The Impact of Technology Integration on Language Proficiency in English Learners

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Abstract

The integration of computers into foreign language training appears to support the claim that effective technology use in education may improve both teaching and learning. This study aimed to investigate the effects of using technology, including computers, Iraq undergraduate English language instruction uses the internet and a multimedia projector. The participants were 4 EFL teachers and 40 undergraduate students studying English as their compulsory study course. The study applied in-depth interviews and questionnaires to collect data. The study found that the use of technology in English language instruction had a mixed effect. On the one hand, the technologies stimulated and inspired students to become more engaged with their lessons; on the other hand, the teachers felt more secure and the classes were more dynamic and productive when technology was used in the classroom. It was also discovered that technologies had certain unfavorable effects. The survey also revealed that not many teachers in our nation were proficient in using modern technology in the classroom. That efficient use of technology in the classroom was uncommon. They therefore recommended several training programs that would be

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beneficial to them. Lastly, this study made the case that implementing technology at the undergraduate level required the support of the institutions and qualified instructors.

Keywords: Undergraduate, Teaching, Learning, CALL, EFL

Introduction

The increasing impact and influence of information technology on all aspects of our lives have led to a trend in foreign and second language teaching in emerging nations technology-augmented language instruction. Since the previous ten years, Iraq has likewise been moving toward technology-enhanced instruction. Technology such as computers, multimedia projectors, mobile phones, sound boxes, and social media, are employed extensively in foreign and second language education across the nation, particularly in private universities, just like in other fields.

These days, educators prefer to employ technology in the classroom to successfully teach English. Teachers enjoy using the internet to find helpful language materials to prepare for teaching English since it is easily accessible and offers the tools they need. Additionally, Singhal (1997) notes that there is a connection between technology and English language instruction. These days, there are a lot of options available to teachers thanks to technology that greatly influences English language instruction. Here, the internet is essential to using many technologies. With this equipment, teachers can efficiently teach the English language.

In addition to attracting interest, the World Wide Web provides a wealth of tools tailored for language teachers. Additionally, the pupils are permitted to use technology to study the language online either independently or in groups. Despite these advancements, there are still certain negative effects of technology on English language instruction and learning. There are instances where using technology presents difficulties for both teachers and pupils. Despite several drawbacks, educators have embraced the use of technology in the classroom.

The capacity of technology to reach audiences worldwide is its most inspiring feature. In terms of language acquisition, it implies that instructors can be employed locally and that learners have access to classes instructed by native speakers, guaranteeing appropriate language immersion. Enrolling in an online language education program provides access to the course and its materials for almost anyone. Without technology, the reach of education is constrained to a certain location, school, or classroom; with it, the possibilities are endless. To shed light on the attitudes and motivations of English language instructors about the use of computers in teaching English, as well as the challenges and obstacles that they encounter,

Abdullah et al. (2006) carried out a study. The results showed that most of the instructors had a cheerful outlook.The teachers truly employed computers for teaching and learning, and they had a strong motivation to use them to teach English. According to Maniruzzaman and Rahman (2008), the use of audio aids in
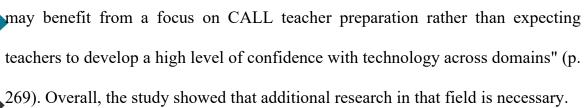
EFL lessons is hampered by a lack of adequate audio visual equipment and teacher training. The greatest educational tools, in the opinion of Darrel M. West and Joshua Bleiberg (2013), let teachers accomplish more with fewer resources. Using social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr, teachers may have dynamic conversations with their pupils. As stated by Şahin-Kizil (2011), there is a positive attitude among EFL teachers towards using ICT for educational reasons. However, the replies imply that the main barriers in the process of ICT integration are inadequate class time and training opportunities (p. 1).

According to Aydin's (2013) research, despite having positive attitudes toward computer use and computer integration, Turkish EFL teachers "indicated that they have little knowledge about certain software and experience difficulties using the software programs" (p. 218). They also suffer from a lack of technical and instructional support. Additionally, research was done to prepare teachers for Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). According to Kessler's (2007) research, "there is evidence that teachers obtain a majority of their CALL knowledge from informal sources and personal experience rather than through formalized preparation" and "there is a general lack of CALL preparation in teacher preparation programs" (p. 173). He also emphasizes the need for a greater understanding of CALL's function in teacher development (Kessler, 2007).

Additionally, according to Kessler and Plakans (2008), "developing contextualized confidence within certain teaching domains or types of technology

may benefit from a focus on CALL teacher preparation rather than expecting teachers to develop a high level of confidence with technology across domains" (p. 269). Overall, the study showed that additional research in that field is necessary.

Bordbar (2010) looked into the motivations and contributing elements to teachers' use of computers in the classroom. The study also sought to investigate how teachers use their practical experience and understanding of computer-assisted language learning to inform their instruction of language, as well as their attitudes about computers and information technology. The findings demonstrated that nearly all of the teachers had favorable opinions about using computers in the classroom. The findings also demonstrated how teachers' perceptions of technology, their own experiences with it, their degree of computer proficiency, and the cultural context surrounding its introduction into English-language schools all play a significant role in determining how they feel about computers in the classroom. According to Healey et al. (2008), teaching English with multimedia technology is adaptable and concentrates on the appropriate and possible applications of technology by administrators, teacher educators, and English language instructors for both inside and outside of the classroom. This means that opportunities for English instruction to occur both inside and outside of the classroom are made possible by multimedia technologies. It develops a multimodal language learning environment for English instruction.
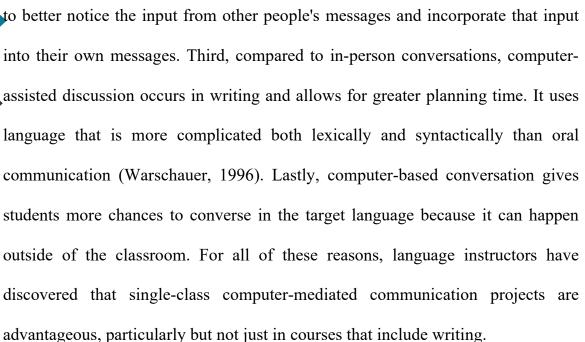
Technology, in the opinion of Chapelle (2003), is essential to helping pupils simultaneously advance their language skills both inside and outside of the classroom. For their students to become more proficient communicators, teachers of English as a second language understand that their pupils must utilize the language outside of the classroom. Gordon (2007) offers a helpful discussion on using technology to enhance language acquisition. Several findings that indicate that technology is driving several other advances in the practice overall, particularly in the content and approaches to teaching and learning, provide strong validations of her work. Kuo (2009) looked at the effects of YouTube video clips on educating EFL Taiwanese learners about their performance in listening skills. As Zhang (2006) notes, we can provide students with rich sources of authentic learning materials as well as an appealing and welcoming interface, vibrant images, and soothing sounds through multimedia and network technology. This effectively makes up for the absence of an authentic language environment and sparks students' interest in learning English. It does, however, have certain advantageous qualities that make it a useful instrument for language learning. First, class discussions with computer assistance are more likely to be fully collaborative since equal involvement is more common than in-person talks; teachers or a few vocal students are less likely to control the conversation (Warschauer, 1999). Second, computer-assisted discussion increases the number of opportunities for students to learn new language chunks (e.g., collocations, common phrases; see St. John & Cash, 1995; Warschauer, 1999) by helping them

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to better notice the input from other people's messages and incorporate that input into their own messages. Third, compared to in-person conversations, computer-assisted discussion occurs in writing and allows for greater planning time. It uses language that is more complicated both lexically and syntactically than oral communication (Warschauer, 1996). Lastly, computer-based conversation gives students more chances to converse in the target language because it can happen outside of the classroom. For all of these reasons, language instructors have discovered that single-class computer-mediated communication projects are advantageous, particularly but not just in courses that include writing.

It is challenging to reach the goal of communication since traditional teaching has limited students' ability to understand the structure, meaning, and function of a given language as well as certain language usage. Students become passive recipients of knowledge. Therefore, when teaching English language at the undergraduate level in our nation, teachers currently employ technology in a variety of methods. Using technology in English language instruction helps students overcome linguistic hurdles and becomes more motivating for them to learn the language. Thus, the goals of this research were:

To learn about the different ways that teachers use technology to teach English

1-To highlight the advantages and disadvantages of technology use; and

2- To offer solutions to address issues related to technology use.

Methods

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the study's execution The researchers used a mixed-method approach to collect data and analyze it in accordance with the study's aims. Using a qualitative approach, in-depth interviews and Questionnaires from teachers and students were covered by the quantitative method The survey was carried out at Thi-Qar university Art collage. Participants included 40 undergraduate students learning English as a required study subject for their undergraduate programs, as well as four EFL teachers. Several open-ended questions were asked during formal teacher interviews. The interview statements were recorded using a cording device with the consent of the teachers who were interviewed. For both teachers and students, two separate questionnaires with ten statements on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree were created.

Findings and Discussions

This study aimed to give the field an overview of the progress made in integrating ICT into language teaching and in the creation of ICT-based language teacher education, as well as to offer recommendations for ways to make things better. The literature included in this overview is from all across the world. The purpose of this section is to present the findings of a study on the impact of technologies on language instruction in Bangladesh at the undergraduate level. The study looked at how teachers used and were competent with various

technologies, as well as what kind of training would help them become more proficient in using technologies to teach language. In order to gather information, data from four private universities in Dhaka were chosen. Forty students and four EFL instructors from those institutions were contacted for questionnaire responses and interviews. First, the situation at each university was discussed. Subsequently, the percentage is displayed according to the survey results.

Concerning the Findings from Teacher Interview, It was discovered throughout the interview process that the four teachers employed various technologies in their English language classes. They revealed that they were all using multimedia projectors and computers, either laptops or desktops. They were all using TV monitors, tape recorders, electronic boards, internet, and cell phones. One of them said, "I don't know about any specific websites for language teaching," as he was inquiring. One other person mentioned that he had never considered teaching pupils via Facebook and blogs. In answer to a different query, every teacher mentioned that technology assisted them in planning engaging lectures and keeping language classes engaging. They claimed that the internet gave them fresh perspectives on teaching English and opened them new avenues for language learning. In response to an additional query, the majority of students reported feeling at ease in subjects related to technology. However, there were instances where students' access to speaking and writing assignments was

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restricted by technology, and their interest in using it decreased. Particularly, the pupils from the rural areas were not accustomed to the lesson that involved technology. Teachers noted that their kids needed more time to become used to the technology in the class. Thus, utilizing technology with the newcomers presented some challenges for the teachers. Teachers who were interviewed stated that their use of technology in the classroom had varied results.

While there have been numerous instances when technology has helped instructors accomplish their goals, there have also been instances where it has had a negative or detrimental effect. In response, the educators said they encountered some difficulties integrating technology into their lessons. They claimed that the teaching-learning approach was not entirely technologically compatible. It was discovered that students had little interest in participating in any activity that would not be tested. The teachers who were interviewed revealed that in their situations, there were insufficient resources available. They advised that the class's outdated and malfunctioning machines were difficult to operate. The majority of the educators said that they lacked formal training in the correct use of contemporary technologies. "We require help," they said. The instructors offered several fixes for the issues they frequently encountered .

They believed that proper funding, training for teachers, and encouragement and support from higher ups were necessary for the advancement of their careers. In order to effectively teach and learn in the classroom, the
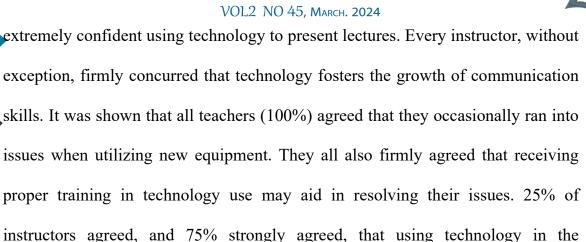
teachers underlined the importance of receiving training on the usage of contemporary technologies. There is still an issue with the content or texts being displayed in the power In a simulated environment, point courseware cannot replace students' critical thinking or English communication skills. One teacher said, "We should not overuse the courseware merely in the hope of adding the modernized feature to class teaching." Instead, we need to encourage the students to utilize their own minds and talk more, participate actively in class practice, and work on the course materials. It's possible that some educators have the false belief that they will use multimedia tools exclusively in their instruction. Additionally, it is thought that when multimedia technology is used more, the classroom environment will improve, students will participate in class more actively, and students will have easier access to the curriculum. Although the students appear to be interested in learning, in reality, they would rather just observe. The more unconsciously the pupils pay attention in practice. The less the pupils learn from the language materials, the more interference there is with the transfer of educational content.

In regards of Findings from Teacher Questionnaire Survey, were structured questions on the questionnaire. Instructors were asked to respond on a 5-point Liker scale (1932). In answer to the question, every single teacher (100%) firmly agreed that technology was an important educational tool for teaching English. Of the teachers, half strongly agreed and the other half agreed that they were

extremely confident using technology to present lectures. Every instructor, without exception, firmly concurred that technology fosters the growth of communication skills. It was shown that all teachers (100%) agreed that they occasionally ran into issues when utilizing new equipment. They all also firmly agreed that receiving proper training in technology use may aid in resolving their issues. 25% of instructors agreed, and 75% strongly agreed, that using technology in the classroom would be successful after its drawbacks were lessened. The study concluded that, in the modern English language classroom, technologies play a critical role.

In order to stay current with technology and improve the effectiveness and interest of their lessons, teachers heavily relied on it. In this situation, to keep pace with the global world, teachers think that, technologies should be made user-friendly. Ideally, the purpose of both the traditional and computer –assisted cooperative language leaning classrooms is to provide a space in which the facilitation of learning, and learning itself, can take place. If problems and shortcomings can be solved, impact may be positive; and technology may be the useful media for teaching English language in the education system.

5.3. Findings from Student Questionnaire

The results demonstrated that, depending on the subject and substance, each teacher employed a different kind of technology. Most students felt at ease in classes that included technology.

They took pleasure in using the projector and laptop in class. However, several of the pupils came from remote areas without access to technology. It was discovered that they were less engaged in the classroom with the projector. The following table displays the results of the questionnaire survey:

Sl	Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Technologies help in learning English language	12 (30%)	20(50%)	8(20%)		
2	Technologies make the language class more interesting	5(12.5%)	21(52.5%)	7(17.5%)	7(17.5%)	
3	I pay more attention when teachers use technologies in the class	6(25%)	22(55%)	10(25%)	2(5%)	
4	Technologies promote development of communication skill	23(57.5%)	15(37.5%))	2(5%)		
5	Technologies have good impact on my learning English language	25(62.5%)	10(25%)	2(5%)	3(7.5%)	
6	Using projector in language class is effective	22(55%)	15(37.5%)	3(7.5%)		
7	I feel comfortable in technology affiliated classroom	6(15%)	21(52.5%)	7(17.5%)	6(15%)	
8	Teachers use relevant technologies for teaching language	8(20%)	25(62.5%)	7(17.5%)		
9	Teachers motivate me to use technologies for learning English language	20(50%)	17(42.5%)	2(5%)	1(2.5%)	
10	Teachers often engage me in using technologies for learning English language	17(42.5%)	23(57.5%)			

Table: Responses of the students to the questionnaires

Strongly agree and agree are combined to form "agreement" during the findings presentation, whereas strongly disagree and disagree are combined to get the total of disagreement. Here, the pupils discussed their personal opinions and sentiments regarding the technology they utilize in the classroom. They revealed conflicting results: 80% of pupils felt that technology aided in their language study of English. The majority of students—65%—agreed that the use of technology in the language classroom increased its interest level. According to the study, eighty percent of pupils believed that when teachers employed technology in the classroom, they paid closer attention. It was shown that 95% of students agreed that technology may help the growth of communication skills. Students who remarked on the impact of technology on their English language study were 87.5% in total.

It was found that 87.5% of students thought projectors were useful in language classrooms. According to the survey, 67.5% of pupils said they felt at ease in a classroom with technology. It was found that 82.5% of students agreed that teachers taught English using acceptable technology. Additionally, 92.9% of students said that their teachers encouraged them to use technology to improve their English. Nearly all of the participants strongly agreed that their teachers regularly encouraged them to use technology to improve their English. It's possible that some educators have the false belief that they will use multimedia tools
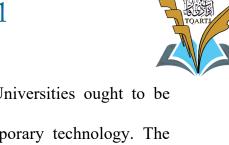
exclusively in their instruction. Computers and other technology shouldn't take the place of teachers in the classroom. Additionally, it is thought that when multimedia technology is used more, the classroom environment will improve, students will participate in class more actively, and students will have easier access to the curriculum. Although the students appear to be interested in learning, in reality, they would rather just observe. The more unconsciously the pupils pay attention in practice. The less pupils learn from the language resources, the more teaching information interferes with transmission.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the results, some recommendations are made to be taken into consideration for Bangladesh's successful integration of technology in language instruction at the undergraduate level. Here, educators ought to take the lead in utilizing technology, like internet, multimedia, PC, etc. It is important to take into consideration the interpretation of teachers when teaching languages. For English language learning and instruction to be effective, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) should be used. Teachers of English should encourage their pupils to use technology and online resources to expand their language proficiency and linguistics understanding. To ensure that teachers are proficient in utilizing various new technologies and can practice computer literacy, training for one-on-

one or small group tutoring should be implemented. Universities ought to be outfitted with digital content, the internet, and contemporary technology. The study illustrates how various technologies affect undergraduate language instruction. In addition to the many benefits, there are a few drawbacks. Sometimes there is not enough equipment available, and teachers are not given enough training opportunities. Nonetheless, this study offers several tech-related suggestions made by the educators. Based on the results, it can be concluded that in the context of Bangladesh, technology-based language instruction will only be successful and have a positive impact if there is coordination and understanding between university authorities and teachers regarding the provision of complete technological support.
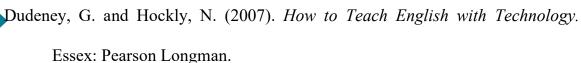
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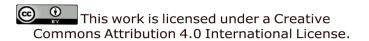
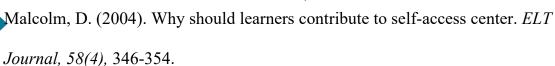Dudeney, G. and Hockly, N. (2007). *How to Teach English with Technology.* Essex: Pearson Longman.

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