THE ROLE OF MEDIA TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN THIS ERA OF INSECURITY AND COVID 19 PANDEMIC: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract

This paper is focused on the role of media in teaching and learning English language in this era COVID-19 and insecurity. We are living in the 21st century, the era of technology and internet in which people share ideas, thoughts and beliefs with moments through the media. Media nowadays represents an integral part of our life and involves all facts of life including education. The role of media in the development of education has been imperative. It has played a substantial part in influencing teaching and learning in this socio-economic era where insecurity and COVID 19 have made teaching and learning handicapped. It is both tools for teaching and avenues for learning; and its functions is to serve these two processes by enhancing clarity in communication, diversity in method and forcefulness in appeal. Media determines the quality of our education effort in this era of insecurity and COVID 19 pandemic. English teachers employ media for language learning because it motivates students and offers a different mode of presentation. It provides individualized, differentiated process of training and implementation in this new normal. Its effectiveness builds bridges between students' knowledge and learning objectives of a course. It engages students, aids their retention of knowledge, motivates interest in subject matter and illustrates the relevance of many concepts thereby giving all equal opportunity for learning in this era..

Keywords: Media, era, insecurity, pandemic challenges, prospect, COVID, teaching and learning

Introduction

As in many countries worldwide, as part of the consequences of COVID-19 pandemic lockdown many schools in Nigeria were closed in March 2020. Although schools began later after some months, far-reaching restrictions remain in place, and any prediction as to when closures would end completely seemed to be hardly possible at the moment. Consequently, teachers face significant challenges adapting to media teaching and maintaining at least a minimum of communication with students and supporting students' learning and development. However, the extent to which teachers have successfully mastered these challenges and factors are most relevant remain unknown. The extensive school closures occurred during an era that has generally been shaped by rapid transformation in technological innovations and digitalization, not least in educational contexts (Selwyn, 2012, Mcfarlane, 2019). Subsequently, digitalization in schools has become a prominent issue independently of and before the COVID-19 pandemic (Gewerkschaft, Erziehung & Wissenschaft, 2020). However, in Nigeria as in other countries, many schools lag behind with respect to the expected Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

During last several decades, one of the most exciting changes in education is

related to the word "technology". Although some debates regarding the effectiveness of technology have existed Kleiman, 2004 & Kozma, 1994, most researchers agree that technology can be used effectively as a cognitive tool as well as an instructional media. For example, Bruce & Levin, (2001) suggest that technology can be helpful in classroom settings by encouraging inquiry, helping communication, constructing teaching products, and assisting students' self-expression.

The technology in today's fields of teaching is often associated with the use of the information and communication technology (ICT). Related to the reality about the technology used in learning, the teachers have big roles in making it successful or not. The teacher needs some skills in using those technology tools at school or university. Then to have a good result in using technology, the teachers should have a good attitude towards the technology used especially in in the era.

In addition, the result of some researchers has shown that the media has superiority to help teachers to deliver learning faster and easier for students. In addition, media have a positive effect and can change the students' behavior to be creative and dynamic especially in English language as a second situation. Then, the role of media is needed in learning process where media is not as a tool but as a part of integral in educational system and learning process. Furthermore, the use of technology as media in classroom is very helpful in language learning. Media technology can increase the students' interest in learning process.

In this digital world the use of technology is ubiquitous and students' engagement with mass media is tremendous in the 21st century. Besides,

technology has entered into our classroom, thereby pushing learning beyond the four walls of the classroom and textbooks. Hence, it is indispensable for the language teachers to forgo the use of mass media in the classroom. Effective usage of mass media can foster learner's learning experiences. Mass media plays a significant role in all works of life and its intrusion in the English classroom can create wonders in the performance of the students. The use of the mass media resources can facilitate deeper learning such as problem solving skills and creative skills needless to mention cooperative learning. Furthermore, the amalgamation of sounds and visuals makes the learners understand the concept faster and their retention becomes stronger in teaching English as a second language. Teaching with technology can deepen student's learning by supporting instructional objectives. Therefore, the present paper attempts to study the role of mass media in teaching English in this COVID-19 and insecurity.

Kress has affirmed that "the medium of books and mode of writing is giving way and in many domains has already given way to the constellation of medium of the screen and mode of image". In addition, Gurzynski-Weiss quotes Salomon who asserts that novel ideas and concepts can be easily comprehended when it is presented both in verbal and visual form. Further, "learner's attention and cognitive engagement are essential for language learning as it allows learners to focus on new information and to solidify form-meaning connections". Tafani in her research article on "Teaching English through Mass Media" states that the use of mass media for teaching English "provide students with lots of inside and outside classroom activities, promoting extensive reading by giving the students,

the confidence and the ability to continue their reading outside the classroom and above all they enhance motivation". In addition, Sad is of the opinion that utilization of media technology breaks the monotony of traditional class teaching and makes learning enjoyable and stimulating". Further, Larsen-Freeman & Anderson supported the view that technology provides teaching resources and brings learning experience in the learners' world. Through using technology, many authentic materials can be provided to learners and they can be motivated in learning language. Hence, it becomes imperative for the teachers to use mass media in the classroom for an effective and meaningful learning experience.

Definitions of Technology

What is "technology"? Many people probably have a general understanding of this word. However, it is easier for most people to give examples of technological equipment, rather than a clear definition of the word. College students could mention such devices as computers, radios, televisions, CD/DVD players, digital cameras, photocopiers, and other modern gadgets. Middle aged people could mention electric drills, electric saws, laser levels, and other handy tools. Elderly people could mention film cameras, vacuum tubes, gasoline engines, and diesel engines. The term 'technology' is used to refer to electromechanical systems used for language teaching (delivery modes). According to The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, the word technology is derived from the Greek word "tekhnologia," meaning "systematic treatment of an art or craft." Thus, in modern English, the first listed meaning is "the application of science, especially to industrial or commercial objectives." The second listed meaning is

"the scientific method and material used to achieve a commercial or industrial objective." However, the last definition is the most historic and the most interesting. The dictionary mentions that this definition is from the field of Anthropology: "the body of knowledge available to a society that is of use in fashioning implements, practicing manual arts and skills, and extracting or collecting materials" (American Heritage).

Do these definitions help people understand what technology is? Does it mean something different now than it did to the ancient humans? Even though the technology of 2021 A.D. is vastly different compared to that of 2021 B.C., it still fulfills the same purpose in the lives of people today: It helps to improve food, clothing, and shelter. In that same process, it helps humans to do better whatever they need to do in order to survive. It helps many people to communicate better, feed their families better, and do their jobs better. Even though most of the "pure science" taking place in research laboratories will not directly affect people, the everyday products of "applied science technology" are helpful tools to improve the quality of human lives.So, as the Merriam-Webster Medical Dictionary states, "technology" is just "application of knowledge to practical purposes" or "a scientific method of achieving a practical purpose" (Merriam-Webster).

Fred Flintstone and his friends had only animal power and stone tools for their technology, yet somehow ancient scientists constructed enormous astronomical calendars such as Stonehenge, simply so they could plant their crops at the correct time every year. Other ancient ancestors built huge pyramids out of dirt or stone to honor their Creators. But the spears of the

cavemen, as well as the bows and arrows of the Native American Indians, were very effective examples of "Stone Age" technology. The efficacy of these early stone tools could easily be demonstrated by their ability to kill animals for dinner. Undoubtedly, these "Stone Age" warriors also discovered that this same technology could bring down humans just as easily as animals. After the "Stone Age" came the "Bronze Age," when humans first learned to forge metal tools. These craftsmen also noticed that metal tools could be sharpened much better than stone tools. Later, the "Iron Age" laid the foundations for the "Industrial Revolution," but iron technology also produced cannons and guns. As weapons technology improved, so did its power; efficient projectiles capable of killing several animals or humans replaced the old fashioned hand-to-hand combat of ancient warriors. Today's WMD technology can kill millions of people with one bomb.

Does technology really improve human life, or just make it more complicated? Perhaps modern people need to heed the 200-year-old message of Tensquatawa, the Shawnee Prophet, who preached to Native Americans and to anyone else who would listen. He warned against the evil tools (technology) which corrupt and destroy human beings, in opposition to the good tools (technology) given by the Creator ("Master of Life") to help human beings. In the twenty-first century, technological tools and machines outnumber people. Hopefully, the machines will not enslave humanity, such as seen in the Terminator and Matrix movies. If humans do not learn how to control technology, it will control them.

Based on the above explanation, it can be said that technology has big influence towards the humanity. It can be used to develop the quality of education in every field of studies. Based on the writer's believe, the things that should be improved is the using of media. The result of some researchers have shown that media has superiority to help teachers to deliver learning message faster and easier for students. In addition, media have a positive effect and can change the students' behavior to be creative and dynamic. Then, the role of media is needed in learning process where media is not as a tool but as a part of integral in educational system and learning process.

The using of technology as media in classroom is very helpful. Furthermore, media technology can increase the students' interesting in learning process. Movie as a one of the kind of modern technology, it can be used as a good media since it is an enjoyable things for students. Computer technology is an invention that allows present some or all forms of stimulus, namely relations or human interaction, reality, moving images or not, the writing and voice recorded. Therefore learning would be more optimal), however, problems arise not as easy as imagined. The teacher is a person who has the ability to realize the five forms of the stimulus in the form of learning. However, most of teachers do not have the ability to bring it to the fifth stimulus computer program .The solution is to realize the stimuli in a computer program using macro media flash applications and thus the teachers will easily realize teaching ideas. Instructional media in general is the process of teaching and learning aids.

Instructional media is anything that can help deliver the message, to stimulate thoughts, feelings, and the willingness of the students so as to encourage the creation of learning

process in self-learners. Learning media includes all the necessary resources to communicate with learners. This could be either software (software) which contains a message or educational information, while equipment (hardware) is a means to be able to display the messages contained in the media. Learning interest owned by learners assumed to increase academic achievement. Learning media is capable of aiding presentation: saving time in class, easy to show examples that exist in everyday life, can be packed more interesting because of the shape and color it can be played in accordance tendencies shape and color preferred by learners. Macromedia flash is one of the computer software that are able to be used to create images, animations and other students were able to increase the interest to follow the teaching and learning process.

Technological media in teaching and learning English language

The use of modern technology in teaching English is broadly understood to encompass an innovative application of methods, tools, materials, devices, systems, and strategies which are directly relevant to English language teaching and lead to the achievement of the desired goals. Thus, while technology is now generally accepted as an important educational and auxiliary tool across a range of teaching and learning contexts, it is particularly true of English language teaching since it affords a number of potential opportunities to enhance both the content and delivery of the pedagogies typically associated with traditional English language instruction. This is primarily achieved by enabling the students and/or teachers to revisit problematic content time after time until it is fully understood and assimilated. Familiarity with the concept of using

modern technology is not merely limited to the use of modern appliances and devices, but rather obtains to the introduction of innovative systems and methods of teaching which facilitate faster and more comprehensive learning progression.

According to prevailing pedagogical theories, in utilizing the learning potential of technology students are better able to acquire and enhance their language knowledge and skills. The use of technology in teaching English consolidates the integrated view of the modern means, system and association with other components which benefits students by achieving the required results. The use of modern technology in English language teaching has therefore become indispensable, especially in the wake of unprecedented developments of the COVID-19 pandemic and insecurity in the nation and the world at large across numerous fields and disciplines. It is essential that the education sector keep apace of the global technological revolution by adopting modern technological means such as computerization, multi-media devices, mobile phones, audio/visual effects applications, and social media, to optimize English language instruction and equip teachers to connect with classroom language learners in a systematic and advanced way especially in the era. The Internet provides easy, immediate, and virtually unlimited access to software, applications, and a host of ancillary platforms and materials which can expedite English teaching and learning. While these affordances may be widely available to all, it is noted that teachers often play a key role in operating the different tools and teaching methods. Moreover, many such programmes are specifically designed to promote effective English teaching whilst simultaneously

increasing learner understanding and attainment of English language skills.

Purpose of the study

The topic of English language teaching and learning has emerged as one of the central issues of contemporary educational debate as studies have consistently demonstrated poor standards of student achievement across all levels. Since the current era is epitomized by the ubiquitous use of technology, it follows that technology has penetrated the field of teaching on a worldwide scale. In fact, since most educational institutions have now absorbed such technology into current and future curricula in this epoch, technological and/or media-based pedagogies have assumed considerable prominence due to proven enhanced learning outcomes, especially in comparison with traditional teaching methods and the state of world and nation.

Obsolete teaching practices include a number of problems, as follows:

1) Traditional methods lead students through precise curriculum content and rely on outdated learning aids such as blackboards and textbooks. As such, the teacher merely relays the information without accounting for positive or negative results.

2) Traditional methods rely on simple strategies that do not meet the purpose of learning or basic needs in the process of teaching. Since such teacher-centred pedagogies situate the learner as a recipient, their overarching goal is the extent to which a student can replicate information without necessarily understanding it.

3) Students rely on received sounds and images as opposed to interaction and discussion with the teacher.

4) Student accreditation by means of set texts tend to foster boredom and loss of motivation and attention in attainment, as opposed to modern technological teaching methods which inhere numerous incentives that increase the likelihood of acquiring English language skills in a timely and positive way.

In light of the above obstacles, the present study was undertaken to ring-fence the causes at the heart of the problem with the advent of COVID 19 and insecurity in the country; and attempt to resolve the issue by introducing a range of modern technologies into the context of English language teaching.

significance of the research

The study aims to advance knowledge in a number of significant areas. In the first instance it will identify traditional teaching practice challenges which retard or obstruct the process of effective language learning in order to formulate a range of solutions to update them with technological methods and aids. The research will also evaluate the scale of the difficulties confronted by English teachers who use modern technology and determine whether additional IT skill training is required. It is hoped that the ensuing data may be used as a reference guide for future researchers in the same field and context, along with a detailed analysis of the teaching and education sector as intrinsic to the infrastructure of any modern society.

Technology has become ubiquitous in all forms of contemporary life. Since the teaching process cannot be atomized from this global trend, this study further considers the role of technology teaching and learning English as compared to traditional practices which arguably render students passive, and prone to

boredom. Indeed, this study demonstrates that the introduction of modern technological assistance yields timely learning progress and improved student proficiency across all English language skills including writing, reading, and conversation. Ultimately, the research provides key educative stake-holders and authorities with practical solutions to tackle the problems related to the use of modern technology in English language teaching for teachers and students alike in face of COVID-19 and insecurity.

Reasons for using technology in teaching English language

Jacqui Murray, (2015) taxonomies the rationale for using technology in English language teaching as follows:

1. Technology allows students to demonstrate independence.
2. Technology differentiates the needs of students.
3. Technology deepens learning by using resources that students are interested in.
4. Students actively want to use technology.
5. Technology gives students an equal voice.
6. Technology enables students to build strong content knowledge wherever they find it.

Merits of using technology in teaching English language

English-language students are highly implicated in and motivated by the use of modern technology such as radio, TV, computers, the Internet, electronic dictionary, email, blogs, audio-visual aids, videos, and DVDs or VCDs (Nasser, 2017) as follows:

1. The use of technology in teaching English is deemed interesting and motivating as the student reacts with the subject.

2. Technology plays an important role in the process of teaching English by enhancing timely understanding, and thereby enabling students more learn more efficiently.
3. Teachers perform more effectively when using modern technology since they can communicate with the students through a variety of ways.
4. The use of modern technology enables both teachers and students to access a wealth of books, publications, and references which are directly relevant to the English language curriculum.
5. Modern technology encourages student self-sufficiency which better equips them for the future.
6. Unlike traditionally passive teaching methods, modern technology teaching and learning aids incentivize both teacher and student.

Challenges of using media in teaching and learning of English language

The answers to the core research question are summarized as follows:
1. Studies confirm there are not enough English language instructors trained in the use of relevant technological teaching aids.
2. The survey found greater student response and interaction with the use of modern technology than traditional methods.
3. The study also showed that the language teaching process was hampered by the unequal availability of relevant technology across educational institutions.
4. Studies confirm that up-to-date sound and visual effects and tablet display devices are more effective in teaching English language skills due to their immediacy and user-friendly English content, which reflects real-life situations as opposed the

traditional means that student find contrived and boring.

5. As anticipated, the study confirms that the use of technological media leads to enhanced learner outcomes including better student motivation, improved achievement levels, and increased interaction between students and teachers. It improved student self-learning, self-reliance, positive self-talk were also observed, as were maximum utility of time and effort for both the teachers and students. Going forward, it is evident that the various modes and sources of modern classroom technology have proven their reliability and effectiveness in the comprehensive, relevant, and timely instruction of contemporary English language skills.

Recommendations

In light of the findings, the researcher suggests the following:

1. Substitute modern technology for obsolete English language teaching methods.
2. Provide appropriate training for all teachers to use modern technology in English language teaching.
3. Adopt complete electronic curriculum projects in line with modern requirements.
4. Urge English teachers to encourage students to use modern technology as a means to develop their language skills.
5. Establish Internet networks within educational institutions to equip teachers to properly avail of modern technology.
6. Provide appropriate student training in all forms of available technology in order that they maintain pace with the requirements of the electronic curriculum.
7. Establish an English language teaching portal school-home connection to enable students to learn in their free time.
8. English teacher development of classroom dialogue and discussion programmes which use modern technical means such as screens, projectors, and smart panels in order to promote student mastery of the English language.

Covid-19 and technological media

The catastrophe posed by coronavirus on education in Nigerian has revealed to us the benefits of online/virtual teaching. A large number of children whose education was completely disrupted for months due to COVID-19 pandemic is a great disaster to the national growth. The consequences could be felt in economies and societies in the years to come." In Nigeria, nearly all school-children were affected by the lockdown. In a time like this, there is no other option than to adapt to the dynamic situation and accept the change as disasters will continue to occur and technologies will likely help us in managing them. One good effect of COVID- 19 pandemic is that it has forced some schools which were earlier reluctant to change, to accept modern technology. At this present age, the importance of online education cannot be over emphasized. Coronavirus disaster could be beneficial to the education sector and could bring a lot of surprising outcomes if well utilized. With the help of online teaching, a large number of students can be taught by a single teacher at the same time. However, accessibility, affordability, flexibility, learning pedagogy, life-long learning, and unstable educational policies are some of the challenges that affect online pedagogy. It is line with these that the authors provide some

creative solutions to the problems facing virtual method of teaching in Nigeria since it can be concluded that online teaching is the panacea to educational disruption in the time of pandemic and crisis. In countries such as Nigeria, education should be viewed as a high government priority by increasing the awareness of pressing need for the country's children to be educated, especially those from low-income families, as this will benefit the country's economy in years to come. Aid provided in this direction can be viewed as an investment in human capital; the more educated a country is, the more productive it is.

Conclusion

In summary, it is clear that despite genuine efforts to modernize traditional methods of teaching English, residual obsolete practices should be phased out and replaced by the use of the available technology on offer via computer, smart devices, display, audio-visual materials, and electronic approaches. This study underscores the vital educative potential and numerous benefits of technology in the English language classroom for positive learning outcomes in the language classroom and the wider world, the financial implications of setting up the infrastructure, and encouraging teachers to overcome their anxieties around of teaching technologies. Of course, the purpose of both traditional and modern technologies is to maximize students' English skills and provide a space where learning can be best facilitated. One of the ultimate goals of using technological media is to actively engage students in language learning and motivate them to acquire English language skills in a practical and realistic way.

This can be achieved through an open learning context which fosters openness and access to the subjects and information through modern technology means, wherein students are motivated and directed to communicate with each other. In terms of future development, it is clear that multimedia will be integral to the student-centred process of teaching English to modern standards. As such, the quality of teaching and application of students to modern educational foundations would benefit from an extensive survey of English language skills in to improve overall communication proficiency.

In conclusion, we believe that this process can fully enrich student thinking and practical language skills and promote improved efficacy in overall teaching and learning especially in the pandemic and insecurity era. Indeed it is evident that many routine learning issues that can be overcome through the effective incorporation of technology and appropriately trained teachers, while funding ramifications can be addressed through ministerial planning and the establishment of an infrastructure which prioritizes the interests of effective learning considering the bedeviling COVID-19 in the world at this time.

In fact, current technology offers a vast array of affordances to enhance the efficacy, methodologies and interest level of teachers. Moreover, studies of teaching English with the addition of technological tools found it enabled students to be more pro-active and to learn in line with their particular interests and abilities (Roma, 2013).

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