Mercier &Higgins, 2013).

With the introduction of "apps," technology has managed the information to which we have access. With the expansion in "Cloud" people have access to use the information technology (Tomei, 2005). Today, the different electronic equipment has changed the style of thinking of people, and students with multiple languages have developed the capacity to perform in almost every language. Tablet computers like iPads are popular are popular sources of knowledge delivered digitally. Computer technology has been improving in Pakistan's education system (Wasif, Ullah, & Ali, 2011). The use of ICT in teaching and learning has just started progress in learning a language (Albirini, 2006). ICT is a useful tool for educational changes and reforms. A computer-enhanced or blended learning environment may encourage language acquisition (MacDonald, 2008). It means that the learners learn language through trial and error methods. The need for the hour to switch over to learn English through computer keeping in view its advantages. The current study investigated children's engagement with Information Communication Technology (ICT) at the elementary level and examined impacts of ICT on enthusiasm and related issues such as student learning outcomes, behavior, and school attendance and quantify any impacts where possible. The study also sets out to consider the ways in which teachers can use ICT in the best way to enhance motivational impacts for students at the elementary level, especially for those dissatisfied with outdated forms of learning.

1.1 Objectives of the study

The core objectives were:

1. To stimulate the teachers to enhance their language learning.

2. To find out whether ICT can create teachers' interest in studying English at the elementary level.

3. To highlight the role of ICT in teaching-learning situations to facilitate the learners.

4. To make teachers more motivational, self-disciplined and help them formulate ideas.

5. To find teachers' views regarding their beliefs and problems about the implementation of ICT at the elementary level.

1.2 Research Questions

Whether it is possible through the use of ICT to motivate, stimulate sight and hearing, and encourage language acquisition of teachers and get better results in teaching English language than through traditional teaching methods. The major research questions for the present study were to know:

1. What are the teachers' opinions about the implementation of ICT?

2. What is the influence of ICT on teachers' teaching-learning practices?

3. Whether it is possible to make students independent learners through the use of a computer?

4. What types of ICTs are available at the teachers' elementary level?

5. What are the teachers' problems in accessing ICT at the elementary level?

1.3 Research Hypotheses

In this investigation, the researcher attempted to give a tentative solution to the problems; the hypotheses could be stated as follows:

1. Whether the teachers are taking an interest while using ICT in the classroom or not?
2. Does ICT technique improve the language learning skills of the teachers or not?

1.4 Significance of the study

The study will reveal the usefulness and consequences of ICT as one technique in the English language classroom. It will be significant enough to boost a language teacher's teaching capabilities. It will also cover the other skills of language learning techniques in integrating ICT into the teaching and learning process. This research's positive results can support the English teachers to apply this method in teaching language skills, and teachers can change their methods to make the students motivated and relaxed in the teaching-learning process. ICT can make ESL students comfortable in the teaching-learning process because, with this method, the students can improve their language skills by catching the message from their teachers. This research is also expected to be beneficial for the students, the teacher, and the institution as well.

2. Literature Review

2.1 ICT Use in Education

ICT is an interactive learning technique in which students actively use computers, tabs, or mobiles, and the teacher can evaluate their feedback after using ICT. These language learning techniques aim to apply the methods or techniques using ICT and its impacts on students. ICT refers to all broadcasting media, blended management system, auditory transmission system, and networking facilities.

The use of ICT enhances vocabulary learning, as revealed by (Fitzpatrick, Al-Qarni, & Meara, 2008), is considered as multi-technologies carrying diverse data and communication formats and types (Batra, 2001).ICT has no agreed upon definition, as "the concepts, methods, and applications involved in ICT are evolving continuously on a daily basis".

Society has shaped expanded information technology. The students with a better understanding of the learning method are better to receive the nature of learning (Kara, 2009). Adopting new technological methods in teaching can prove a better social media tool for learning (Kumar &Biradar, 2010).

Policymakers widely accepted that access to ICT in education improves skilled workers and social mobility. They emphasized that ICT in education has related to traditional instructions delivery (Mangal &Mangal, 2010). It is supposed that ICT may bring abstract perceptions of life using sounds, images, movements, animation, and simulations. Others argued that it is just a supply mechanism for learning and teaching. A better understanding of ICT use in improving language education has integrated the national education system (Obeng, 2004).

3. Methods

3.1 Research Design

This research is experimental in nature, including both experimental and control pre-test and post-test groups. A pre-test is conducted at the beginning of treatment to get respondents' understanding of the current learning level, while a post-test is directed after treatment to find what has been learned.

3.2 Population of the Study

Elementary level teachers of Bahawalpur City were part of the study. This study's data were collected from the elementary level teachers in the academic year 2018-19. The study was limited to the Bahawalpur City only.

3.3 Sampling and Procedure

In this study, fifty teachers from Workers Welfare School Bahawalpur participated. Twenty-five teachers were selected in the experimental group and the same number in the control group. The experiment lasted for four weeks.

3.4 Data Collection Tool

The questionnaire in the form of test items was the research tool used for this study. The questionnaire was delivered to both experimental and control groups of teachers about their teaching experiences in their teaching, and their responses were recorded. After four weeks' treatment about ICT integration in teaching English was given to the experimental group, the same questionnaire was delivered to both control and experimental groups of teachers, and responses were recorded again. The comparison was made using a t-test in both pre-test and post-test groups. There found a remarkable performance in the post-test result in the experimental group but not a significant difference in pre-test results. The analysis of data is presented in the next section.

4. Results, Findings and discussion

Table 1
Comparing the experimental and control groups in pre-test
Using t-test Results

Groups Pre-test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	p
Control group	24.48	25	8.574	1.715	2.295	.301
Experimental group	24.24	25	8.526	1.705		

Table 2
Comparing the experimental and control groups in Post-test
Using t-test Results

Post-Test	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t	p
PT Control group	30.96	25	8.974	1.795	-15.615	0.000**
PT Experimental Group	37.88	25	7.518	1.504		

****P<0.01**

4.1 Discussion and Results

Prior to the beginning of the study, 50 teachers were randomly selected and divided into control and experimental groups, pre-tests and post-tests were conducted to check whether there was any effect of ICT on the experimental group. In table one, the value of p is greater than 0.05; we will accept the hypothesis that "there is no difference between the control group and experimental group scores in pre-test." In post-test, the p-value is less than 0.01. So, we will reject the hypothesis "there is an apparent difference between scores of control and experimental groups in post-test." It was concluded that the experimental group performed better in integrating ICT in English language learning skills than that of the control group.

So from the results, it is obvious to accept the general hypothesis that “ICT enhances elementary level teachers’ performance in learning English language skills.”

5. Findings, Conclusions, Suggestions and Recommendations

5.1 Findings

After completing the analysis of data, the researcher found the following information:

it is necessary for everyday life activities and at all levels of education. According to UNESCO, expertise in ICTs is considered modern literacy. The results showed that most students and teachers faced problems in assessing ICT in schools.

Findings revealed supporting with (Zhao &Cziko, 2001) that teachers' opinions with problems in accessing ICTs at the elementary level should be encouraged to provide technology to students and teachers. Due to frequent load-shading of electricity it becomes difficult for teachers to use computers, because of poor phone lines it becomes difficult for teachers to access internet, technical support is not easily accessible when needed and due to lack of supporting staff, teachers face problems in using internet, computers, projectors, and printers, Virtual language lab is not easily accessible by teachers for conducting classes, it’s very difficult to access internet websites at school. The study's findings exposed that accessibility of information and communication technology services and elementary teacher’s consumption of ICTs are very limited, which is a serious restraint in excellent instructional service delivery.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the results of this research, the researcher concluded that the implementation of ICT could bring drastic changes among the elementary-level teachers that intern enhances students' performance. The conclusion drew from the teacher’s opinion with the availability of ICTs shows the fact that basic ICT facilities like broadband internet, intranet, trained technical staff. The study revealed that a few libraries have an internet connection, limited use of ICT implementation of an automated library system was extremely slow. The mean of teachers' gender score shows that female mean score is higher as compared to male mean score on problems in the accessibility of ICT facilities at the elementary level. Moreover, on the availability of ICT facilities at the elementary level, male students have a high mean score as compared to female students. The mean of private sector school students is higher than public sector students on ICT availability. Moreover, public sector school students face more problems in accessing ICT compared to private sector students.

5.3 Recommendations and Suggestions

Based on the investigation and findings of this study, the researcher makes the following suggestions and recommendations for better implementation of ICT:

1. Special attention may be paid towards infrastructure at the elementary level, such as UPS and Generators' provision for computer laboratories.
2. Poor phone lines should be repaired and replaced.
3. Proper training may be given to technical supporting staff.
4. Access to virtual language labs may be given to teachers.
5. Special training may also be given to female teachers to handle ICTs better.

This study's recommendations and findings should be taken into careful consideration, and steps should be taken to implement those in our classrooms. If implemented intentionally, it is expected that the state of the teaching and learning of language skills at the elementary level will be improved remarkably.

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Biodata

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