

## THE IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH

*Samandarov Jasurbek Javlonbekovich*

*UrSU academic lyceum*

*a senior English teacher*

**Annotation:** The article describes the importance of using Information Technologies in teaching English. It deals with some problems in the process of teaching EFL for students. Nowadays the importance of incorporating Information Technologies in English language education has often been emphasized, especially by foreign language pedagogy scholars.

**Key words:** english language, communication, information technology, skill, method, computer, listening material, e-book

Currently, learning english languages have become a widely spread phenomenon in the globalized world. We are living in such times when the rapid development of information and communication technologies generates a number of radical change is in our lives, including in the educational process. The position of the English language in the world as the leading means of international communication is associated primarily with the rapid development of high technologies, economics, and technologies. This strengthens the motivation of students who want to learn English as foreign language of intergovernmental communication and scientific research. The 21st century is the age of globalization and information technology as Harry Samuels argues, “Much more recent developments in social media and information technology are taking english-language education in new directions” [18]. English is one of the important mediums of communication in the world, so it is important to learn the language. As a result, English language teaching has been one of the important subjects in education. In fact, there are more non-native than native speakers of the language. There is also the diversity of

context in terms of learner's age, nationality, and learning background that has become an important feature of English language teaching today. The need to teach in general and teach the English language effectively, in particular, is the challenge before all the teachers in Uzbekistan. Technology is an effective tool for learners. Learners must use technology as a significant part of their learning process. Teachers should model the use of technology to support the curriculum so that learners can increase the true use of technology in learning their language skills. As English has gained its popularity so it has become a need for qualified teachers to instruct students in language learning in the easiest way possible. It is true that there are teachers who use advanced technology for interactive teaching, but the majority of teachers are still teaching in the traditional manner. None of these traditional methods of teaching are bad or unuseful for students. As technologies are changing English learning and teaching (ELT) needs to be upgraded to the next level. In fact, to date, they are proving to be useful also. However, there are many more opportunities for students to gain confidence in practice and extend themselves. It is like how teachers use technology to perform familiar activities more effectively and how this usage can re-shape these activities. It supports classroom teaching by completing assignments on the computer rather than a normal pencil and paper. This enhances the use of technology as well as it allows the students to interact with new information technologies. According to Bransford, Brown, and Cocking, the application of computer technology enables teachers and learners to make local and global societies that connect them with the people and expand opportunities for their learning. They continued that the positive effect of computer technology does not come automatically; it depends on how teachers use it in their language classrooms. According to Susikaran, basic changes have come in classes besides the teaching methods because chalk and talk teaching method is not sufficient to effectively teach English.

Raihan and Lock state that with a well-planned classroom setting, learners learn how to learn efficiently. The technology-enhanced teaching environment is more effective than a lecture-based class. Teachers should find methods of applying technology as a useful learning instrument for their learners although they have not

learned technology and are not able to use it as a computer expert. According to Susikaran, basic changes have come in classes besides the teaching methods because chalk and talk teaching method is not sufficient to effectively teach English. Raihan and Lock state that with a well planned classroom setting, learners learn how to learn efficiently. The technology-enhanced teaching environment is more effective than a lecture-based class. Teachers should find methods of applying technology as a useful learning instrument for their learners although they have not learned technology and are not able to use it as a computer expert. The application of technology has considerably changed English teaching methods. It provides so many alternatives as making teaching interesting and more productive in terms of advancement. In traditional classrooms, teachers stand in front of learners and give lecture, explanation, and instruction through using blackboard or whiteboard. This method must be changed concerning the development of technology. The usage of multimedia texts in the classroom assists learners to become familiar with vocabulary and language structures. The application of multimedia also makes use of print texts, film, and internet to enhance learners' linguistic knowledge. English language skills learning has been anytime possible through ICTs. The students can find language learning materials such as e-books, journals, articles for enhancing their reading and writing skills; and videos, conversations, and discussions for improving listening and speaking skills. Likewise, the students can find different reference materials such as dictionaries, and grammar books; and language skills related exercises, apps, or online/offline programs to practice English language skills. In the discussion, the students in college A shared their experiences that ICTs have made English language learning easier and faster. They could download the English language learning materials such as videos, conversations, books, articles, and many more English language learning apps and programs. ICTs help them exchange their ideas and information; and discuss their queries with their teachers and friends anytime they like. The class teacher in the college Bagreed that ICTs could be used to facilitate the student stop develop their English language skills. The advantage was that ICTs helped them to provide several types of learning materials that could

increase the amount of exposure to English. Similarly, ICTs were useful to make updates of their current knowledge, information, and to understand recent pedagogical trends. The teacher from college opined: The advantages of ICTs are that they provide the students with ample exposure to the English language to promote their language skills. The students can use several browsers for searching and downloading several language skills improving exercises and programs. ICTs help me to motivate the students in the class and make their learning long-lasting as they can engage both visual and auditory sensory organs of the students through texts, images, sounds, and motions. Similarly, in the discussion, the students in college B expressed that ICT-based education and ICTs were quite beneficial to them in learning English language skills. The tools help them search and collect English language skills learning materials and practice all types of language skills. The learning resources such as English language dictionaries, English grammar related reference materials, language learning apps which are available through ICTs were very useful them to enhance English language skills. Moreover, the tools such as laptops, smart phones, projectors, email, Skype, Facebook groups, and discussion forums help them share their resources, ideas, and information in easier and less effortful ways. The implementation of ICT will lead to variety in English content, contexts and pedagogical methods in teaching environment. ICT makes English language environment interactive, flexible and innovative. The application of computer technologies in language instruction provides a student-centered learning environment. It enables course administrators and teachers to vary lesson presentation styles to motivate students of varying interests, provides learning opportunities outside the classroom, and is perceived to cater more for individual differences. Integrating technology into language instruction reduces teacher-centered understanding and students' language learning anxiety, but encourages them to be risk takers to practice target language as they are digital natives. Jayanthi and Kumar [9, p.34-38] explain the positive impacts of ICT on ELT under the basic headings such as: availability of materials, students' attitudes, learner autonomy, authenticity, helping teachers, student-centered, and self-assessment. The availability of large body of authentic materials such

as images, animation, audio and video clips facilitate presenting and practicing language. As for students' attitudes, ICTs increase motivation. The students feel highly motivated to learn a language as they displayed positive attitudes towards language learning as they use computer and learn in stress-free learning environment. In addition, ICT fosters learner autonomy as ICT tools provide learners to take responsibilities for their own learning. Students are free to choose the material convenient for their learning styles. Furthermore, ICT provides authentic situations and real life learning environment. As ICTs offer different types of facilities and availability of teaching materials, EFL teachers only suggest and design these tools as complementary teaching materials. Contrary to traditional learning environment, ICT supports student-centred learning together with teacher-student interaction. As for assessment, with the ICTs both receptive and productive skills are effectively assessed. The teacher may decide and design relevant materials to test students' achievement in all skills. Additionally, the following impacts seemed to be the most obvious ones when using ICT to support foreign language teaching:

- The possibility to adapt easily the teaching materials according to circumstances, learner's needs and response;
- ICT allows to react upon and enables the use of recent/daily news, it offers access to authentic materials on the web;
- Possibility to combine/use alternately (basic) skills (text and images, audio and video clip);
- Lectures become more interesting and less ordinary which boosts learners' engagement;
- ICT enables to focus on one specific aspect of the Lesson.

The advantages of ICT usage in english language teaching could be listed as:

1. Capacity to control presentation. This capacity marks the difference between computers and books. Books have a fixed presentation, unlike computers, which can combine visual with listening materials, text with graphics and pictures.

2. Novelty and creativity. A teacher may use different materials for each lesson, not like in teaching with textbooks, where all classes presenting a certain topic are the same.

3. Feedback. Computers provide a fast feedback to students` answers through error correction. It not only spots the mistake but also corrects it, sometimes evengiving the appropriate advice.

4. Adaptability. Computer programmes can be adapted by teachers to suit their students` needs and level of language knowledge .

There is significant evidence of the benefits and advantages that the use of ICT can have on learners. The effective use of ICT impacts on learners and various aspects of the learning process can be summarized as follows: ICT increases learners` motivation and thus enhances personal commitment and engagement; ICT improves independent learning; Learners` collaboration and communication are more important; Learners` attainment and outcomes are improved . On the other hand, the integration of ICT in classrooms can also bring certain disadvantages. Teachers may have difficulty in relation to the integration and implementation of technological tools into course syllabus and curriculum. There are necessities to bear in mind before to use ICTs in EFL classrooms. Therefore, Livingstone asserts that ICT “is not suitable for all learners in all situations and for all purposes, and may require some considerable learner training for effective use”. The problems in classroom management, the lack of highly experienced teachers, choosing the best technological tool matching with course content, finding reliable and acceptable activities for students` learning styles, the costs of new technological tools, and devices, insufficient physical capacity of classrooms are only certain remarkable issues to be taken into consideration before employment of ICTs in language classrooms. Preston and Cox state the drawbacks of using ICTs in classrooms as follows: difficulties in using software/hardware, need more technical support, not enough time to use ICT, too expensive to use regularly, insufficient access to the resources, restrictions the content of the lessons, counter-productive due to insufficient technical resources [5]. It is vital to effectively integrate technology into the classroom

that an on-site technical assistant be recruited to assist teachers when needed . It seems reasonable to assume that education teaching and learning should satisfy the needs and interests that people have as a result of new work and technological demands. However, there are aspects of such discourse that need to be carefully considered. In this regard, Van Dijk argues for the relevance of studying how power, domination and social order are imposed, reproduced, and controlled through discourse. He points out that education tends to enact institutional and professional practices associated with power abuse and discursive reproduction; in particular, such abuse and reproduction are present when particular topics, actions and rules are standardized and formalized according to the interests and needs of a specific set of actors. Furthermore, Rogers claims that educators need to analyze discourse critically to be able to describe, interpret, and explain the current relationship among the economy, national policies, and educational practices.

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