

The use of technological resources in English class and its influence on the teaching-learning process

El uso de recursos tecnológicos en la clase de inglés y su influencia en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje

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Resumen

A medida que las herramientas digitales se integran cada vez más en la educación, es fundamental comprender su impacto en la adquisición del idioma. El estudio tiene como objetivo analizar el uso de los recursos tecnológicos en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje del idioma inglés. El diseño metodológico de la investigación fue cuantitativo con diseño no experimental, utilizando técnicas de recopilación de dato la observación y la entrevista. Para el tratamiento y análisis de los datos, se empleó el método descriptivo. Finalmente, la investigación ofrece ideas prácticas para educadores y formuladores de políticas que buscan optimizar el uso de herramientas digitales en la enseñanza del idioma inglés. En cuanto a los resultados, se destaca, la variable motivación como esencial para la consecución de objetivos, puesto que, el uso direccionado de herramientas tecnológicas en la enseñanza del idioma inglés, conlleva en los estudiantes, la búsqueda incesante del conocimiento científico y tecnológico en el aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera, por tanto, puedan mejorar las habilidades comunicativas, lo que actualmente se relaciona con el concepto de la innovación educativa y lo cual se ha convertido en un pilar para las prácticas de enseñanza en las aulas, siendo considerada, la tecnología uno de los mejores aliados para los docentes.

Palabras clave: Recursos tecnológicos; Inglés; Proceso; Enseñanza; Aprendizaje

Abstract

As digital tools become increasingly integrated into education, it is essential to understand their impact on language acquisition. The study aims to analyze the use of technological resources in the teaching-learning process of the English language. The methodological design of the research was quantitative with a non-experimental design, using observation and interview data collection techniques. For data treatment and analysis, the descriptive method was used. Finally, the research offers practical ideas for educators and policymakers seeking to optimize the use of digital tools in English language teaching. Regarding the results, the motivation variable stands out as essential for the achievement of objectives since the directed use of technological tools in the teaching of the English language entails students searching for scientific and technological knowledge in learning the foreign language. Therefore, they can improve communication skills, which is currently related to the concept of educational innovation and which has become a pillar for teaching practices in the classrooms, with technology being considered one of the best allies for students. Teachers.

Keywords: Technological resources; English; Process; Teaching; Learning

Introduction

Through interactive digital tools and educational applications, students have the opportunity to practice and expand their vocabulary in a more dynamic and motivating way, giving them access to a wide variety of resources, such as online dictionaries, interactive exercises, adaptive learning applications, which are adapted to the individual needs of each student, encouraging active participation and autonomous learning, which contributes to greater mastery of English vocabulary (Kaicer et al., 2024).

The objective of applying different methods and approaches is to teach the student to think in a foreign language without the need to translate or use grammatical rules, but rather, by knowledge so that they can respond and act orally. According to Vásquez & Rodas (2022), it is necessary to review some approaches that have been used to transmit knowledge of the English language to students. For instance, the formal approach. It includes those varieties of teaching procedures that proceed from the abstract study of grammatical rules to their application to translation. The reading method is concerned with the language itself, dedicating a lot of time and effort to decoding using exact grammatical foundations. The functional approach is the pragmatic part of the language, which makes you an expert, prioritising the oral form and taking into account what the study plans set as objectives with respect to the student's connection with oral production. The direct method implies direct contact between the student and the objective but without intermediaries. The intensive method is taught by two tutors, one teacher who is an expert in linguistics to structure the language while the other develops practical forms of communication.

Menéndez et al. (2020) comment that, in general, learning a second or third language is not easy. In fact, your native language has direct relevance. For example, Hispanics may find it easier to learn sister languages such as Portuguese, Italian or French than others from radically different families such as Russian or Arabic. The EF English Proficiency Index (EPI) study details the level of English in Latin America. Nineteen countries were considered, with Ecuador occupying the last place, obtaining the lowest score in the region. Ecuador is the country in Latin America with the worst command of English. The concern is aggravated if it is observed that students from the coastal area are generally the lowest performers.

This situation becomes even more worrying in Ecuador, where historically, students have not preferred the English subject at any educational level. This has had a direct impact on students' learning of English, which has meant that the average Ecuadorian's knowledge of English is relatively low.

In Ecuador, the teaching of the English language at the higher education level presents shortcomings in the teaching-learning processes because it has not followed proven international methodologies that have given results such as English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Cambridge. In this way, the teaching task is committed to developing activities contained in the micro curriculum (syllables) that may be subject to modifications or updates whenever new developments or suggestions are presented through general or specific curricular standards of the language major.

It is necessary to improve the level of English knowledge of university students so that they feel more comfortable studying it. Therefore, it is essential to improve the teaching resources used, which are currently basically virtual. We must recognize that some students cannot access technological resources that allow all students to study under equal conditions.

According to Carranza et al. (2018), students are immersed in technologies that are essential for their learning and can help them acquire skills to master a second language. Since technology is used every day and is already part of the educational environment, teaching resources must evolve towards that objective, optimizing the use of ICT.

Currently, bilingual teaching uses new collaborative learning methodologies, Such as e-learning, Dialang, or Clic. These methodologies consider ICT an excellent resource for improving teaching practice, fostering students' development of digital competence, and facilitating the learning of a foreign language (Carrión, 2018).

This attempt to balance the effort made by students must, in turn, be balanced with the difficulties of university students, as Hernández & Cordero (2021) detail, the need of many students with the challenge of learning English in a university context. They are students who enrol in formal teaching spaces and are exposed to covering the four basic skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). On the other hand, since they are primarily adult students who sometimes work, have families with children, have curricular adjustments, and, if they come from educational contexts with low academic training or with an unfavourable socioeconomic situation, the effort they make at home to studying the language is generally not appropriate. Therefore, these students require extracurricular support material and a study guide at home.

Learning the English language globally is a historical process of improvement at all educational levels. For this reason, it is necessary to contribute with methods and techniques that contribute to the development of communicative capacity in an environment where the mother tongue is Spanish. In this context, the objective of this paper was to analyze the technological resources used in the teaching-learning process applied to English teachers of a private school in Portoviejo.

Material and methods

The research used a quantitative approach with no experimental design. Field research was used since the information was collected directly through the application of a checklist addressed to 10 English teachers at the Cristo Rey Educational Unit and an interview with the area's coordinator. The scope of the research was descriptive. At the same time, the data collected through the checklist were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Additionally, the information provided by the interview was analyzed using a critical approach.

Results

According to the following table, the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained in the research are detailed.

Table 1
Influence of technological resources on the teaching-learning process of the English language

Questions	Answers (%)				
	Totally agree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Totally disagree
1. Students use technology tools (e.g., tablets, laptops) effectively and appropriately in class activities.	80%	0	0	20%	0
2. Technological resources are frequently used in the teaching-learning process of the English language.	80%	0	0	20%	0
3. There is active interaction with the multimedia resources (e.g., videos, podcasts) used during English classes.	80%	0	0	20%	0
4. The incorporation of technological tools contributes significantly to the teaching-learning process of the English language.	100%	0	0	0	0
5. The students demonstrate tremendous enthusiasm, motivation and attention during activities that incorporate technological resources.	80%	0	0	20%	0
6. Students are more likely to complete tasks and assignments when technological resources are used.	80%	0	0	20%	0

7. Students demonstrate greater focus and attention during activities that incorporate technological resources.	90%	0	0	10%	0
8. The student is constantly trained on the use and/or management of linguistic technological tools.	80%	0	0	20%	0
9. The use of technological tools speeds up time and encourages teamwork in students.	90%	0	0	10%	0
10. The lack of human, technical, material, natural, energetic and economic resources interrupt the use of technology in English classes.	100%	0	0	0	0

The analysis of the questions asked allows us to identify high percentage values in relation to the agree and totally agree alternatives, where prevalence values for the first option totally agree with 80%-100%. With these results, it can be determined that the English teachers of the Cristo Rey Educational Unit consider the incorporation of technological resources in the complementary development of the teaching-learning processes carried out in the study classroom to be positive. Therefore, they contribute to the incessant search for theoretical and practical knowledge of the language from an innovative approach and with the international standards demanded by the work, academic and professional world.

Additionally, it was evident that there is active interaction with the multimedia resources (for example, videos and podcasts) used during English classes; there is a greater probability that students complete tasks and assignments when technological resources are used that save them time and effort. It allows them to work as a team and motivates them to quickly complete tasks, which previously cost them a lot due to traditional methods for their execution. Therefore, as an Educational Unit, students are constantly trained on the use and/or management of linguistic technological tools, specifically educational apps for mobile devices or computers, use of writing, audio and video translation applications such as Edpuzzle, Menti, Quizizz, AI, Kahoot, Educaplay.

Consequently, it has an international baccalaureate program that includes advanced study of the English language. The methodology is based on disciplinary and interdisciplinary project-based learning, thinking routines, and cooperative learning. However, the lack of human, energetic, natural, technical, material, and economic resources interrupt the use of technology during English classes (see Table 1).

Furthermore, to contrast the information collected through the teachers of the English area of the Cristo Rey Educational Unit, an interview was conducted with the coordinator of the language department, where the following results relevant to the research were obtained:

-The types of technological resources currently used in English classes usually include the use of Google Classroom for communication and grading purposes. Additionally, YouTube is a platform for interactive videos and live worksheets to obtain materials from digital tools such as Edpuzzle, Kahoot, and others.

The use of language practice applications in learning English helps students be more committed and motivated. Therefore, the most effective applications to promote the teaching-learning process are puzzles and Kahoot.

The integration of multimedia resources in English lessons brings advantages such as interest, attention, and collaboration when sharing videos to present a topic in classes or a multimedia game that involves the formation of work teams.

The perception of the use of technology in teaching/learning the English language depends on how it is used. Technology can become a good ally for teachers due to the benefits it provides. However, nowadays, with the use of AI, students can also become lazy and dependent on it.

-Work with listening comprehension activities. Usually, students have a video, answer questions about it, and practice active listening skills.

-The barriers that prevent success in modern technological learning of the language are generated by the lack of internet connection, especially in rural areas that are difficult to access, and by the lack of commitment of teachers to improve their knowledge regarding the use of digital applications, since they do not want to leave aside the use of traditional methods such as the blackboard, written works, among others.

-Barriers in the educational process can be effectively addressed by guaranteeing access to an Internet connection in classrooms and providing teachers with seminars or workshops related to the use and management of new technological applications and tools.

The implementation of technological processes has a positive impact on most students and teachers. They are more interested in using modern methods that speed up times, reduce efforts, and promote resource savings. This encourages the incessant search for innovative knowledge and its implementation.

Discussion

New technologies enrich and innovate the educational learning environment in an interdisciplinary way. As an improvement strategy, they can be used in different fields since they favor learning in all areas of knowledge, including foreign languages. In the last three years, new information and communication technologies have begun to be used more frequently in learning the English language. With the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, their use intensified for the development, practice, and feedback of virtual classes.

In Ecuador, learning English during the confinement period was not unrelated to what happened in other countries in the region, starting with problems such as difficulty in accessing the Internet and sufficient technological equipment to connect to online classes, the limited experience in the domain of ICTs and the decrease in the development of foreign language proficiency in students. (Córdova et al., 2022)

In this regard, Mendoza (2020) argues that Ecuador lacks the budget to invest in educational technology and with each passing day, the situation becomes worse. Science and technology have not been taken into account in the government's social plans and programs, especially when the contribution of scientific research is needed to make innovation and academic and professional competitiveness more productive.

Added to this problem, Cedeño et al. (2021) maintain that the way of teaching in Ecuador during the pandemic left a lot behind since teachers were inexperienced in managing educational platforms, there was a collapse them, and the majority of students did not have knowledge corresponding to the domain of mobile devices. These findings are confirmed by the results obtained by Hurtado et al. (2022) in their research titled "B-learning and its influence on teaching performance in the English area", in which 92% consider that student participation in virtual classes depends on interactivity. Participation was determined in the observed activities. However, teachers currently use permissive techniques in interaction that do not allow the desired results to be achieved.

Due to the above, countless pages and technological applications emerged in the classroom with the aim of teachers carrying out a more dynamic and participatory class. A clear example of this is the so-called Liveworksheets application, which covers a page that allows you to transform traditional worksheets into work with interactive self-correction exercises. In turn, it will enable students to complete the worksheets online and send the answers to the teacher, which implies a saving in marking time and an environmental benefit due to the decrease in the use of paper. (Cedeño, et al., 2023)

In agreement, Franco & García (2019) indicate that the Liveworksheets virtual learning environment has a positive impact on students by providing additional practice to improve the four skills associated with learning the English language such as listening, speaking and writing. Therefore, it is a technological application that not only helps reinforce the knowledge acquired in class but also helps enormously in the development of linguistic skills necessary for success in the communication process.

Additionally, Patiño et al. (2020) point out that Liveworksheets' main advantage is that it allows you to transform traditional spreadsheets into PDF, JPG, DOC, etc. formats, including multimedia content such as video, audio, and images. Generally speaking, it is a free platform that teachers can use to send assignments to students and manage the educational process in real-time.

Finally, according to Castillo & Canese (2021), in their research called “Criteria for evaluating language learning applications”, based on the analysis of the results, it was revealed that through the use and management of technological applications, it is possible to achieve an adequate acquisition of the English language.

Finally, it is essential to encourage the implementation of technology in teaching-learning processes since this promotes the interest and commitment of those involved in improving modern education.

Conclusions

Learning the English language is one of the areas of modern education. We live in a highly digital and globalised world, which requires constant communication between people due to the importance of its implementation in processes such as the educational, labour, and professional market, networks, and science.

There is a need and interest to encourage the learning of the English language as one of the official languages of the countries since it allows the interconnection of people, so the scientific community in its eagerness to contribute and intervene in realities that will enable for improvement. The teaching-learning processes of the foreign language English have incorporated the improvement of the same in the study plans and programs in higher educational processes, this with the purpose of being on a par with countries that manage the fluency of the language both in the listening comprehension, oral expression, comprehension reading and written expression.

The use of technological tools in teaching the English language has proven to be very beneficial and transformative in several ways. They provide a wide range of multimedia resources, enrich the learning experience, offer different ways of interacting with the language, and allow learning to be adapted to the individual needs of the students in the

management of academic activities. Therefore, students have the opportunity to practice the language in an active, attractive, engaging, and motivating way.

The use of technology in teaching English improves the linguistic skills of students and teachers, which allows them to continue developing technological skills that are relevant in today's world since it will enable them to take a more active and participatory role in the learning process. Please explore and learn independently to generate self-knowledge, thus promoting autonomy and responsibility in their linguistic development. In other words, the effective use of technological tools is essential to create educational experiences that are not only based on the teaching of the English language but also inspire and encourage students and teachers to participate in the continuous improvement of the educational process.

According to the interview and checklist applied to English teachers at the Cristo Rey Educational Unit, it was evident that the majority (80%-100%) agree that the incorporation of technological resources in English classes significantly influences the teaching-learning process since it allows the transfer of theoretical-practical knowledge from the innovative approach and in correspondence with the international demands involved in the development of activities that involve the participation of creative ideas for the improvement of linguistic skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) considered necessary for the student's work and/or professional performance. Therefore, it has been proven that students demonstrate tremendous enthusiasm, motivation and attention during academic activities that incorporate technological resources for their implementation, saving time and effort in their productive fulfilment.

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