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The Use of Modern Technology in Learning English as Second Language: A study at undergraduate level in South Punjab, Pakistan

Abstract:

The purpose of current research is to highlight the influence of using modern technology in teaching English as a second language. It explains that productivity of pedagogical process can be increased if technology is infused in it tactfully. There are several ways in which modern technology can be employed in class like English language learning web sites, Mobile assisted language learning, computer assisted language learning programs, presentation software, digital dictionaries, chatting and email messaging programs, listening CD-audios, and watching of English language learning videos and stories. Questionnaire was employed to collect the data from 300 students learning English language in various undergraduate programs of two universities of Bahawalpur. The findings revealed that most of the students choose the use of technology, especially mobile and computers, in developing their second language skills. The study advises proper training to use various software related to language learning.

Key Words:

Computer Assisted Language learning (CALL), Educational Technology, Mobile Assisted Language learning, Modern Language Teaching Tools

Introduction

Modern technology has completely changed the techniques of teaching and learning the language in addition to the instructor's role and learner's expectations from instructor. The instructor with the help of technology can revolutionize learning outcomes (Sharma, 2009). Students who want to learn English as a second language need to integrate all the main language skills to be more proficient and more successful (Ybarra & Green, 2003). For this purpose, they need to use modern technology and other aiding tools. These tools would make their learning interesting and motivating. It is a fact that modern technology has changed our lives altogether and it can be exploited to get desired results in teaching learning process as well. The technology has lessened the labour on the part of instructor and made the learner more resourceful and independent. The term New Technology is very vast and broad. It can facilitate communication and give access to the learning material in which computer is indispensable (Davies & Hewer, 2012). In addition to this there are many other software, tools and techniques that play a vital role in making teaching and learning process rapid and effective. In order to reap the fruit of modern technology, students need to have computer and internet literacy.

Background of the Study

Technology and learning really join hands in this modern era (Singhal, 1997). In olden times, laboratories were set up for teaching English practically. Those laboratories were having speakers, headphones, microphones, tape recorders and cassettes. Teacher had to instruct and monitor each and every activity of the students. No doubt that step was fruitful in

enhancing students' skills but material and techniques were somewhat boring. Those drills were not able to create real life situations. At the same time student was not independent and teacher was more than a facilitator. Those laboratories failed to arouse the interest of the students and accelerate learning process.

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Computer assisted language learning (CALL) software is another useful assistant in teaching English as second language. The application of technology has made teacher's job easier and at the same time has given learners easy access to require materials in English language classroom .Presently, there are many other soft wares that enhance learners' vocabulary and develop their comprehension of language and grammar. Students of English can improve their pronunciation with the help of electronic dictionaries. Then with the help of internet and computer, teachers can create artificial situations in the classroom for the practice of the learners. In short, computer aided programs help the learners to build the foundation and framework of English on firm basis.

Related Literature

Learning English means to get mastery of four basic skills that are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Technology has different tools and techniques to develop all these skills .Each tool has its own specific function and utility. But all these are equally significant in teaching -learning process ([Sharma, 2009](#)). Four basic skills of English can be called receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing). These skills are effectively developed with the help of different educational soft wares.

Use of Modern Technology in Listening Skill

Listening means to identify and discriminate different sounds in communication. It includes understanding speakers words, their relation, different rules that govern these words and sentences and speaker's intentions and purpose of talking ([Saricoban, 1999](#)). The listener has to be very cautious and alert during interaction. He has to listen, comprehend and memorize at the same time. Listening is a primary skill, so learner has to have its full command. He can develop it by practice and just practice.

Listening is called receptive skill because learner learns vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation through listening.so we can say that listening is the main skill in building the structure of language in learner's mind. If a learner has good listening skill, he can produce English in next steps of learning. Listening feeds the mind of learner and gives him information and ideas ([Saricoban, 1999](#)).

Modern technology has replaced old and worn out methods to improve listening skill. Computer aided programs give the learners an easy access to error free and correct pronunciation and grammar. Student can listen to the target language and imitate it .In this way, students choose material according to their requirements and learn in stress free environment. There are numerous techniques to improve the listening capability of the students which are described as follows. Listening to TV and radio is a very useful way to enhance listening skill. Such programs develop learner's comprehension and pronunciation. Then they tell what to speak and how to. Speak in different situations in life through these programs students learn practical language. CD-player can be used in English language laboratory. It is useful in the sense that material can be recorded on them and played again when needed. The learners frequently use this device to produce and reproduce the material and develop their listening skill.

Tap-recorders are somewhat older devices to enhance listening skill but their importance can never be denied. They are not completely discarded and still be used to record and produce the material in language class.

Use of Modern Technology in Reading Skill

Reading is to comprehend the written symbols by the reader. It is also called receptive or input skill .This is important in the sense that all other skills depend on it .If a learner wants to develop reading skill he should learn new words and word's structure. There are many tools, games and soft wares to improve vocabulary and structures ([Constantinescu, 2007](#)). Interesting online books, stories, jokes and other materials are available to improve reading skill of the readers and quench their thirst at the same time.

Several methods can be utilized to improve the reading ability of the learners through the use of technology. Some of them are given below. Computer has become a vital part of educational process. Computer captures the interest of the students and keeps them motivated. Internet provides very effective and easy texts to enhance the reading skill even the learners who have no interest in reading process may be attracted very easily to the interesting material presented by internet. Computer aided programs provide very good chances of practice and at the same time they can pick the mistakes of readers and rectify them. Learners can check their comprehension by taking different tests and exams on internet.

These days' lectures are delivered through multimedia and this new strategy has aroused the interest of even passive and demotivated students. Multimedia lectures are very eye catching and force the learners to read and learn. The Internet is a pool of knowledge and information. We need to browse internet even for petty jobs and tasks. This searching and browsing exposes us to a vast sea of knowledge. We pick the thing of our interest and perform our task. But this thing surely builds our vocabulary and increases our comprehension of language. The learners may improve their reading skill by reading different magazines, newspapers, journals, and letters on internet. Electronic dictionaries are a very effective way of building vocabulary. Through these dictionaries students can learn new words and their correct usage. Online dictionaries even tell the correct pronunciation of words. Students need not hold heavy hard copies of dictionaries. Then these dictionaries have some unique and modern applications that are not present in book dictionaries. Many online word games are there on internet to facilitate learners of English language. The learners play these games and become quick in using appropriate word at the right time. The learners access these games easily and play them with great interest and curiosity. In this way the learners use words and build their vocabulary unconsciously.

Use of Modern Technology to Develop Oral English

Language is to speak and communicate ideas. Communication may be of two types that are oral and written. Face to face communication is more effective as compared to written communication. Teaching a language should be started with speaking and interaction. This skill can be enhanced with the help of modern technological tools. The learners can use internet to chat about their daily programs, their habits, likes, dislikes etc. Internet gives sufficient opportunities to the learners to express themselves in general conversation. Here learners learn to speak in comfortable and stress free environment. Communication is defined as the transfer of information from a source to a receiver. Here learners may transfer the information that other person is missing or vice versa. In this way, they practice language practically and increase their speaking skill effectively.

Use of Modern Technology in Writing Skill

Writing depends on mechanical and mental functioning. It refers to drawing letters, knowledge of the spelling and punctuation. Writing process may be difficult for initial learners but internet provides very useful soft wares and exercises in this respect. Computers have very intelligent and useful programs like MS Word to make our documents flawless and effective. These programs have different usable functions. The learners can write very easily with the help of formatting facilities. The learners can write in different font sizes, can bold letters, change their designs, use different layouts, replace, delete or change words and even save documents for later use and send them through mails. The learners can even correct their spelling and grammar mistakes with the help of grammar and spelling checks. Students can use these applications and mold materials to meet their specific requirements. Electronic mail is to send messages electronically. E mail makes this sending very quick and efficient. It can be proved very effective in enhancing writing skill at the same time. These days' hard copies of letters and mails are out dated. New and modern trend is to communicate through internet. The learners can learn how to respond and write correctly and nicely with the help of modern technology. Text chatting is also very interesting and useful application to amend writing skill. Chatting makes the learners fluent and eloquent without much effort. At the same time learners learn how to speak by using proper words

in different situations. .chatting with native speakers really makes learners to learn language in the real sense of the word.

Methodology

Objectives of the Study

The major aim of this study was to find out the part and function of modern technology in teaching English. The sub-aims were to determine:

1. Awareness related to modern technology used in English language learning.
2. The practical use of various software and gadgets in teaching English as second language.

Research Design

The research approach used in this study was quantitative. Survey research method was applied to find the truth. A questionnaire was used to collect the data from the university students.

Sampling Approach

Purposive sampling technique was used to select the individuals for the purpose of this research. Individuals for the study were selected from public sector universities of South Punjab Pakistan (The Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Cholistan University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences Bahawalpur).

Questionnaire

The questionnaire for students (participants) was distributed among 300 students to collect the information regarding to use computer in teaching English language.

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was personally delivered and data were collected from the target population of the current study. This ensured a high return rate of questionnaire. These self-administered questionnaires were completed by the participants without the assistance or presence of the researcher.

Data Processing and Analysis Procedure

Data collected from 300 students were inscribed on data sheet of the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The data were tabulated and analyzed under the expertise of the advisor. On the basis of findings, conclusion and suggestions were created. The analyzed data are presented in tabulation form followed by explanation.

Table 1. Frequency (%), Mean and Standard Deviation Use of modern technology in second language learning

Item No.	Use of technology in learning second language	1*	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
1	I believe that my language skills can be enhanced by using digitized tools.	2.7	7.6	6.3	57.6	25.8	3.04	.933
2	I practically use technology to accelerate my English language learning.	15.5	8.2	11.3	20.2	44.7	3.61	1.203
3	Computer really improves my English vocabulary and pronunciation.	2.4	3.6	5.5	14.3	52.1	3.20	1.075

4	I believe that computers in the classroom make the students more alert and observant.	22.9	11.3	4.6	22.1	39.1	3.60	1.35 1
5	My teachers encourage me to use technology for learning English language.	13.2	7.6	13.0	23.1	43.1	3.69	1.18 3
6	My university provides advanced technological tool and soft wares for learning English language.	24.2	53.2	6.5	11.1	4.8	3.19	1.07 5
7	The technology assists me to learn English language faster than other conventional ways.	4.8	10.1	7.5	22.2	55.6	3.94	1.02

Note. *1 = Never or almost never true of me; 2 = Usually not true of me; 3 = Somewhat true of me; 4 = Usually true of me; 5 = Always or almost always true of me.

Table 1 is showing the reply of the participants to the statements regarding to the use of modern technology for the use of technology in learning second language i. e I believe that using technology can help me to improve my speaking skills (M=3.04,SD 0.933),. I use technology for English language learning (M=3.61,SD 1.203), I believe that the computer can improve my English vocabulary (M=3.20,SD 1.075), I believe that using computer in the classroom increases students' interaction with learning (M=3.60,SD 1.351), My teachers encourage me to use technology for learning English language (M=3.69,SD 1.183), My university has a good source of technology for learning English language (M=3.19,SD 1.075), I think technology will help me to learn English language faster than other ways (M=3.94,SD 1.02). Results of data analysis in relation to the participants' responses in relation to the modern technology use in second language learning indicate that modern technology play significant role in learning English as second language.

Table 2. Frequency (%), mean and standard deviation use of modern technology in second language learning of listening skill

Item No.	Technology use for Listening Skill	1*	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
8	I believe that the use of computer will improve my listening skills	2.7	8.7	6.3	51.5	33.5	3.95	0.95
9	I use computer to develop listening skill.	12.8	3.2	3.2	31.1	49.2	3.09	1.02
10	Voice chat really proves to be helpful in improving my pronunciation.	5.5	11.6	5.7	30.5	46.8	3.15	1.14
11	Some TV and radio programs make me able to speak correct English.	4.0	7.4	6.9	54.0	27.7	4.0	1.00
12	I learn fast by watching movies.	9.2	16.2	9.0	38.0	27.5	3.76	1.23
13	You tube facilitate me to learn English fast and correctly.	12.0	20.6	4.8	34.9	27.7	3.46	1.40
14	Use of multimedia in classroom motivates me to learn English language.	18.7	13.4	7.4	28.2	32.4	3.85	1.34
15	I use my mobile for listening of pod cast and BBC hard talk to improve my listening.	12.2	3.2	3.6	35.3	45.6	4.02	1.08
16	I use mobile to improve my English pronunciation and accent.	3.6	7.1	4.2	48.1	37.0	3.92	1.08

Note. *1 = Never or almost never true of me; 2 = Usually not true of me; 3 = Somewhat true of me; 4 = Usually true of me; 5 = Always or almost always true of me.

Table 2 is showing the response of the participants to the statements regarding to the use of modern technology for the listening skill i. e I believe that the use of computer will improve my listening skills ($M=3.95,SD 0.95$), I use computer to develop listening skill, Voice chat really proves to be helpful in improving my pronunciation($M=3.09,SD 1.02$), Some TV and radio programs make me able to speak correct English ($M=3.15,SD 1.14$), I learn fast by watching movies ($M=4.00,SD 1.00$), You tube facilitate me to learn English fast and correctly ($M=3.76,SD 1.23$), Use of multimedia in classroom motivates me to learn English language ($M=3.85,SD 1.34$), I use my mobile for listening of pod cast and BBC hard talk to improve my listening($M=4.02,SD 1.08$), I use mobile to improve my English pronunciation and accent ($M=3.92,SD 1.08$). Means and standard deviation values, represent that the students improve their listening skill through modern technology. It mean modern technology play significant role in enhancing English language listening skill.

Table 3. Frequency (%), Mean and Standard Deviation Use of modern technology in second language learning of Reading skill

Item No.	Technology use for Reading Skill	1*	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
17	I read on line stories using my mobile or computer.	2.7	7.6	6.3	57.6	25.8	3.04	.933
18	It is easier and cheaper to read books available on inter net.	20.2	8.2	11.3	15.5	44.7	3.61	1.203
19	I can search any book of my interest on enter net.	2.4	3.6	5.5	14.3	52.1	3.20	1.075
20	Computer based reading programs motivate me to learn	22.9	11.3	4.6	22.1	39.1	3.60	1.351
21	I check my error and then correct them by using computer aided programs.	13.2	7.6	13.0	23.1	43.1	3.69	1.183

Note. *1 = Never or almost never true of me; 2 = Usually not true of me; 3 = Somewhat true of me; 4 = Usually true of me; 5 = Always or almost always true of me.

Table 3 is showing the response of the participants to the statements regarding to the use of modern technology for the listening skill i. e I read on line stories using my mobile or computer ($M=3.04,SD .933$), It is easier and cheaper to read books available on inter net ($M=3.61,SD 1.203$), I can search any book of my interest on enter net ($M=3.20,SD 1.075$), Computer based reading programs motivate me to learn ($M=3.60,SD 1.351$), I check my error and then correct them by using computer aided programs ($M=3.69,SD 1.183$). Results related to use of modern technology for reading English language skills clearly indicates the important role of modern technology in learning English language.

Table 4. Frequency (%), Mean and Standard Deviation Use of modern technology in second language learning of writing skill

Item No.	Technology use for writing Skill	1*	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
22	Writing emails and chat have made writing task easier.	7.6	2.7	6.3	25.8	57.6	3.04	.93
23	I produce quality writing through computer.	15.5	8.2	11.3	20.2	44.7	3.61	1.03
24	Computer provides useful suggestions for writing anything from unexplored areas of life.	2.4	3.6	5.5	14.3	52.1	3.20	1.05

Note. *1 = Never or almost never true of me; 2 = Usually not true of me; 3 = Somewhat true of me; 4 = Usually true of me; 5 = Always or almost always true of me.

The table is showing the response of the participants to the statements regarding the use of modern technology for the listening skill i. e Writing emails and chat have made writing task easier (M=3.04,SD .93), I produce quality writing through computer (M=3.61,SD 1.03), Computer provides useful suggestions for writing anything from unexplored areas of life (M=3.20,SD 1.05). Results regarding to modern technology use in learning English language writing skills support the significant role of modern technology in learning English language writing skill.

Table 5. Frequency (%), Mean and Standard Deviation Use of modern technology in second language learning of listening skill

Item No.	Technology use for speaking Skill	1*	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
25	I speak through imitating my listening.	7.6	2.7	6.3	25.8	57.6	3.74	1.01
26	Mobile and computer has improved my speaking.	15.5	8.2	11.3	20.2	44.7	3.81	1.00
27	Through standard listening material available on inter net I improved my pronunciation and accent	2.4	3.6	5.5	14.3	52.1	3.95	1.05

Note. *1 = Never or almost never true of me; 2 = Usually not true of me; 3 = Somewhat true of me; 4 = Usually true of me; 5 = Always or almost always true of me. **The percentages (%) have been rounded to the nearest tenths

Table 5 is showing the response of the participants to the statements regarding to the use of modern technology for the listening skill i. e I speak through imitating my listening (M=3.74,SD 1.01). Mobile and computer has improved my speaking (M=3.81,SD 1.00). Through standard listening material available on internet I improved my pronunciation and accent (M=3.95,SD1.05). Results regarding to modern technology use in learning English language speaking skills support the important role of modern technology in learning English language speaking skill.

Findings and Discussion

To evaluate the benefit of the use of modern technology English language learning a questionnaire was constructed and applied to collect the data from 300 students learning English language in the two public sector university of south Punjab Pakistan(The Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Cholistan University of veterinary and animal Sciences Bahawalpur). The collected results from data analysis show the following findings:

Most of the students use modern technology for English language learning and are in favor of the use of it for learning purpose. They believe that computer develop vocabulary, class interaction, learning motivation and achievement in learning English Language. The students through modern technology to improve all the four skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing in a well-organized and interesting way. Computer and other software tools help to have reading material of choice with easy access. Books can be downloaded and read by the learners especially novels and stories. Just a single click provides the reader a material for reading of his interest. It improves reading as well as writing skill rapidly. Moreover, email texting, text messaging and chat provide the opportunity of the development of writing skill. The learners can learn how to respond and write correctly and nicely with the help of the modern technology.

Text chatting is also very interesting and useful application to amend writing skill. .chatting makes learners fluent and eloquent without much effort .At the same time learners learn how to speak by using proper

words in different situations. .chatting with native speakers really makes the learners to learn language in the real sense of the word.

Listening to TV and radio is a very useful way to enhance listening skill. Such programs develop learner's comprehension and pronunciation. Then they tell what to speak and how to speak in different situations of life. Through these programs students learn practical language.

CD-player can be used in English language laboratory. It is useful in the sense that material can be recorded on them and played again when needed. The learners frequently use this device to produce and reproduce the material and develop their listening skill.

Tap-recorders are somewhat older devices to enhance listening skill but their importance can never be denied. They are not completely discarded and still be used to record and produce the material in language class.

Learners can use internet to chat about their daily programs, their habits, likes, dislikes etc. Internet gives sufficient opportunities to learners to express themselves in general conversation. .Here learners learn to speak in comfortable and stress free environment. They practice language practically and increase their speaking skill effectively. Modern technology is used to help the learners to learn English language faster than other ways. Findings show the conventional methods are boring in learning English language as there is no element of motivation and interest for learners. Universities are not fully equipped with modern technologies in southern Punjab as they demand of modern era.

Conclusions and Recommendations

On the basis of findings it is concluded that modern techniques such as computers, mobiles, CD players, internet, email chat, text messaging are playing significant role in learning English language. Students feel a drive of motivation for learning language through modern technology. Following are the recommendation on the basis of the study

1. Teaching and learning should be through modern technology to have good and rapid results in English language learning.
2. Educational institutions should be modernized, fully equipped with modern technology to support teaching learning procedure.
3. Second language learning process should be incorporated with theory and practice.
4. Modern technical methods should be followed for real teaching and learning of the English language.
5. English language teachers should be trained to use modern technology in developing the English language skills.
6. Student should be encouraged to use modern technology i.e. laptop, smart phone, computer and internet etc. for English language learning.
7. Teachers training related to use of modern technology in English language learning class should be continuous for the development of their professional skills.
8. Teachers should visit technically advanced institutions, their class room practice to have model in their mind to apply for English Language learning.
9. Students should be trained for the use of modern technology in English language learning.

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