The Influence of Incorporating Digital Tools in Foreign Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the influence of several digital technologies on language instruction, analyzing its advantages, illustrations, and consequences for learners. The digital world provides a wide range of chances to improve language acquisition, including interactive platforms, language learning applications, and social media. This study contends that although digital technologies can greatly enhance the learning process, they should be utilized alongside human education to cultivate a comprehensive and captivating learning experience. It also discusses several factors to increase efficiency and fair access to digital tools for effective language learning.

KEYWORDS: Digital environment, digital tools, platforms, quizzes, mobile applications, collaborative learning, communicative activities, digital technology.

INTRODUCTION. Incorporating technological tools into language instruction has several benefits, for example, interactive exercises, tailored learning platforms, and access to real multimedia information provide a dynamic and captivating learning environment that accommodates various learning styles and learners' demands. Moreover, digital technologies have the capability to overcome geographical limitations by facilitating connections between learners and native speakers. This enables learners to access genuine cultural encounters and promotes practical communication in real-life situations.

Nevertheless, despite these advantages, there are still obstacles that need to be addressed. It is essential to prioritize fair access to technology, minimize possible interruptions, and promote responsible use of technology in order to achieve successful implementation. This article examines the profound influence of digital tools on the instruction of foreign languages, investigating the distinct advantages, difficulties, and approaches for using their capacity to generate a more efficient and captivating educational encounter for all learners.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODS. Over the past decades, there have been conducted multiple research by scientists to evaluate the influence of the digital environment on modern language teaching. Smith (2019) investigated the role of the digital environment on students' *self-*

directing learning by incorporating Web 2.0 platforms, blogging and microblogging, audio sharing and video-sharing websites. The thorough analysis shows that L2 digital experience motivation has been increased in students through these kinds of e-tools and illustrated high results on students' engagement in L2 learning. Furthermore, "digital learning increases access to education and knowledge while empowering students with a mindset and capabilities that set them up for success in their present and future" (Dash, 2022, p.11). Tomlinson (2023) suggests utilizing digital tools for developing classroom materials taking into account of accessibility of platforms and availability of students' use. However, it is a crucial factor to choose affordable and age-related digital tools for language classrooms because it might include diverse learners with various digital literacy skills. In another study, Liton (2015) conducted an empirical case study by investigating the students' perception and efficacy of technology-integrated language classrooms in Asian universities. The findings illustrated that multiple students are engaged enthusiastically in technology-mediated classroom activities, but a number of students showed a lack of experience in integrating digital tools into their language acquisition process. Consequently, the study suggests the beneficial pedagogical implications of increasing students' ability with working digital tools in language learning process. Vonog et al. (2021) in their study compared the advantages and disadvantages of using digital platforms Zoom, Skype, Webinar and Discord in modern language classrooms. Their findings revealed that such collaborative platforms are found crucial for developing communication skills in the target language, sharing audial and visual information conducting distance teaching, cooperative learning and motivating students to independent learning.

RESULTS. The incorporation of digital technologies into language classrooms has had a substantial influence on the process of acquiring foreign language skills. However, using online flashcards, quizzes, and vocabulary games enables learners stimulating and efficient methods for expanding their vocabulary range. Platforms such as *Quizlet, Quizizz, Cheggs* and *Memrise* provide users with the ability to create personalized flashcards and employ repeated exposure techniques to enhance retention of information. On the other hand, digital tools such as Duolingo, Wordwall, and Blooket are beneficial in providing focused assistance for comprehending and applying grammar rules.

Apart from vocabulary and grammar aspects digital tools are affordable for practicing pronunciation, for example, online apps including *Voice Thread, Elsa Speak* and *Speechling* are mobile applications that offer individualized instruction and evaluation for improving pronunciation, moreover, these kinds of digital tools facilitate learners to receive corrective feedback on their articulation of certain sounds. Also, online mind-mapping tools such as *Coggle* it, and *Miro* assess learners to engage in classroom activities and work on group projects collaboratively. Additionally, teachers as well as students can create their own materials for language classrooms, the platforms *Canva, Prezi* and *Nearpod* possess such functions for designing presentations, online boards and visual materials.

DISCUSSION. Although the promise of digital technologies in foreign language instruction is unquestionable, it is essential to take into account the problems and intricacies associated with their incorporation. The following factors are crucial for guaranteeing fair and equal access, optimizing efficiency, and encouraging responsible utilization of technology:

A prominent obstacle is the digital disparity, which refers to inequitable access to technology and dependable internet access. This inequality can put learners from disadvantaged communities at a disadvantage, impeding their capacity to fully take advantage of the possibilities provided by digital technologies.

Although digital technologies provide essential assistance, over-dependence on technology can impede the cultivation of critical thinking, self-directed learning, and face-to-face communication abilities. An equitable strategy that incorporates digital technologies alongside conventional teaching techniques is crucial.

It is important to recognize the possibility of becoming distracted and misusing digital technologies. Implementing successful instructional tactics, such as establishing explicit guidelines for technology usage and organizing scheduled learning activities, is essential for optimizing educational outcomes.

In addition, digital tools provide an opportunity to gain insights into many cultures. However, it is crucial to practice caution and verify that the tools and materials utilized are suitable and respectful of various cultural settings, taking into account cultural sensitivity.

Ensuring the security and confidentiality of information is of utmost importance as students concentrate more on web-based resources for language study. Schools and educators must possess knowledge of data protection legislation and take necessary measures to safely manage student data.

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