

USING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING ENGLISH

English is an international language and its popularity is increasing day after day. It has become the necessity as everything is done with the help of this language. At the same time information technology (IT) continues developing and introduces new approaches of learning and inquiring the language.

IT and language teaching have been hand to hand for decades so far. It is difficult to imagine teaching without using the computer software. This issue has been discussed in different books (Chesters, 1987; Brierley, 1991; Sabourin, 1994; Boswood, 1997; Beatty, 2003; Lee, Jor & Lai, 2005; Szendeffy, 2005; Towndrow, 2007; Gavin Dudeney & Nicky Hockly, 2007 etc).

Nowadays using of information technology at the English lessons is also very important. Information technology provides teachers an endless choice of multimedia, software, applications and devices with which to create more exciting, interactive lessons. The traditional English lecture-based lesson, while effective to a point, does not stimulate every type of learner. By adding a dimension to their lessons, English teachers have the opportunity to engage more students and lead a more involved, energetic class [1].

Many mobile devices have one or more cameras and where there is a reliable internet connection; users can communicate over distance using simple video conferencing tools. Clever software can facilitate the delivery of multi-modal content as well as offering the potential to register user interaction, provide feedback and track progress [3, p. 37].

Interactive audio and video allow real time communication using phones and computer at the English lessons. Voice over Internet Protocol enables a person's voice to be transmitted through an Internet connection. Voice and multimedia presentations can be delivered to a dispersed class with questions and answers taking place in real-time [1].

With advancements in information technology like multimedia applications and interactive software, teachers can increase literacy and understanding in any subject. Lessons with audio and video components that directly engage students reach more types of learners in comparison with traditional lecture methods of teaching, encouraging more students to participate in class and raising their level of understanding. New technology also helps disabled or disadvantaged students participate in subjects they were once unable to join, thanks to assistive programs and devices [1].

'Smart' devices (both phones and tablets) feature dedicated software applications (apps) that can be used to assist language learning [3, p. 39].

It can be seen from the case studies and illustrative examples in this chapter that technology has a significant role to play in enhancing the delivery of English language teaching and learning in the primary sector. The range of technologies now available can support teachers in a variety of ways both inside the young learner classroom, but also increasingly in the home environment and

while learners are on the move about their daily lives [3, p. 39].

There has been a tremendous growth of information communication technologies (ICT) across the board in recent years. An overwhelming majority of teachers in Europe (90 per cent) use ICT to prepare their lessons (Empirica, 2006). All European Union (EU) countries have invested in ICT in schools and this has included spending on 'equipment, connectivity, professional development and digital learning content' (Balanskat, Blamire, and Stella, 2006: 2). Furthermore, the European Union has also set targets for enhancing digital literacy, skills and inclusion (European Commission, 2012). Outside the EU, the story seems to be the same. In the US, the Office of Educational Technology (OET) has developed a 'National Educational Technology Plan' (OET, 2010) for transforming education through the power of technology. [3, p. 45].

The incorporation of technology into school-wide teaching pedagogy as outlined above means that students will also develop digital literacy skills at the same time as acquiring a second language [3, p. 58].

Literacy includes the ability to read and interpret media, to reproduce data and images through digital manipulation, and to evaluate and apply new knowledge gained from digital environments.' (Jones-Kavaliar and Flannigan, 2006: 1). One thing is certain, to be literate in the 21st century requires a more 'multimodal' (i.e. combining words, images, and sounds) approach because 'multimodality is more pervasive, diverse, and important today than ever before' (Gee and Hayes, 2011: 5) [3].

In conclusion, we may say that technology is an indivisible part of the 21st century education. When used correctly during the class, technology can allow students to immerse into the English speaking environment which leads to a better motivation and higher results. Through technology, books and figures can suddenly become alive and applicable to the real world. It makes learning available to students with more varied learning styles and more student-centred.

Literature:

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