

TECHNOLOGY TRENDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AT TERTIARY LEVEL IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Twenty-first century Student at tertiary level carries more than a traditional resource pack in classroom. With the introduction of modern technology, the dynamics of teaching and learning has reshaped. This paper aims to investigate the use of technology in English language teaching and learning at tertiary level in physical classroom. To be more specific, this study was carried out to explore the trends of technology use at tertiary level in English language related courses offered at four private sector universities in Karachi. The data were collected through survey questionnaire via Google forms, from 35 English language teachers, who taught the courses and 134 students enrolled in the courses. Findings reveal that, internet, computers (desktops/laptops), videos and overhead projectors were the most frequently used technology tools out of 21 different types of technology tools on the list with 92%, 78%, 68% and 65% respectively. Whereas, the use of web-based tools such as classwiki, googledocs and e-news were the least practiced for teaching English language. The study concludes that English language teachers at tertiary level were actively using internet and desktop/laptops tools in their classroom while were found to less inclined toward social media based technology forums for teaching purposes.

Keywords: Instructional Technology, Educational Technology, Higher Education

INTRODUCTION

With the introduction of modern technology, the dynamics of teaching and learning has reshaped. Teaching over the last three decades has reshaped with the introduction of technology. The concept of teaching is constant to change only (Belvins, 2018). Now teaching and learning do not require traditional time and space limitations. Teaching and learning both need substitute learning process for enhancement so that utilization of technology is a medium through which these can be upgraded (Puspitarini & Hanif, 2019). Technology has influenced almost all walks of life, and language teaching is no exception. It has provided great teaching and learning experience for both instructors and learners of English language as well (Jan, 2018). Technology not only has created unlimited resources of teaching and learning but has improved the standards of language teaching and learning (Coskun & Marlowe, 2015). Second language teaching and learning through technology has become easier and less expensive due to more access to technology. -According to Misha, Metthew and Zaho (2007), educationists are able to customize the needs of the learners. Technology has also introduced new dimensions to education policies and practices; it provides a platform where all stakeholders can work together. Misha, Metthew and Zaho (2007) state that English language teachers have been able to establish a strong connection between the curriculum and the practical approach of language learning and its usage with the help of technology. Teachers have a settled concept about integration of technology in the advancement of curricula and they have approved classroom activities that nurtured the twenty-first century competences tied together with technology (Oudeweetering & Voogt, 2018).

Technology integration is a source of motivation for the second language learners as well, due to the availability of open source material on internet; learners have become more autonomous (Mehdiyev, 2018). Technology has also provided opportunities to English language Teachers access language teacher material from various authentic sources of the world- According to Farr and Murray (2016), technology can facilitate in different ways: it is a source of authentic material, active participation, diversity in learning, and cooperative learning. Hockly (2016) further states that with the help to technology more senses can be utilized to language learning and teaching, in addition to just black and white texts; videos graphs, pictures and audios also become part of English language teaching learning process, which help the language learners to learn a language better and faster.

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan (2005-2010) encourages use of technology in teaching learning process, “technology should be capable to develop an atmosphere conducive to teaching, learning and research, capacity building/ training of faculty, students and staff is imperative to train them for effective use of library and technology”(p.38).

Technology use in Pakistan still has much space for growth, but efforts are being made to integrate technology—at all levels of education across the country. Suleman and Hussain (2014) conducted a study Khyber Pakhtunkhwa conclude that availability of the technology in both government and private sector institutions is a matter of concern. They observed that computers, educational software and videos were utilized as tools in teaching learning process some extent in private sector institutions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, whereas, in public sector institutions, only charts were used in addition to chalk board.

Keeping the above discussed background in mind, there is a need to integrate technology at all levels of education in Pakistan to make teaching of English language more effective and increase students’ motivation, learning and achievement. It needs to be explored that what technology tools are being practiced at tertiary level in Pakistan.

Previous research has largely focused on exploring the perceptions of English language teachers about the use of technology at school level, but students’ perceptions have not been investigated. This study aimed to fill the gap in literature by investigating the perceptions of university teachers about the use of technology and exploring the perceptions and experiences of university students about the technology used in English language related courses taught at higher institutions.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of Pakistani tertiary level English language teachers and students regarding the use of technology in teaching English related courses. This study was conducted to answer, what technology tools are used by English language teaching to teach English language related courses at tertiary level-

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Education began to change and develop in the 20th century and the reason for this was the advancement of technology which gave us different ways of teaching in the class and using machines as well like education T.V, computers, and laptops etc. to help instruct a class, this was widely used and has been shown to help raise the standard of education. The usage of technology in classrooms is a great opportunity for instructors and learners to maximize their practices through technology enriched education settings (Paul, Hilary, Alan & Bernadro, 2021) . A great deal of learning that is taking place within any educational system today is only possible due to the integration of the technology into classrooms environment (Gilakjani, 2013). It is one of the key factors of rapid development of the language learning phenomenon in today’s world as the sense of achievement among its users has improved their confidence level. Boulter (2007) stated that learning is no more centralized to teachers as in past they were considered the only source of information; technology has changed the focal point, as a result students’ dependency on technology has strengthened than teachers. Students feel more self-reliant. According to Litster, Mallows and Morris (2014), although, the claim is very strong, the achievement in learning is only possible if the integration of technology into curriculum is very well thought. Coskun and Marlowe (2015) added that integration of technology in second language teaching is dated back 1960s. However, its impact and usage has dramatically increased over last two decades especially after the introduction of internet and its wide and convenience of availability. The graph of using technology has risen further with the latest social networking sites and easy-to-use application software. This has led to the question that should English

language teachers innovate themselves or their practice of English language teaching should remain traditional? The people who practice technology claim high of its effectiveness. For example, Stannard (2016) said that language learning and technology have a strong correlation and all four components of language (listening, reading, writing and speaking) can be facilitated by the use of technology. However, even with the resources available to integrate technology into teaching, teacher's professional growth remains a reason that makes the technology integration yet more than a challenge (Harrell & Bynum, 2018).

The Use of Technology in Global Context

Martimelli and Bart (2010) have stated that in Norway, all Norwegian Universities and Colleges are using electronic infrastructures to stay connected. A number of universities are giving students that are working in the field video camera computers so they are able to stay in touch electronically with the help of internet facilities to the campus to share their experiences and finding in seminars and discussions as well as do assignments; technology is used in many areas of interest in Thailand. Stanley (2010) said that cultural studies of technology, racial relations, demonstration of music, and questioning of social problems and its solutions could all be improved or solved with the help of technology and the fields of aeronautical, electrical and biological industries are already using technology. It is also used in communication research, since it can be very important for mass media and as well as in sociology, anthropology, economics, psychology, and political science. Technology tools are also used as studying material for example T.V, radios, and other technology with programs. Mehmoudi and Razzak (2012) discovered the willingness in students in order to add technology to their learning process. Moreover it was revealed that the area of vocabulary enhancement was much influenced and results showed a strong effect of technology in that area.

Use of Technology in Pakistan

Pakistan has focused on the social and economic development of its citizens through providing educational and training opportunities to its citizens. The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has been made the compulsory part of teacher training programs in order to improve the quality of teaching in the educational institutions. To integrate use of technology at all the educational levels in Pakistan, different development projects, such as Education Sector Reforms (ESR) and Teacher Training Project (TTP), have been launched. Modern educational technology is being brought in the access of Pakistani students by setting up computer labs and providing internet access to the educational institutions (Zehra & Bilwani, 2016). The use of multimedia projectors for the classroom instruction is becoming common, especially at the tertiary level, in Pakistani educational institutions.

Microsoft Partners in Learning (PIL) is also collaborating for capacity building of education planners and managers. For quality delivery, teachers are being trained in collaboration with the institutes of information technology and the departments of computer sciences in the universities and private sector. So far 38,000 teachers and teachers' trainers have completed the training by INTEL since 2003. In addition, as per the report published by USAID in December 2014, under the terms of the memorandum of understanding (MOU), INTEL will provide training to at least 800 teachers, 4,000 students, and 4,000 out-of-school adolescents and adults over a period of three years. The training will enable them to use information communication technology (ICT) effectively in education, literacy, and daily activities.

The Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) has launched a satellite distinguished as Pak. Sat-2 and is being used for mass education and staff development. Educational institutions are being provided internet facilities. According to Hanson (2009) Virtual University is giving education and training through e-learning in the fields of information technology at undergraduate and graduate levels. All the universities both in public and private sectors are becoming online for sharing information and experiences. Websites of Provincial Education Departments and the Ministry are placed with robust information on policy, programs and budgets available to the public, and are updated regularly.

The emphasis on technology integration at tertiary level has been on the rise as research reveals the benefit of this integration.

Use of Technology in Academia

To improve productivity and efficiency in higher education institutions administrators believe that the use of technology is needed (Jugovich & Reeves, 2006). Higher education has also started offering

eLearning course in higher numbers as a form of technology. This new type of educational opportunity is changing the link between learners and educational institutions. Khan (2005) said "since more and more institutions offer e-learning programs, learners have more options to compare quality, services, price, and convenience of education providers" (p. 23). Because of this the relationship between learner and educational institute will look more like one of a customer and sales market with high competition. The higher education market has started developing new trends and technology at a quicker pace.

Higher Education and Technology

Language learning is enhanced by technology which gives the student different learning examples; Web based delivery through the internet which holds a huge amount of resources helps to enable implicit and explicit learning in language learners (Bhatia & Ritchie, 2009).

Technology Practice in English Language Teaching in Pakistan

In Pakistan the English language teaching learning is mainly done through the conventional way of textbooks and is seen as the best way to teach ESL. Even though it has been seen that in Pakistan ESL learners are using technology for different uses, ESL teachers need to be aware of the applications that come through technology for teaching and learning to help give students a better way of learning and a better experience. Majeed (2009) states the importance of English language teachers in Pakistan of how to use applications of computers especially in the digital age to become better teachers.

Language teaching and learning through technology had become common by the end of the twentieth century. Although in Pakistan the Higher Education Commission (HEC) (HEC, 2007) of Pakistan began using new techniques which resulted in the development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and English language education. The English Language Teaching Reform (ELTR) committee of HEC in 2005 started a subcommittee which aimed at providing electronic technology which could help to enhance learning and teaching in class to English language teachers (Rana, nd). Modern technology for technology tuned Pakistanis has become a good method for ESL since it can help to promote English language teaching and learning.

Learning English is a primary factor for attaining higher education and a good livelihood in Pakistan. The importance of English can be seen and the need to provide teachers with up to date technology so that the teaching-learning process can be enhanced.

METHODOLOGY

To conduct this study, the researchers opted for survey research approach. Brown (2001) defined survey research as "any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting them among existing answers" (p. 6).

In addition, the other set of participants were the students enrolled in the courses of English language or subjects that were English language related such as Freshman English, Business Communication, Speech courses, etc.

Sampling procedure

The target population for this study were English Language Teachers and tertiary level students from four selected private sector universities. The selection of the institutions was based on purposive sampling technique.

Data for this study were collected with the help of a close-ended questionnaire from 37 teachers and 134 students of the selected universities. The data were collected via Google Forms as they are considered one of the best options for online data collection (Yang, 2015). Two separate forms were developed and emailed to 80 English language teachers and 800 students from four selected private sector universities. In addition, the other set of participants were the students enrolled in the courses of English language or subjects that were English language related such as Freshman English, Business Communication, Speech courses, etc. Out of 80 teachers 37 teachers responded to the questionnaire. On the other hand, out of 800 students only 134 students responded to it.

Instruments

The survey questionnaire in this study was adapted from *Teachers' Perceptions of Technology Integration in the United Arab Emirates School Classrooms* (Almekhlafi & Almeqdadi, 2010). The questionnaire validity and reliability were checked before data collection: it was validated by two university professors and reliability was assessed with Cronbach's Alpha 0.94.

Table No. 1: Sample of the study

	Male	Female	Total
English Language Teachers	11	26	37
Students Registered in English Language Courses	81	53	134

DATA ANALYSIS

Technology Tools Used by English Language Teachers at Universities

The following table shows frequency and percentages of technology tools used by 37 English language teachers at the selected four private sector universities.

Table No. 2: technology tools used by English Language Teachers

Type of technology	Frequency	Percentage
Computer	29	78.4
Different computer software	17	45.9
Internet	34	91.9
Multimedia/Overhead projector	24	64.9
Electronic email	22	59.5
Videos	25	67.6
TV	5	13.5
Turnitin	11	29.7
e-newspaper	9	24.3
Audio/podcast	14	37.8
Recorded lectures	10	27
Dropbox/googledrive	6	16.2
Googledocs	5	13.5
RSSFeeds	0	0
Classwiki	2	5.41
Blogs	9	24.3
Smart Whiteboard	9	24.3
Social networking sties	15	40.5
Whatsapp	10	27
Mobile application	12	32.4
Smartphones	10	27

Among twenty-one different types of technology, the use of internet was the highest with 91.9% and RSSFeeds was the lowest with 0%. No teacher was found using RSSFeeds into English language teaching. Computer, videos, multimedia and electronic emails were above average with 78.4%, 67.6%, 64.9% and 59.5% respectively. Seventeen teachers said that they practiced Different Computer Software in teaching English the percentage of which was just below fifty percent with 45.9%. However, the use of turnitin compared to social networking sites, audio/podcast and mobile application was the least with only 29.7% whereas the rest of three were higher in percentage with 40.5%, 37.8% and 32.4% respectively. Recorded lectures, whatsapp and use of smartphones had the equal percentage with 10%. The remaining technology items were used as low as below 10% of the English language teachers at higher educational institutions.

Technology used by English language Teachers: students' perception

This section covers frequencies and percentages of students' perception regarding type of technology used by English language teachers in English language related courses at four selected private sector universities.

Table No. 3 Technology tools exposed to the Students learning English

Type of technology	Frequency	Percentage
Computer	86	64.2
Different computer software	44	32.8
Internet	122	91.0
Multimedia/Overhead projector	17	12.7
Electronic email	64	47.8
Videos	80	59.7
TV	42	31.3
Turnitin	103	76.9
e-newspaper	59	44.0
Audio/podcast	20	14.9
Recorded lectures	31	23.1
Dropbox/googledrive	43	32.1
Googledocs	50	37.3
RSSFeeds	2	1.5
Classwiki	18	13.4
Blogs	57	42.5
Smart Whiteboard	21	15.7
Social networking sties	68	50.7
Whatsapp	76	56.7
Mobile application	77	57.5
Smartphones	81	60.4

As the instrument covered twenty-one different types of technology, the use of internet was the highest with 91% and RSSFeeds was the lowest with 1.5%. Only two students out of one hundred and thirty four were found using RSSFeeds for English language learning. The data indicated that use of Turnitin, Computer, smartphones, videos, mobile applications, whatsapp and social networking sties were above average among students with 76.9%, 64.2%, 60.4%, 59.7%, 57.5%, 56.7% and 50.7% respectively. The result showed that use of Trunitin and social networking sties had noticeable difference. Little less than 50% students said that they practiced Electronic mail, e-newspapers and blogs. Approximately one third of the participants reported that they practiced Googledocs, different computer software, dropbox/googledrive in English related subjects. Less than a quarter students said that they were exposed to recorded lectures, smart whiteboard, audio/podcast, classwiki and multimedia/overhead projected as learning tools.

DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this research study was to explore the practice of technological tools used in English language classrooms at tertiary level in Pakistan. The data findings were gathered with the help of close ended questionnaires through Google forms which analyzed the data. Total 37 English language teachers participated in this study including 26 female teachers and 11 male teachers. On the other hand, students' perceptions were recorded from 81 male and 53 female students registered in a language course.

This research study suggested some worthy findings in terms of technological tools used by teachers. It was found that English language teachers at tertiary level were actively using internet and computers and tools like information filled videos, multimedia and overhead projectors. Student's data showed a significant comparison in terms of perspectives regarding the use of technology. The results showed that students are also eager to use internet and educational websites for learning. Most of the students showed positive attitude towards the use of computers and smartphones.

The results of this research study showed consistence with the prior research conducted by Boulter (2007) concluding that learning no more is centralized to teachers only and students can learn through different technological modes. It is evident that the use of computers and the internet makes the learning procedure more exciting and diverse and increase the cognitive activity of students (Harrell & Bynum, 2018). The study supports the theory of Bhatia and Ritchie (2009), which also states that web based learning, provides abundant resources and helps students learn both implicitly and explicitly.

Furthermore, the present study caters the idea presented by Majeed (2009) and brings focus on how important it is to train the teachers about the use of latest technology in classrooms.

CONCLUSIONS

The use of technology has been widely accepted and practiced in private sector universities where the basic infrastructure and facilities are available. However, the latest technology tools are not being practiced by the teachers of English. To further probe the matters the impact of technology and motivation can be assessed by providing relevant trainings. Teachers of English should be encouraged to inculcate new technology based teaching methodology. Since, it has been difficult to stop students to interact with technological devices in the digital age; teachers should learn to convert into something of value.

Limitation of the Study

Like any research, this study also has some limitations. The data have been collected from only four universities located in Karachi. The data have been collected only from private universities. The researcher has focused on the universities in the urban areas only where presumably technology related resource were available and were accessible.

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