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CURRENT APPLICATION OF ICT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Abstract. Now, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been used in almost all fields of life, including in education. In education, computer technology has become so essential that the government put ICT as one of the curriculum in Kazakstani education. The utilization of ICT in education has recently started to appeal the potential and significant progress in language learning. It has become a major issue in education world and has been used from preschool through to university that could facilitate students and teacher in teaching and learning process. ICT has been publicized as potentially powerful enabling tools for educational change and reform. The computers play significant role in the learning process especially in learning language.

Key words: ICT, EFL, ELT, e-learning.

Аңдатпа. Қазіргі таңда ақпараттық және коммуникациялық технологиялар (АКТ) өмірдің бүкіл салаларында қолданылуда. Сонымен қатар білім беру әдіснамасы да бұл технологияларды қолдануға еңгізді. Білім беру саласында бұл технологиялардың маңыздылығының артылуын, оның Қазақстандық білім беру бағдарламасының бір бөлігі ретінде қалыптастырған. Ақпараттық және коммуникациялық технологиялары тіл үйрену парадигмасына өзінің ерекше үлесін қосуда. Осындай жаңа бағыттағы білім парадигмасы, тіл үйренушілер мен оны үйретушілер үшін үлкен жеңілдік әкелді. Осы технология тілді үйренудің ең ұтымды әдістерін таңдап, тіл үйренушінің талпынысы мен жігерін арттырды. Қазіргі уақытта білім беру парадигмасының маңызды бір бөлігі – компьютерлер болып табылады, әсіресе тіл үйренуде өзіндік қолайлылықтарға ие.

Кілт сөздер: АКТ, ағылшын шет тілі ретінде, ағылшын тілін үйрету, электронды үйрету.

Аннотация. В настоящее время информационные и коммуникационные технологии (ИКТ) используются практически во всех сферах жизни, в том числе в сфере образования. В сфере образования компьютерные технологии стали настолько важными, что правительство выделило ИКТ в качестве одной из учебных программ казахстанского образования. Использование ИКТ в образовании в последнее время стало привлекать соответствующий интеллектуальный потенциал в сферу образования и вызвало значительный прогресс в преподавании и изучении языка. Это стало серьезным шагом в мире образования и используется с дошкольного образования до университета, что помогло облегчить процесс преподавания и обучения для преподавателей и обучающихся. ИКТ были обнаружены как потенциально мощные стимулирующие инструменты для образовательных изменений и реформ. Компьютеры играют значительную роль в процессе обучения, особенно при изучении языка.

Ключевые слова: ИКТ, английский как иностранный язык, преподавание английского языка, электронное обучение.

ICT defined as technology which the function is to support the process of conveying information and communication. The ways of conveying information doesn't have to be carried out directly between the communicator and the communicant. The development of ICT makes the process of communication between the communicator and the communicant can be conveyed in easy ways. They can communicate through telephone, internet, e-mail, satellite, television, video conference and so on. The process of those communications applies in language learning. In language learning, there is a

communication between teacher and student. The process of learning is not always carried out by subjecting teacher and students in the certain room or a certain place directly. As the example, teacher can use internet as the medium to give lessons, assignments, or other information to their students.

In context of language learning, ICT has an important role as the «media» bridging and enabling the learning process, or direct communication between students and teacher although they are not present in the same room or place in certain time. Language learning program can be created to enable students to learn the lessons with guidance, instruction, information or further explanation. ICT in language learning used as a reference-book. Computer can store unlimited lessons or references, which can be accessed anytime, anywhere and accurately. Fitzpatrick and Davies in Hartoyo sets out the seven ways in which ICT used in language learning:

a) Presentation

Some material of language learning such as text-based materials, audio-video needs to present to the learners. Presentation helps learners in understanding the learning material well.

b) Practice

Some of different exercises types are possible to be provided with ICT, incorporating the presentation stimuli in varying combinations of text, audio and video format. ICT also offers the possibility of the analyzing learners' responses with appropriate feedback.

c) Authoring

In applying ICT in language learning, teacher can either purchase ready-made materials or create their own exercise materials using a variety of authoring tools based on Hartoyo.

d) Computer-Aided Assessment (CAA)

Computer-Aided Assessment (CAA) is playing an increasingly important role in foreign language teaching and learning. This media used to testing and assessing students understanding after learning some courses.

e) Publishing

ICT tools exist to help teachers and learners or students to publishing or linked in their work in a local area network. ICT may use by the teacher and learners to help them publish their work in these ways:

Word – processors and Desk Top Publishing (DTP) software. Doing audio recording and editing tools to record interview, discussions, learning material and etc.

Using digital camera and camcorder to record presentations, drama, role play, and so on Power point can be used as the medium to publish presentations Web pages using web authoring tools.

f) Communications

Technology can help learners and teachers to communicate with another. Some ICT tools which can use as the medium of information are: 1)

Email, which allows language learners to communicate with ‘web pals’ in other countries; 2) Tandem learning; 3) computer mediated discussion; 4) web-based learning environment; 5) audio conferencing; 6) Video Conferencing.

g) Simulations

The computer can act as a stimulus which generates analysis, critical thinking, discussion and writing. Program which include simulations are especially effective as stimuli. Examples of language learning tasks which «simulate» real world tasks are: 1) Web Quest; 2) Action Mazes; 3) Adventure games; 4) Sunpower; 5) Expodisc; 6) «Real-life» simulations; 7) video conference.

ICT appears to give both advantages and disadvantages. ICT in language learning reduces the intimacy of students – teacher relationship that it may negatively contributes to students affective feelings in the process of learning. However, ICT appears as a «bridge» to break the distance and ‘survive’ the learning. In case of distance, teachers can use ICT through video conference to enable them teach or monitor the students learning process. Therefore, the development of ICT is seen as a better way of teaching and learning a certain language compared to the existing methods. Through the internet, teacher or learners can obtain as many as possible sources related to the learned – language; such as text, songs, stories, etc. Those sources can contribute as models of the learned – language use in the real context and in a proper manner. In addition, computer can also be used as a more interactive aid to support the learning of language compared to that of tape recorder, or chalk and blackboard. However, you can see that many of the technology solutions available in the world of education can lead to confusion among the teachers on how to choose the right ICT technology solutions. Let’s take a look at the advantages and disadvantages of ICT tools for education and finding a suitable ICT education solution for the needs of the school.

The information required will be more quickly and easily accessible for educational purposes.

Innovation in learning is growing in the presence of e-learning innovations that further facilitate the educational process.

Progress of ICT will also allow the development of virtual classroom or classroom-based teleconference that does not require the educator and learners are in one room.

System administration in an institution will be more easily and smoothly because of the application of ICT systems.

Progress of ICT will also occur of violation of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) for the easy access to the data that is causing people plagiatis will commit fraud. Although the system of the administration of an educational institution like a system without a gap, but if there is a recklessness in running the system would be dangerous. One of the negative impact of television is to

train children to think short and survive concentrated in a short time (short span of attention).

ICTs have become an essential part of everyday life of most people in the Western world. From the smooth running of societies' vital functions, such as banking and finance, to social networking and recreational activities, new technologies rapidly transform important aspects of our lives. ICTs empower us to perform tasks that were inconceivable only a few decades ago. From our personal computers we buy and sell all kinds of products, keep in touch with friends and find new ones, participate in chat rooms and discussion groups, work and play. The number of tasks we perform via new technologies is continuously rising.

The second main idea is that schools must adopt a radical progressive pedagogy in order to make full use of ICTs' affordances. From this perspective ICTs are valuable since they seem ideal for promoting so-called pupil centered teaching and learning through the access they provide to sources of information and arenas for interaction. From this perspective it is not particularly important to look closely at the use of ICTs in relation to the characteristics of individual curriculum subjects, since the traditional understanding of curriculum subjects will not be the basis for a pedagogically transformed educational context. «This potential [for innovative practices] simply cannot be fully realized within the single subject and single session model. We need to develop learning situations where complex problems are approached from a cross-curricular position and across flexible timescales» [1]. The new educational context is instead emphasising the development of pupils' so-called «21st century skills», such as their ability to access and process information, and their ability to identify problems and choose strategies for solving them [2]. The emphasis is on tasks requiring that pupils work across traditional curriculum subject boundaries.

From this perspective, teachers sticking to a traditional understanding of curriculum subjects and thus object to an ICT induced pedagogic transformation, might be seen as reactionary and old-fashioned. Their lack of enthusiasm might be seen to stem from a general opposition to change per se, and might thus be accused of lacking consciousness about their own «theory of practice».

The view adopted in this study is that the value of ICTs must primarily be assessed according to the degree to which it promotes the attainment of central subject specific objectives. This view is based on international research findings and trends. The trends in the literature show that researchers increasingly turn their attention to characteristics of teachers and curriculum subjects to understand the proper role and function of ICTs in complex educational contexts. One obvious reason is that teachers play a crucial role in relation to the quality of pupils' learning [3], and are the ones who decide what actually takes place in the individual classroom. Moreover, teachers experience the obstacles to successful integration of ICTs in their teaching on a daily basis.

A steadily growing emphasis in the literature on the individual differences between teachers in relation to their beliefs, attitudes, and competence, reflects the understanding of teachers as key players in the educational context [4].

Simultaneously, there is a tendency in the literature to draw attention to the unique subject specific context new technologies are part of. Previous research suggest that teachers require positive experiences with ICTs which are specific for the subject they teach in order to make use of ICTs [5]. Also, some researchers have found that successful integration of ICTs are more likely to happen if the teacher's general pedagogical approach corresponds in some way to the characteristics of the technology [6].

Similarly, a common characteristic of successful projects is when the teacher sees a close connection between the technology and the curriculum, and has an educational rather than technocentric understanding of the role of technology, i.a. uses the technology as a means for reaching a subject specific objective, rather than seeing the integration of technology as an end in itself [7]. The findings suggest that research should be directed towards the teacher's role in the integration of new technologies in the individual school subject.

For the purposes of this study, only Lund's PhD thesis is directly relevant. Although Lund's study is based mainly on qualitative methods and is placed within a sociocultural theoretical framework, both studies share a systemic rather than an analytic approach [8] to a common research object; EFL teachers' encounters with ICT. However, where Lund provides a thick description of the practice of a limited number of teachers, the current study seeks to provide a less detailed description of the reported practice of many teachers. So, where Lund provides a close-up image of a number of intricate processes, the current study seeks to provide a general overview revealing common patterns and systems of associations. Also, Lund directs his attention to teachers participating in a course designed to try out school environments with high ICT density and collaborative pedagogical practices, whereas the current study seeks to capture the voices of teachers working in their regular environment. So, where Lund is concerned with capturing innovative practices that can serve as models for other schools to follow, the current study is more concerned with capturing actual practices that might help explain the state of ICT integration in the teaching of EFL in Norwegian lower secondary schools.

In a masters thesis about EFL teachers' use of ICT for lower secondary school pupils, many angles from which to approach previous research are open. Ideally, the state of the art both nationally and internationally within each field constituting this composite area of research should have been comprehensively accounted for. Yet, for pragmatic reasons linked to time, resources and level of academic sophistication, this is beyond the scope of the present presentation. Instead, a principled selection of a few exemplary studies has been carried out. First, by using a spatial principle of selection, I have separated national from international literature. Arguably, there is a need to place this study in context

of other relevant studies of the Norwegian situation, and at the same time present findings that communicate important background information. There are few studies to choose from, so no studies are excluded. The studies included based on this principle are [9] and [2].

The second principle of selection can be said to be of a methodological nature. So, even though there are numerous studies concerning the integration of technology in education, I have primarily focussed on those with similar methodological underpinnings. Hence, the current study can be placed within the larger picture of quantitative studies dedicated to the identification of variables associated with ICT use. There are a number of international studies sharing these properties, and I have consciously excluded some of them, most notably [10]. The second principle led to the inclusion of Mueller et al. for a closer inspection.

Thirdly, studies with similar exploratory and empirical outlooks are included. This principle of selection excludes e.g. theoretically grounded, confirmatory studies occupied with the testing of the robustness of scales and items, and studies with an expressed or implied desire to influence the object of study in a particular predefined direction on the basis of theoretical convictions. There probably are a number of studies sharing these properties, but I have solely focussed on [8], which is presented in more detail in this chapter.

Finally, studies on Computer Assisted Language Learning (hereafter simply referred to as CALL) are included, since this is the field that most comprehensibly covers the composite reality facing EFL teachers trying to integrate ICTs in their classrooms.

«The teacher as interface – teachers of EFL in ICT-rich environments: beliefs, practices and appropriation» is the title of Andreas Lund's Ph.D. dissertation, in which he presents the findings from a focused exploration of the processes involved in EFL teachers' appropriation of digitized artifacts. He uses a sociocultural theoretical perspective in his mainly qualitative study of EFL teachers practicing in ICT-rich environments.

He defines his research field as EFL teachers' encounters with technology, and poses one overarching research question to guide his study: "In what ways are ICTs appropriated in the EFL classroom?" Incorporated in this overall approach are questions related to the beliefs and attitudes of EFL teachers who encounter ICTs in their profession, the kinds of educational practices that emerge when ICTs are integrated in EFL classrooms, and the identification of conditions conducive for innovative practices. A main line of conflict presented in the study is how teachers (should) approach the task of fully embracing the inherent (genotypical) properties of ICTs (appropriation) while at the same time looking after traditional aspects of enculturation, i.e. between innovation and tradition.

«At the interface of the two we see a dialectic relationship of traditional (thesis) and transformational (antithesis) practices and with a third space as the potential synthesis. For those spaces to prosper, however, impediments in the traditional system will have to be conquered. As schools are socially and culturally constructed institutions, the way they arrange conditions for teaching and learning are manifestations of how they think about (or ignore) urgent educational issues».

He finds answers to the overarching research question through an examination of the transformation of the underlying activity system of «teaching». He identifies three dimensions of transformation related to the teaching of EFL that he considers to be closely linked to teachers' appropriation of ICTs:

- The school subject of EFL itself is undergoing change. Lund maintains that the new participatory social spaces and associated genres of communicational forms provided by networked ICTs should be regarded as 'acceptable' functional practices. «The result is that ICT-rich environments afford opportunities for authentic, diverse, mature practices to a greater extent than in non-ICT classrooms». Moreover, a consequence of the the rapidly changing standards for 'correct' English should in Lund's view be a realignment of the ontological position of EFL. «Instead of locating the discipline within a linguistic system to be acquired, it is located in practices that are constantly being shaped and reshaped through a constantly increasing number of people who engage in global and online Englishes» [2].

- The social spaces (both in terms of time and place) for EFL practices are extended. Lund sees the emergence of new social spaces for EFL practice which extend beyond the classroom (online communities etc.) as opportunities that must be exploited by teachers through the use of designs for learning that bridge the gap between off and online environments.

- Teachers must teach in ways they were not taught to do. Lund maintains to see in ICT-rich environments the outline of communicative practices that should prepare learners for the future. Teachers must continuously keep up with new conventions and practices through ongoing professional development, according to Lund.

Lund's study provides an in-depth analysis of the intricacies involved in the process of integrating ICTs in EFL classrooms, and can be said to be the present study's qualitative counterpart. His theoretically informed investigation of the «messy» reality of ICT integration provides «thick» descriptions of individual appropriation-processes based on a deep understanding of the multilayered ecology of influencing factors in EFL teachers' wider social and cultural context. His fine-grained presentation of individual processes needs to be complemented by a study of recurring patterns among larger groups, which is exactly what this study tries to accommodate for.

Lund has taken advantage of the relative strengths of quantitative methods himself in order to capture «several refractions of a phenomenon». While the methodological approach is mainly qualitative, he uses quantitative methods to capture the beliefs of a sample of teachers in order to create a backdrop for the concerns teachers have when integrating ICTs. He claims that «complementary approaches may carry a lot of potential when analyzing dynamic phenomena that appear at individual as well as collective and institutional levels» [11]. The present study sticks to a quantitative approach, but the findings should be considered in conjunction with results from Lund's investigation as they complement, inform and relate to each other.

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