

A Theoretical Study on the Genuinely Effective Technology Application in English Language Teaching for Teachers and Students

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Abstract

It is strongly believed that advanced technology has created considerable influences on fields generally and English language teaching and learning particularly. Therefore, a myriad of latest applications, modern devices, and inventive soft wares have flooded the educational market for the last two decades, especially during the time the whole world has suffered from the serious effects of Coronavirus. This paper mainly focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of technology integration in English language teaching and suggesting some practical solutions to overcome the difficulties.

Keywords: Technology integration, teaching creativity, learning engagement, authentic resources, advantages and disadvantages, technology application

1. Introduction

Language generally and English has been considered one of the most meaningful elements influencing international communication activities, and students worldwide have tried to improve their English language proficiency and practical communication (Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Ahmadi, 2018). According to the personal viewpoint of the writers, we firmly agree with the perspective of Ahmadi (2017) and Clements & Sarama (2003) that one of the decisive and vital contributions for students' performance is the lecturers' method used in their classes to facilitate the language learning process. Furthermore, the language teaching method has been drastically changed due to the remarkable influences of technology development, as argued by Carol (2003). Especially, the instructors' teaching methodology can be supported thanks to the application of technology significantly in terms of preparing activities sufficiently to satisfy both visual and auditory senses (Becker, 2000; Solanki and Shyamlee, 2012; Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2017, Teh, 2021; and Tran et al., 2021) and providing countless authentic and interesting learning resources to students (Bull & Ma, 2001; Harmer, 2007; Genç İter, 2015; and Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011), improving students' cooperation and confidence (Bennett et al., 2000; Patel, 2013), enhancing their language productivity and improvement (Alsulami, 2016; Rodrigues & Vethamani, 2015) as well as meeting their distance learning demand for students and teachers' safety during Corona Virus' pandemic (Hoang & Le, 2021; Pham & Vo, 2021; Chau, 2021). This study is aiming to present the strong and weak points of technological application in teaching English context and figure out some solutions.

2. Literature review

a. *Definition of technology and the use of technology in English language teaching*

Obviously, technology or advanced technology has not been an unfamiliar terminology and has been defined by different researchers in fields. Especially, İŞMAN (2012) describes it as the interrelationship between humans and machines and the environment where people prefer the application of appropriately technical processes into their practical tasks. Meanwhile, "technology integration" is the term suggested by Hennessy, Ruthven, and Brindley (2005) and Pourhosein Gilakjani (2017), encompassing the technology application ways of teachers in performing their teaching English activities effectively to encourage the students' learning engagement in the classrooms.

b. *Previous studies to support the advantages of the technology application in the English teaching context*

As mentioned in the following content, some studies have been performed for the advantages of technology utilization in the English language teaching and learning context.

Firstly, technology is an effective tool for teachers to enhance their learners' cooperation (Costley, 2014; Gillespie, 2006; Rahimi & Bigdeli, 2014; Hashim, 2006) generally and their peer reading work particularly (Keser, Huseyin, & Ozdamli, 2011). Thanks to the support of technology, teachers have easily adapted their teacher-centered to learner-centered approach and played the better role of facilitator in guiding their students' learning via providing cooperation tasks, collecting information, and interacting with material sources actively. Moreover, the writers agree with Mouza (2008) and Sabzian, Pourhossein & Sodouri (2013) that technology application can also boost the students' confidence via the cooperation among them and teachers by assisting their teachers' technical teaching process.

Secondly, as regards teaching sufficiency, Bennett, Culp, Honey, Tally, and Spielvogel (2000) strongly emphasize that appropriate selection and utilization of computer technology can contribute dramatically to the improvement of teachers' teaching and learners' learning in schools by providing a large number of opportunities for them to explore the endless useful materials from the Internet. Furthermore, according to Raihan & Lock (2012), Susikaran (2013), Patel (2013), Lian (2014), and Arifah (2014), they argue that computer technology and its application in classrooms completely can effectively enhance both teaching and learning environment in terms of learners' linguistic knowledge, background knowledge, and interpretation to meet the educational demands of students as compared with lecture-based classes.

Thirdly, technology integration in classrooms directly leads to conveniently authentic material resource exposure, as supported by Warschauer (2000a), Drayton, Falk, Hobbs, Hammerman, and Stroud (2010) Peregoy and Boyle (2012), and Parvin & Salam (2015). This point can be explained that technology application from the teachers can create abundant opportunities for their students to practice social interaction to boost their language skills and their life skills cognitively and meaningfully.

Fourthly, technology application may lead to greater English skills improvement for students generally, as demonstrated by a study conducted by Alsulami (2016). In this study, the positive influences of technology on learning English as a foreign language among 36 female EFL students at Effatt College were investigated via questionnaires with Likert scale questions included four specific questions regarding technology tools that enhance learning the English language. The analyzed data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) showed the results that kinds of computer soft-wares, social networking websites,

online videos, audio tools (i.e., YouTube, Skype, MP3 players), and smartphones and tablets apps have a positive impact on learning English as a foreign language. Furthermore, according to the argument of Rodrigues & Vethamani (2015), computer-mediated activities provide unlimited and effective online platforms for ESL learners to practice their oral conversations in an individualized learning environment at their own pace and time. Therefore, students in the experimental group can enhance their English-Speaking proficiency, learning autonomy, and self-confidence despite unstable Internet connection compared to the students in the control group within the 12-week Intensive English Program. Moreover, based on the result of the study carried out by Yunus and colleagues (2013), Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) play a major role in boosting English Reading and Writing skills for ESL students in a secondary school, Malaysia. Based on the data collected from 23 teachers there via a semi-structured interview, the findings of the study reveal that ICT application may not only contribute to the greater English speaking and writing skills but also facilitating the students' attention during their learning process, as well as their vocabulary knowledge.

Finally, technology application has also demonstrated its extremely important role in enhancing the demand for long-distance learning during Corona Virus' pandemic (Hoang & Le, 2021; Pham & Vo, 2021). According to Hoang & Le (2021), despite the difficulties in online group learning between lecturers and students, an online learning solution should be preferred in such emergency situations. Furthermore, we appreciate learning online via kinds of teaching online programs, including Zoom Cloud Meeting, Microsoft Teams, Vsee, Voov, Google Classroom and Google Hangout, etc. Such high-tech utilizations have demonstrated their significant role in vigorously changing from in-class teaching to online teaching to meet the distance learning demand of students during this severe time of Coronavirus outbreak.

c. Perspectives towards disadvantages of technology utilization in classrooms

There are constantly two sides to everything, and technology integration in classrooms is not an exception where both teachers and learners have faced during the time because multimedia utilization sometimes is not as positive as we may think.

First of all, the writers agree with Solanki & M Phil (2012) that over technology implication limits the students' cognitive thinking potential when they depend too much on it by searching, clicking, and finishing as fast as they can lazily avoid the thinking enhancing, information discovering, and problem-solving steps suggested by the teachers. Moreover, the students' imaginable thinking might be restricted by inappropriate utilization of technology from the teachers. This means overloaded technology use in the class might cause students' abstract thinking in transferring their personal recognition to the better rational interpretation after the lessons cognitively and metacognitively when they focus only on the sounds, images, and videos.

Secondly, according to Solanki & M Phil (2012), the application of technology in classes sometimes causes the useless dependence for teachers when teachers may have become slaves to the technology instead of playing their leading role in teaching practices, especially elderly ones when they cannot keep up with the extremely fast development of the current era of technology. Ultimately, over-stressed of technology is the other burden on the shoulders of the teachers besides their long-life learning responsibility.

Finally, to the writers' practical situations, technical problems can be considered as one of the disadvantages mentioned here because not all technical difficulties can be solved effectively

in the classrooms, which delay the teaching and learning process of both teachers and students in some cases.

3. Conclusion

Technology implication is favorable in the teaching and learning context generally; however, teachers should choose and apply it appropriately with specific targets for particular skills. According to Solanki & M Phil (2012), Zoheb (2017), and Ahmadi (2018), we have highlighted the important and significant role of multimedia utilization, and we should not forget the perfect and irreplaceable position of teachers in the classes where interaction can be enlarged to cultivate the students' communicative competence, to boost the students' cognitive thinking and imaginative potential by actively technology implication and control.

Based on the opinion of Ahmadi (2018) and the writers, in order to avoid the useless dependence on technology integration for the teachers in the classrooms, the educational organizations, including private and national schools and universities and teaching foreign language centers for all levels should have suitable technical application training programs with specific technique utilization to support teachers for stress-reducing caused by their limited understanding of technology. Especially, the schools should have effective technical staff who are ready to support teachers in their classrooms as fast as they need to ensure the learning process of the lessons.

Agreeing with the viewpoint of Ahmadi (2018), teachers, should self-study by searching updated information on teaching and learning English technology integration and study from other colleagues to upgrade their skills of technological application through various kinds of teaching online programs including Zoom Cloud Meeting, Microsoft Teams, Vsee, Google Classroom and Google Hangout and the other outstanding websites in assisting them to design funny and attractive interaction activities for students like Kahoot and Quizzes.

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Biodata

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