ICT
in English Classroom

Supanee Sengsri supanees@nu.ac.th
Marady Phoeun mardipmd@gmail.com
Faculty of Education, Naresuan University

Abstract

"Technology can become the "wings" that will allow the educational world to fly farther and faster than ever before—if we will allow it." - Jenny Arledge. In today's world using technology is something undeniable; almost everything needs technology especially in educational field. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a key role in language education, specifically on English learning and teaching. That is why this paper aims to outline some of the crucial impacts ICT has on English language teaching and learning. It includes the role of ICT as resources for both teacher-centered resources and student-centered resources. It, furthermore, explains what sources are best for students and teachers and where they can find those. This paper also focuses on the incorporation of ICT in helping enhance four basic language skills which are listening, speaking, reading and writing and the basic areas of language teaching include grammar and vocabulary which helps learners acquire efficiency in the language. The last part of this paper will elaborate how ICT promotes learners' motivation and participation in learning.

Introduction

We all know that our current life is greatly affected by the era of information and communication technology, and this has become an essential part in today's human society development.[1] There is an assumption that ICT can play a key role in facilitating individual's learning in language, especially for English learning.[2] Based on this fact, it is vital to take advantage of the modern technological facilities to assist the task of English language education. In English classroom, using ICT is inevitable. ICT is a helpful tool for English language learners and teacher, both for developing skills and as a useful resource for classroom activities. Several types of ICT have been introduced to learners and educators. There are a number of positive impacts ICT have on English classroom; however, this paper will discuss three most potential advantages of using ICT for English learning and teaching.

ICT as resources

Language education is an area where open-access resources, online courses, virtual classrooms and social networks based on information and communication technology (ICT) are being increasingly used to give learners access to information, promote interaction and commu-nication, and enhance digital literacy skills. ICT such as computer, Internet can be great resources for both language learners and different language skill assessment. [3] Educators and learners can obtain as many as possible sources related to the language. Finnemann briefly outlines the most common uses of the Internet for language teaching by dividing the resources available in the internet in two main groups: teacher-centered resources and student-centered resources. [4] Teacher-centered resources are the ones that support teachers in planning their classes and in their own development, Ames mentioned, [as cited in 4]. In this instance Dudeney stated that the Internet becomes a rich resource called bank [as cited in [4] or a source of teaching materials, Teeler referenced [as cited in 4]. These resources include audio material, audio journals, video, dictionaries, books, journals, research projects, resource books, specific sites for professional development with hundreds of links, on-line literature, courses, so on and so forth. Besides these resources, there is great range of authentic material in all skills needed for English teaching. For example, teachers may use YouTube videos to integrate into their teaching listening or speaking. Doing so would create a visual and special interactive environment in the classroom. [5] Games are also confirmed to be effective way to teach in English classroom. There are many educational games available on the internet which can be adopted in their classroom. Teachers can search for ones which are most appropriate for their students and implement in the right way. [5] Ames

said that a large amount of student-centered resources can also be found in the Internet. [as cited in 4] Learners can access a variety of web sites to research the countries or cultures of those countries, find authentic texts about the topics related to the target language learnt in classroom, recipes, songs or even games. Wiki is one good example of a website that can go for any information they need. One research showed that most students in their research valued the benefits of Wiki in the project-based learning, and they seemed to enjoy using the Wiki a lot. [6] As a result, collaborative team work was formed. Furthermore, with ICT, learners can participate in virtual tours of relevant sites, check on-line dictionaries and other language-oriented reference materials, practice grammar and vocabulary skills and other skills with interactive language programs and therefore develop their English skills. The amount of input students can find in the Internet seems to be unlimited, as Perez mentioned. [as cited in [4]

ICT in improving macro and basic skills in English language

ICT helps advance the four macro skills and basic skills in English language learning. The four macro skills include listening, reading, speaking, and writing; while basic skills consist of vocabulary, and grammar. These skills are extremely essential in learning English because the basic English is all about these things.

Listening

Listening is defined as the process of identifying and understanding the speech of the speakers. It includes understanding the speaker's accent or pronunciation, speaker's grammar and vocabulary, and comprehension of the meaning, as Saricoban indicated. [as cited in 1] Since it is an input skill, it plays a crucial role in English learning and teaching. To improve this skill, teachers can adopt many techniques or activities which involve the use of ICT. Computer-based listening tests are very important for students to improve their listening skills as it helps them in understanding of the skills better.[1] CD-ROM based learning films can also offer noteworthy benefits over the traditional methods. Moreover, Internet voice chatting can be a good tool to enhance communication capabilities of the student if they use the second language. Radio, Television or Mass Media are simple yet effective way to better listening comprehension. Listening to radio educational language programs like ABC, BBC, or VOA is another technical way for developing the understanding ability through learning what is happening throughout the world. Some social media sites such as TED, Podcast or other language programs are also suggested to use for self-learning. [7] Another interesting type of online tool an English teacher can use to involve students in listening is audio journal. It is a voice-based e-learning which enable learners

to better their listening skills. Besides, song and music can play an important role in improving listening skills. Songs have been an essential part of human being's language experience, and it is a brilliant idea to integrate them in a language lesson. [5] Kevin Schoepp mentioned the theoretical rationale of two processes using songs in classroom, essential for developing listening comprehension: "The first is bottom-up processing where the listener builds up the sounds into words, sentences and meaning. The second is top-down processing where the listener uses background knowledge to understand the meaning of the message."[8]

Reading

Reading is the process of understanding a written text by the learner. It is also an important input skill which rest largely on the vocabulary and background knowledge of the learner in the second language, said Constantinescu. [as cited from 1] Many methods can be applied to improve reading skills. There are a huge number of resources available on internet which helps enhance reading skills. They come in the form of newspapers, magazines, journals, electronic libraries, dictionaries, encyclopedias, and newsletters, as Kenworthy mentioned. [as cited from 1] Browsing these resources will obviously enrich the learner's vocabulary and reading ability. Since reading requires the acquisition of vocabulary, it is suggested that the use of electronic dictionaries could be one effective way to improve reading ability. Electronic dictionaries are easy to use and can be quick tools for vocabulary acquisition.[1] Based on the research of Aydin [9], WebQuest is also proved to be another supportive tool for reading skill enhancement. Students benefited academically from the WebQuest use in reading. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) programs is another technology of ICT which offers a range of materials to encourage learners to read, such as auditory and/ or visual materials, animated materials, music and sound effects and other materials.[10] One study by Huang & Hong revealed that the flipped English classroom interference is one influential teaching approach which can improve English reading skills because it promotes autonomy and basic foundation learning in English as a foreign language. [2] The students in this study got benefit from this intervention with interesting topics that related to and daily lives and cultures. What is more, there are some good applications which provide great reading material resources for all learners. A research from Momani, Al Farhan & mohammed Al Qarni confirmed that there was the relationship between using some Internet applications and the efficiency of teaching reading comprehension. [11]

Speaking

Speaking is the act of conveying information or expressing one's feeling or thought through speech. Several technologies can be used to improve this skill. Computer-mediated practice is

verified by Buckingham & Alpaslan to be a beneficial method to improve speaking ability of weaker students. [12] This research showed that the use of Computer-mediated communication which includes audio-visual speaking activities such as video, voice recordings of the teacher, images, text, did help learners a lot in their speaking comprehension. Similar to listening comprehension, students can also use Internet voice chatting to better their speaking as well, if used with native speakers. Some websites such as YouTube, Webcast, Podcast, or TED can be good self-learning tools for students to access for their improvement as well. [7] The conversation technique can be both exciting and supportive way for enhancing speaking skills. Many websites for communication such as Facebook, Twitter, provide free live chat services which is very useful for language learners for it acts as language assessment. Role play and interview are another good ways to improve speaking skills. Students may interview one another or play roles implemented by teachers, and then record their activities by mobile phones or cameras. By doing this, learners will be able to see or find out their mistakes, and later better their performance . [3] Likewise, Manurung proved the use of contextual internet-based instructional material to be a potential factor to improve speaking skills.[13]

Writing

Writing skill is another output skill which is an important part of communication. It is the most difficult skill among all the skills in English. It requires learners to generate and organize ideas, and have a good acquisition of grammar and vocabulary. [1]Though it is hard, there are still strategies to improve this skill. Computers can be used to develop the writing skills of English language learners. Writing statements and paragraphs in English language can be very challenging for the students. However, with the use of computers and graphics-based programs, writing becomes a lot easier and fun; hence it enables them to express their ideas better. Word processing programs can also improve Grammar skills as learners can highlight a specific part of the written text through underlining, bolding, italicizing, or changing the font size and color of the text with the aid of these programs which have the capability of automatically checking the spelling and grammar. Besides, using e-mail can be very effective for improving writing skills. Singhal, in addition, stated that students can use E-mails to learn how to respond to the messages or mails by using some formal statements and language learnt. [as cited from 1]. Advantages of using ICT were described to draw students' attention, ease students' learning process, help to improve students' vocabulary and promote meaningful learning, specially encourage learners' independence and self-discovery skills like searching for educational related materials online for their writing tasks. [14] [15]

Grammar and Vocabulary

Grammar and vocabulary are the basic and most important skills of all because without

these skills, students could hardly produce or intake any information. Some ICT-related methods can be used to improve these skills. PowerPoint can be one of the most beneficial and effective tools to teach students grammar and vocabulary. Students can understand structures and words easier by using this tool. Furthermore, a world wide web (WWW) is another great place for discovering and learning grammar and vocabulary as it provides countless lessons, exercises and practices. One research by Su introduced the development of the IRF-based EGLA system. [16] This system aims to build a computerized IRF-based English grammar instructional dialogue environment for learners with self-learning opportunities, in order to achieve concept acquisition with regard to English grammar. The system is expected to provide chances for individual students to do English grammar practice within the limited teaching time. The results from the study indicated a significant effect for students who learned with the IRF-based English grammar learning system though there were no statistically noteworthy differences compared with those who underwent IRF-based English grammar discourse in the classroom. Another research about the use of ICT in improving vocabulary skills is from Ahmad, Armarego & Sudweeks. [17] It reported the positive effects of utilizing Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in vocabulary learning in a non-formal environment. The findings showed that some form of vocabulary acquisition occurred in the experimental group from both non MALL and MALL environment; however, the MALL environment provided considerably deepened vocabulary learning experience.

ICT in promoting students' motivation and participation

Foreign language acquisition is a skill; it requires lots of practice. Therefore, maintaining motivation both inside and outside the classroom is key factor to learning success. [18] That is why it is important that educators find techniques to make learners feel motivated to learn. Because each and individual requires different levels and types of motivation, it is important to find how the orientation of technology particularly ICT tools can promote motivation in language learning. [18] It is vital to know how ICT can actually assist learners in motivating them towards language learning. More importantly, in what way learners are motivated to learn a language. With the use of ICT, students feel more motivated to learn and involve in both in-class and out-class activities. Since they are exposed to new and different learnt- materials, they are eager to explore and learn more. They enjoy what they are doing rather than feeling forced to do things. Furthermore, in ICT, there are activities which encourage students' engagement and involvement; therefore, it improves students' participation. Digital Game Based Learning (DGBL) approach is a good example. It is an application for promoting students' knowledge

of computer memory concepts. Based on research, this approach is more effective and motivational for students compared to the non-gaming approach. Educational computer games can be exploited as learning environments. They can significantly improve both knowledge of the subject matter and student enjoyment, engagement and interest in the learning process. [19] Social media which is a part of ICT also helps motivate students to learn. Oxford University Press (2014) showed that using social media can motivate students to learn English. It further explained that this can happen if instructors make contents students are learning meaningful by relating it to authentic English practice opportunities in social media. By linking this social media use to English learning, students feel that what they are learning is significant as they can apply it for authentic communication and personalize their learning. To add, one research study showed that the flipped classroom significantly promote students' motivation in learning. The finding indicated that learners were able to connect the learning process to their own interests and thus, improve their sense of accomplishment.[20] Another example of using ICT to promote motivation is the use of mobile game-based English learning approach. The research study confirmed the effectiveness of implementing a system called the Happy English Learning System (HELS) into a game-based context. It helped develop the learning motivation and achievement of Taiwanese vocational high school students and further verified the partially predictive power of learning motivation concerning English achievement.[21] ICT also promotes students' participation in learning. Social Network Sites (SNS) is one good example. The study showed that with the use of SNS, learners continuously engaged in learning as they were comfortable with the learning environment, and were motivated by the well-prepared online activities. The results recommended that education-based SNS, such as FB, can be used most effectively as an e-learning technological tool for improved communication and increased motivation and engagement in the learning process. [22] A research about digital video used in English classroom also proved a high relationship between the efforts taken (integrating digital videos in the classroom) by teachers and students' learning, engagement, and overall quality of the classroom experience. [23]

Conclusion

ICT plays an essential role in English education. ICT can assist both educators and learners as they are able to explore information and knowledge needed for learning and teaching on their fingertips with a click or two. This will help them improve their speaking, writing, reading, listening, grammar and vocabulary as well. At the same time, it helps boost their motivation and participation in learning, so they will be able to utilize the full potential of ICT. ICT seems

to provide countless benefits to English language education. Recently, MOOCs (Massive Open Online Course), which is a newly born application, has been introduced to world. This is new technology which is not widely used yet. Therefore, we hope that in the future MOOCs will have a great positive influence on English teaching and learning; and hopefully, more educators and learners will make use of this new part of technology.

References

[1]   Nomass, B. B. 2013. The impact of using technology in teaching English as a second language. *English Language and Literature Studies, 3*(1), 111.

[2]   Huang, Y.-N., & Hong, Z.-R. 2015. The effects of a flipped English classroom intervention on students' information and communication technology and English reading comprehension. Educational Technology Research and Development, 64(2), 175-193. doi: 10.1007/s11423-015-9412-7

[3]   Herlina, A. 2014. The Utilization of Technology to Improve English Speaking Skills. *Journal for the Study of English Linguistics, 2*(2), 19. doi: 10.5296/jsel.v2i2.6665

[4]   Martins, C. B. M. J., Steil, A. V., & Todesco, J. L. 2004. Factors influencing the adoption of the Internet as a teaching tool at foreign language schools. *Computers & Education, 42*(4), 353-374. doi: 10.1016/j.compedu.2003.08.007

[5]   Ali, M. 2016. Application of ICT in English Language Teaching in Bangladesh: Prospect, Problems and Solution. *ASA University Review, 10*(1).

[6]   Chu, S. K. W., Zhang, Y., Chen, K., Chan, C. K., Lee, C. W. Y., Zou, E., &   Lau, W. (2017). The effectiveness of wikis for project-based learning in different disciplines in higher education. *The Internet and Higher Education, 33*, 49-60. doi: 10.1016/j.iheduc.2017.01.005

[7]   Xuan Thu Dang, H. N. 2012, May 26. USING INTERNET RESOURCES TO TEACH LISTENING AND SPEAKING. *ICTEV2012 Creative Connection State Conference*. Melbon.

[8]   Schoepp, K. 2001. Reasons for using songs in the ESL/EFL classroom. The internet TESL journal, 7(2), 1-4.

[9]   Aydin, S. 2016. WebQuests as language-learning tools. *Computer Assisted Language Learning, 29*(4), 765-778.

[10] Al-Awidi, H. M., & Ismail, S. A. 2014. Teachers' perceptions of the use of computer assisted language learning to develop children's reading skills in English as a second language in the United Arab Emirates. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 42*(1), 29-37.

[11] Momani, M. M., Al Farhan, A. A., & mohammed Al Qarni, H. 2015. THE FREQUENCY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS USING SOME INTERNET APPLICATIONS IN TEACHING

READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS. *European Scientific Journal, ESJ, 11*(13).

[12] Buckingham, L., & Alpaslan, R. S. 2017. Promoting speaking proficiency and willingness to communicate in Turkish young learners of English through asynchronous computer-mediated practice. *System, 65*, 25-37. doi: 10.1016/j.system.2016.12.016

[13] Manurung, K. 2015. Improving the Speaking Skill Using Reading Contextual Internet-based Instructional Materials in an EFL Class in Indonesia. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 176*, 44-51. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.442

[14] Md Yunus, M., Nordin, N., Salehi, H., Amin Embi, M., & Salehi, Z. 2013. The Use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Teaching ESL Writing Skills. *English Language Teaching, 6*(7). doi: 10.5539/elt.v6n7p1

[15] Drigas, A., & Charami, F. (2014). ICTs in English Learning and Teaching. *International Journal of Recent Contributions from Engineering, Science & IT (iJES), 2*(4), 4. doi: 10.3991/ijes.v2i4.4016

[16] Su, C.-Y. 2017. Investigating the Effectiveness of an Interactive IRF-Based English Grammar Learning System. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (iJET), 12*(11), 63-82.

[17] Ahmad, K. S., Armarego, J., & Sudweeks, F. 2017. The Impact of Utilising Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) on Vocabulary Acquisition among Migrant Women English Learners.

[18] Hashim, H. H. Utilizing ICT to Promote Motivation towards Language Learning among. *Utilizing ICT to Promote Motivation towards Language Learning among.*

[19] Papastergiou, M. 2009. Digital Game-Based Learning in high school Computer Science education: Impact on educational effectiveness and student motivation. *Computers & Education, 52*(1), 1-12. doi: 10.1016/j.compedu.2008.06.004

[20] Kostaris, C., Sergis, S., Sampson, D. G., Giannakos, M. N., & Pelliccione, L. 2017. Investigating the Potential of the Flipped Classroom Model in K-12 ICT Teaching and Learning: An Action Research Study. *Educational Technology & Society, 20*(1), 261–273

[21] Tsai, C.-H., Cheng, C.-H., Yeh, D.-Y., & Lin, S.-Y. 2016. Can learning motivation predict learning achievement? A case study of a mobile game-based English learning approach. *Education and Information Technologies, 22*(5), 2159-2173. doi: 10.1007/s10639-016-9542-5

[22] Dogoriti, E., & Pange, J. 2013. Considerations for Online English Language Learning: The Use of Facebook in Formal and. The Social Classroom: Integrating Social Network Use in Education: Integrating Social Network Use in Education, 147.

[23] Al Awani, A., Senteni, A., & Singh, A. D. 2016. *An Investigation About the Usage and Impact of Digital Video for Learning.* Paper presented at the ECEL 2016-Proceedings of the 15th European Conference on e-Learning.