AN ANALYSIS ON THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN THE ESL CLASSROOM

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Abstract

The last twenty years have seen a remarkable advancement in technology. Many people are digitally savvy and are moving on to become digital natives. The use of technology in today's world of labor, especially in the sphere of education, has made life easier for us. Technology has also demonstrated its efficacy in the teaching of languages, particularly as a motivator and as a space for real-world learning. But there are definitely drawbacks to employing technology in the classroom. Students could overuse technology and get easily distracted. In addition, continuous use of technology can inhibit pupils' ability to think critically. As a result, this following paper examines the benefits and drawbacks of technology-assisted language learning. Teachers who intend to include technology into their ESL classes may find this paper to be useful as a source of reference. Future studies can examine the impact of technology on students' attitudes.

Key words: Technology, ESL Classroom, Motivation, Authentic Learning, Distraction, Thinking Potential.

I. Introduction

The people of the world are no longer unfamiliar with technology. Technology has contributed to a variety of professions, but education stands out. The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in language instruction has grown significantly during the past twenty years (Ahmed & Naser, 2015). In-class and extracurricular teaching and learning now heavily rely on technology. Language learning can be improved thanks to technology. In addition, teachers can improve the way students learn languages by using technology (Ahmadi & Reza, 2018; Hashim, 2018). This demonstrates that a new era has begun that gives contemporary teachers difficult tasks to complete. Exceptional access to technology has fundamentally altered the traditional teaching approach. The use of technology has opened up possibilities for more engaging and effective teaching and learning sessions, particularly in the study of languages. Technology has offered important impetus for both social and linguistic development, according to Shyamlee and Phil (2012).

English is utilized as a second language in nations like Malaysia and India due to English's status as an international language and its global expansion. English serves as the first language for some people. In many nations, English is now the primary language of education and curriculum. New teaching techniques have been adopted to measure the efficacy of the teaching process as the number of English learners rises (Shyamlee & Phil, 2012). One of the most important components of communication is language. For communication and competency, students use a variety of English language abilities, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). Information and communication technology (ICT) use by students has been documented in numerous fragments by research (Cakici, 2016). However, there are also negatives pieces of evidences of the use of technology.

According to Rosicka and Mayerova (2014), the goal of the new educational age is to use technology to make the current and forthcoming generations active members of society.

According to Harwati (2018), the current generation is referred to as "digital natives" because they are highly computer literate. If the new educational model did not use technology as a means of communication and idea exchange, it would be completely unthinkable (Ahmed & Naser, 2015). When students are involved in knowledge building, collaboration, and reflection, using computers as learning tools can facilitate effective learning (Rosicka & Mayerova, 2014). The use of technology in teaching and learning sessions might increase interest and motivation for learning among the younger, technology-driven generation.

II. Technology in ESL classrooms

ICT has become more prevalent in the sphere of education (Rafiq & Hashim, 2018). According to Abunowara (2016), educational technologies had the potential to permanently alter how teachers and students learned. With the advent of a new era in education and technology, the blank canvas of language teaching and learning has undergone significant inventiveness and changes during the past ten years. English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching has been greatly impacted by the way that technology has changed both lower- and higher-level education (Mansor & Rahim, 2017). Teachings changed along with the times. The transformation in Malaysia starts in the classroom, where technology like projectors, computers, and wireless internet are being introduced (Yunus, 2018).

The process of choosing which electronic tools and techniques for putting them into practice are the most appropriate solutions to particular classroom settings and challenges is referred to as the technology implementation (Roblyer & Doering, 2010, p. 8). The use of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) in the classroom is becoming commonplace (Bax, 2012). The secret to a successful use of technology in teaching and learning sessions is not just in the hardware or software, but also in our abilities as teachers to plan, design, and carry out efficient educational activities.

Currently, educational multimedia is frequently employed in English language teaching and learning (Yunus, Hashim, Embi, & Lubis, 2010). Social media is a further frequently utilized component of technology in the digital age. Social media improves learning by enabling connections and interactions between students and teachers in more creative and engaging ways (Khan, 2015). Users can communicate, exchange ideas, and find solutions through collaboration and conversation on social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, blogs, Instagram, email, and others (Mansor, 2016).

Students' perspectives on learning have changed as a result of technology (Daniels & Pethel, 2005). In addition to changing how students see learning, new and more sophisticated technology are also changing how educators understand education and literacy (Pilgrim, Bledsoe, & Riley, 2012: p. 30). In addition to helping students "internalize lifelong skills needed for success in this global society," these technologies are "also continuing to grow and transform literacy instruction" (Saine, 2012: p. 45). Although technology cannot replace excellent instructors, it can be transformative when used by them (Roy, 2019).

III. Authentic learning

Since the advent of digital learning, authentic learning has become commonplace. According to some educational researchers, the benefits of authentic teaching and learning activity are no longer limited to learning in real-world settings and practice, but can also be realized through the design of Web-based learning environments. Thoughts come to life through software representations, visuals, music, and haptic feedback (Lombardi, 2007). Numerous

studies have also uncovered a number of crucial traits that contributed to the development and advancement of authentic learning. Real-world experiences serve as the foundation for authentic learning (Herrington & Kevin, 2007).

In addition, a lot of teachers have worked to create realistic learning experiences for their pupils using technology like computers and movies (Herrington, Reeves, & Oliver, 2007). Numerous instructional approaches have been used to test the efficacy of the teaching process as the number of English language learners rises. Since quite some time, the field of education has used authentic resources in the form of movies, radio shows, and television programs. These technologies have succeeded in replacing the conventional technique in language teaching and learning (Shyamlee & Phil, 2012).

The use of multimedia in the classroom increases learning outcomes, maximizes class time, breaks the "teacher-centered" teaching pattern, and increases student productivity. Technology and multimedia use, according to Shyamlee and Phil (2012), produces a more vivid, visual, and authentic atmosphere for English learning, encourages student initiative, and saves time and increases class information. According to Jayanthi and Kumar (2016), the use of technology has a good effect on language learning. It makes materials available, boosts student attitudes, infuses the classroom with authenticity, and is student-centered. Presenting and using a language is made easier by the availability of authentic elements including visuals, animation, music, and video clips (Cakici, 2016).

IV. Challenges

4.1. Restrict Students' Thinking Potential

It goes without saying that technology has demonstrated its value in language learning. Like other artificial teaching techniques, it still has drawbacks. The tense and ordered environment is created by teachers and students asking and answering questions, even though language acquisition may not always require demonstrations through multiple phases (Shyamlee & Phil, 2012). Teachers would frequently ask impromptu questions and instruct the pupils on how to respond in the standard traditional form of instruction. However, with the use of technology, kids choose to look for the solution online.

The idea behind ICT in education, according to Yunus, Nordin, Salehi, Hun, and Embi (2013), is that it makes it possible to gather, manage, manipulate, access, and communicate information in a variety of ways. This demonstrates that we can access information without having to stop and think. Additionally, it disregards the significance and priority of teaching. It despises the kids' critical thinking, problem-solving, and cognitive processes. Students should be allowed to think creatively and explore issues and potential answers without the need for an aide who is an expert in everything, according to Shyamlee and Phil (2012). The use of multimedia should not obstruct pupils' ability to think.

Simin and Heidari (2013) claim that the incorporation of technology can potentially constrain other abilities like verbal communication. Technology might be a terrific tool for online communication, but it will lessen spoken communication between students and professors. The introduction of technology may include an auditory, visual, or textual effect that completely satisfies the students' aural and visual needs and can heighten their attention. According to Shyamlee and Phil (2012), it also leads to poor communication between students and teachers.

4.2. Possible Distraction and Misuse

Online users have access to a vast array of resources. Students in particular may become distracted by technology's fascinating features. For students who are minors, using the internet unsupervised can be damaging and dangerous. Digital native students frequently spend the majority of their time on social media. Social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram might divert students from their academic work. Students might quickly become distracted when online by the entertainment options available on computers. In addition, technology makes it simple to plagiarize online.

According to Boudjadar (2015), technology makes it possible for pupils to copy and paste information from the internet that comes from all over the world. Instructors are naturally concerned about the ease with which students can plagiarize, either purposefully or unintentionally, according to Gerard (2012), who claimed that "there is no evidence that web-derived plagiarism is any more widespread than other kinds" (Gerrard, 2012: p. 426). Claiming and stealing someone else's work and passing it off as their own while doing so will never improve their work (Boudjadar, 2015).

V. Conclusion

Overall, technology has demonstrated its importance to the subject of education. Technology integration can stimulate pupils and increase their interest in studying. The use of technology makes the learning environment more engaging and draws students in. The use of technology in language learning does have some drawbacks, too. The entertainment that technology provides could divert students. They might also misuse technology when employing it in other ways. As a result, technology use should be moderated and student computer use should be supervised. All teachers who intend to use technology in an ESL classroom are implied by this paper. Future studies can examine the impact of technology on students' attitudes.

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