

ICT MEDIA IN ENGLISH FOR YOUNG LEARNERS CLASS

Oktavia Widiastuti, M. Pd

English Education Department, University of Kanjuruhan, Malang, Indonesia

E-mail: widiastuti_oktavia@yahoo.com

Abstract.

With all its aspects, internet has given many kinds of service which can be applied in human life. Nowadays the use of computer network is applied in many sectors: banking, health, economy, business, entertainment, security, information, and also education. From those sectors mentioned above, education sector is categorized in minimum level in using this computer network, especially language education. Information and communication technology is not a new issue in education world, but it is interesting to follow its development. Teachers can use this kind of technology to increase work ethos. Besides, this technology makes it possible to do many kinds of activity fast, precisely, and accurately. The development of information technology shows that there appears varieties of activity based on technology. The use of information and communication technology has been implemented in education sector since the government puts it in the curriculum of 2004. Information and communication technology is part of curriculum which is compulsory to be included in school intern activity. The purpose is that the students can optimize their skills, thus it can be applied in other lesson as cross curriculum. For example, the use of information and communication technology in english lesson. This cross curriculum is for getting around the development of society toward globalization, which sees information and communication technology and english as important. Thus the students is compulsorily equipped with those skills. English learning will be easily understood by students when the teachers can deliver the material interestingly.

Keywords: ICT Media, EYL

I. INTRODUCTION

There has been much debate over the use of computers and the internet in foreign language teaching over the past few years. The techniques offered, the activities and the degree of application in the language teaching syllabus have undergone a number of serious changes alongside the evolution of technology. The technology has become a fixture in many homes around the world, and its influence has permeated into all facets of our lives, including educational settings. This phenomenon has been hailed by many as the wave of the future in which language instruction will be driven by new advances in computers, the internet, and mobile technologies.

The introduction of this new process has serious implications for the nature and purpose of educational institutions. The knowledge and skills acquired make learning possible continuously throughout the lifetime. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) as well as newer digital technologies such as computers and internet are more powerful tools for educational change and reform. They can best be harnessed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of education at all levels and in both formal and non-formal settings as it enables access to information exponentially.

The process of learning a second language may be structured in different ways – in a classroom or at home, with or without a teacher, emphasizing or minimizing grammar, gradually exposing the student to native speakers or prompt immersion. With the advancements in ICT, Web 2.0 tools are becoming more and more commonplace in schools. With the change of a “read” Web to a “read/write” Web, teachers are discovering new ways in which to engage

technologically savvy students in computer-based educational activities. Publishing student work to the World Wide Web is a means of providing an authentic global audience for classroom productions. When students write or speak for a broader and more international audience, they pay more attention to polishing their work, think more deeply about the content they produce, and consider cultural norms more thoughtfully. Thus, the rapid advances in technology has led the development of ICT which is thought to offer new opportunities to promote the quality and effectiveness of English language teaching.

II. THE INTERNET AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

The internet offers the best way to learn English other than immersion in an English speaking milieu. The advantages of online learning, can be summarized under the following headings:

- 1) Access – the internet offers the possibility to experience English without the need of travel. Even without the need of leaving home or bedroom.
- 2) Flexibility – the internet allows for users to learn language when they want, where they want.
- 3) Response – the internet offers the possibility of instant feedback to learners. This greatly enhances the learning experience.
- 4) Repeatability – the learner can encounter the language in a repetitive fashion until mastery is achieved.
- 5) Durability – the internet is 24/7. It never tires. It does not take coffee breaks.
- 6) Modality – the internet is a multi modal learning tool. It stimulates in a rich sensory and cognitive and thus fertilizes language acquisition successfully.

7) Specificity – the internet allows the language learner choice and variety in both what and with who will be learned. Learning can be tailored to the language learner's precise makeup and needs.

8) Cost – the internet is a business model which due to economies of scale, can offer services for pennies. It also offers to widen access through a pay as you can dynamic. The internet-mediated communication allows users to share not only brief messages, but also create lengthy documents – thus facilitating collaborative writing (learning). Furthermore, learners can share graphics, sounds and video. Thus, the internet helps create an environment where authentic and creative communication is integrated into all aspects of the course.

III. THE ADVANTAGES OF ICT IN EYL CLASS

There is no more doubt that the use of ICT has positive effects on English language teaching/learning especially in English for Young Learners (EYL) class. Its impact is highly dependent on the way it is used, the teachers' motivation and his "savoir-faire". The following impacts seem to be the most obvious ones when using ICT to support English language teaching especially in EYL class:

- 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).
- Lectures become more interesting and less ordinary which boosts learners' engagement;
- ICT enables to focus on one specific aspect of the lesson (pronunciation, vocabulary, etc).

The advantages of ICT usage in English language teaching especially in EYL class can 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 can 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 even giving the appropriate advice.
4. Adaptability. Computer programmes can be adapted by teachers to suit their students' needs and level of language knowledge. Unlike books, which are produced in a single uniform format and need to be taught irrespectively of students' problems, computer programmes are more learner-friendly.

First and foremost, ICT – and the internet in particular – provides language learners especially young learners with the opportunity to use the language that they are learning in meaningful ways in authentic contexts.

A second important benefit derived from the use of ICT in an EYL classroom is based on the opportunities it affords for cooperation and collaboration with one's peers.

A third major benefit of the use of ICT in EYL classrooms is the opportunity that ICT-based tools give to language teachers so that they can tutor their learners more effectively. With the help of ICT-based tools and the constantly growing number of available educational resources English teachers are able to give individual and personalized guidance to the learners.

IV. THE APPLICATION OF ICT MEDIA IN EYL CLASS

The integration of information and communications technology in EYL classroom is considered as a medium in which a variety of approaches and pedagogical philosophies may be implemented. However, ICT as a teaching media is more complicated in that it demands more specific skills from the teachers. The development of ICT – electronic mail, internet, multimedia, possibilities to use collaborative platforms, undoubtedly, influences the process of using them in everyday EYL classroom teaching and learning. ICT no longer serves to be a simple additional means but ICT is an indispensable part of the modern and contemporary learning environment.

The application of ICT in EYL classroom gives more opportunities for communication between peer learners: they can exchange information in real time, they can participate in blog discussions, work in teams on different projects, exchange emails, search for information, etc.

By using the authentic material provided by the internet, we will have a better insight into the culture of the country. There is significant evidence of the benefits and advantages that the use of ICT can have on young learners. The effective use of ICT impacts on young learners and various aspects of the learning process can be summarized as follows:

- ICT increases learners' motivation and thus enhances learners' commitment and engagement;
- ICT improves learners' independent learning;
- Learners' collaboration and communication are more important;
- Learners' attainment and outcomes are improved. As for the learners' perceptions of ICT, learners work independently with technologies with the goal of arriving at a specified level of mastery of a given knowledge set.

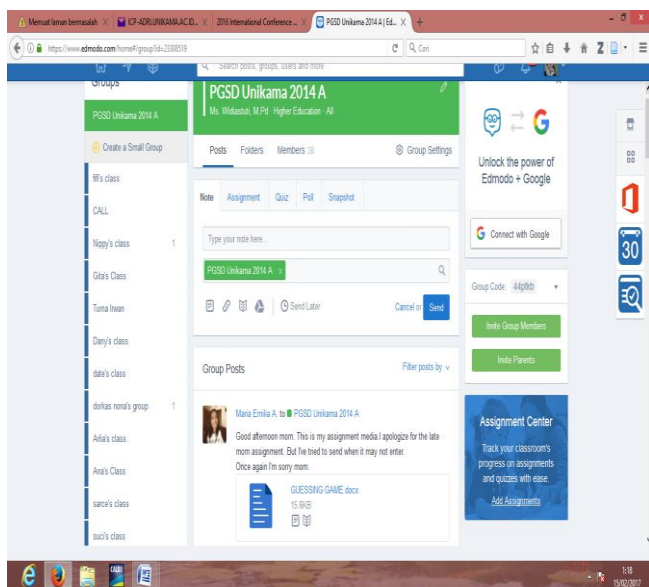
At the same time, it provides flexibility to learners which are a must for mastery of learning and quality of learning. The use of ICT in language learning especially in EYL class not only involves pedagogical changes for teachers but also involves environmental and pedagogical changes for learners who are traditionally used to face-to-face teaching in classrooms. Although an increasing number of learners have access to online technologies and use ICT for personal interactions, they find it challenging to use ICT media in EYL classroom.

Apart from curricular changes that come officially – usually from the Ministry of Education in each country workshops and short trainings introduce new techniques and activities or promote new materials. Accordingly, EYL teachers are accustomed to frequent subject innovations, but not necessarily more resourceful or open to new ideas. There was evidence of many problems in terms of technical skills in the beginning, and it took about a generation for the technical skills and the technical problems to be ignored out.

Helping students find value in learning through the implementation of various instructional strategies and multiple alternative and authentic forms of assessments, while maintaining high standards of student performance in an environment which encourages students to do their best work by effective, nurturing teachers, will help increase the motivational levels of all students.

In this study, the lecturer of English for Young Learners taught the students who will be the English teachers of Elementary School. The materials in this EYL class are stated in the syllabus for elementary school, but they did not make use the conventional teaching. The lecturer made use the technologies which are available in the school surrounding. The students did not have to be trapped in boredom for they had to listen to the lecturer. Instead, they had to do some interesting activities. The activities are;

1. Using online classroom named “Edmodo” to facilitate students having all the information in classroom, doing online assignments, and exchange information among other students.



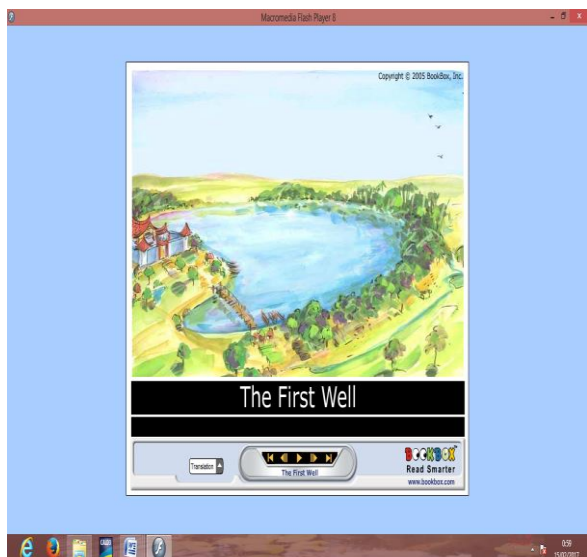
2. Using videocast of English songs to learn English vocabularies and phonetics in a very interesting activity, and to improve students’ listening skill.



3. Using Big Books as an ICT media to improve students reading and writing ability.



4. Using Flash Stories, this ICT media has many similarities to Big Books. By using this media students are able to practice reading and writing in a different and attractive way.



5. Using game application to foster students vocabulary mastery. This ICT media is very effective to improve students English vocabularies.



Making use information and communication technology can help to rise up the students' enthusiasm in learning English in class especially for young learners. And this condition will help the students to understand the lesson better, and finally the result of the learning progress can be achieved.

V. CONCLUSION

ICT presents a powerful learning environment for learners in the classroom. Many countries make investments in ICT integration as ICT is viewed as an effective tool for renewing educational practice in any field. Because teachers are the main characters to employ ICT in educational contexts, they should be trained in how ICT can be integrated into the teaching process especially in EYL class. The use of information technology maintaining contact, that bond between us that let our students know that support was only a click away, and at the same time giving them a sense of freedom to work on the areas of their learning that they considered important. These tools also promote authentic

communication in an environment where this input is scarce and at the same time helps prepare them for the technological work place of the future.

The teacher needs to see the real effect ICT media have on the learning process. Furthermore, there should be an appropriate balance between hands-on and other work and the motivational aspects of using ICT will be effective only with appropriate planning and guidance from the teacher.

In brief, ICT cannot itself resolve educational problems in the developing world. If used prudently, ICTs will enable developing countries to expand access to and raise the quality of education. Today's technologically competitive world needs integration of ICT in education. If ICT is aptly adapted, then it will be lifelong learning process for the learners. The quality of learning with accountability can be improved to enhance the learners to learn things quickly and successfully.

Without a doubt, technology has revolutionized society in many places around the globe, including how English language instruction is taught and delivered. In particular, the Internet has become a conduit where people can learn, share, and collaborate in ways not possible years before. However, a great deal of the success comes from preparing students to interact and learn in this online environment. Therefore, if we try to integrate technology in our teaching, our new, refocused approach to teaching will propel us a long way to making technology and the internet a more rewarding partner in the teaching and learning process.

VI. REFERENCES

- Davis, R. (2006). "Utopia or Chaos? The Impact of Technology on Language Teaching". The Internet TESL Journal. Retrieved August 10, 2012 from <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Davis-ImpactOfTechnology.html>
- Hismanoglu, M. (2012). "Prospective EFL Teachers' Perceptions of ICT Integration: A Study of Distance Higher Education in Turkey". Educational Technology & Society, 15 (1), 185–196.
- Houcine, S. (2011). "The effects of ICT on learning/teaching in a foreign language". Retrieved September 01, 2012 from http://www.pixel-online.net/ICT4LL2011/common/download/Paper_pdf/IBL69-437-FP-Houcine-ICT4LL2011.pdf
- Jurich, S. (2001). "ICT and the teaching of foreign languages". TechKnowLogia, Knowledge Enterprise, Inc. Retrieved July 30, 2012 from http://www.techknowlogia.org/TKL_Articles/PDF/335.pdf
- Mullamaa, K. (2010). "ICT in Language Learning - Benefits and Methodological Implications". International education studies, Vol 3, No 1. Retrieved August 10, 2012 from <http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ies/article/viewFile/4965/4131>.

Noni, Nurdin. Penerapan Teknologi Informasi Dan Komunikasi (Tik) Dalam Pendidikan. Available at <http://blog.unm.ac.id/nurdinnoni/files/2010/04/Modul-1.pdf>

Palupi, Endang Setyo. Pemanfaatan Tik Videoconference Sebagai Media Pembelajaran Mata Pelajaran Bahasa Inggris Pada Siswa Kelas 8 Smp Masehi Kota Pekalongan. Available at http://www.google.co.id/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cts=1331435095285&ved=0CCUQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fendangpalupi.files.wordpress.com%2F2011%2F05%2Fproposal-thesis.doc&ei=phVcT5jAGcXjrAetsuGVDA&usg=AFQjCNHjxRKytj_ZgjMxJ7W2ugHwswlF_Q&sig2=-nqtARB_7_rbqO0aoNT88w

Queiroz, Vera. 2003. Roles and Competencies of Online Teachers. The Internet TESL Journal, Vol. IX, No. 7. Available at <http://iteslj.org/Articles/Queiroz-OnlineTeachers.html> (accessed 25/01/09).

Rahimi, M., Yadollahi, S. (2011). "ICT Use in EFL Classes: A Focus on EFL Teachers' Characteristics". World Journal of English Language Vol. 1, No. 2, Published by Sciedu Press 17.

Wahidin, Dadan. Pemanfaatan Teknologi Informasi Dan Komunikasi Sebagai Media Pembelajaran. Available at Padurean, A., Margan, M. (2009). "Foreign Language Teaching Via ICT". Revista de Informatica Sociala, vol. VII nr. 12, ISSN 1584-384X.