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Globalizing the use of Innovative Technology in Teaching the English Language as a means of Literacy Development in Nigeria

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Abstract: The use of innovative technology in teaching the English language in Nigeria has improved the effectiveness and productivity of the teaching process. It is a well-known fact that, English has attained the status of a global language. This fact is justified with the wide spread of internet usage. The internet has become an important linguistic medium as computer mediated communication which is one of the main factors of globalization. Therefore, innovative technology involves any form of teaching and learning that makes use of technology. The uses of these technologies have helped a lot in the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment. This has theoretically and practically facilitated the learning process and also improved the education section. The reason for this development is connected with the process of globalization and computerization. This has directly reflected in the educational sector. There is no doubt saying that, the use of these innovative technologies has opened new opportunities in the educational environment. These technologies have helped in accessing, storing, sharing, processing, editing, selecting, presenting and communicating information through a variety of media. It is pertinent to note that, these varieties in the use of internet resources and software for the educational purposes has generated global changes and literacy development which has encouraged new teaching approaches. This paper examines the use of innovative technology in this digital era, which aims to assist the English teachers to deliver their material in the classroom

Keywords: Globalizing, Innovative, Technology, English Language and Literacy.

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INTRODUCTION

It is a well-known fact that the widespread of English as a global language and the advent of the innovative technologies as a mode of fast communication channel which has no boundaries, are mutually enforcing new trends in the teaching and learning process (Calvert, 2018). This no doubt has brought tremendous changes in this era of globalization. Since the inception of the internet services and other technological devices, there have been drastic changes in the means of communication which revolutionized the way people communicate and learn their English language in the global context. These innovative devices have indeed, become essential for every aspect of human life including the learning of languages. In 1900's, a new term 'global village' was coined by McLuhan in 1962 and further states that, "Electronic Communication will unite the world because the medium is the message".

Emerging technologies have become a part of daily life of each student. To keep up with time, education has to evolve and customize providing the learner with a more meaningful learning environment. Many teachers are now introducing learning technologies for training purpose since it can serve as powerful tools that enhance student participatory learning (NOSEC, 2016). The technology-aided learning environment enhances learning outcomes in English language acquisition and stimulates the

implementation of quality learning. A recent large-scale survey by Wilson (2008), reveals that the students like learning language through the use of video, which is often used to mean quite different things in English language teaching. The use of technology in this present era has helped people to share information across the world. Technology changing occurred from analog to digital which influenced human resources. These technologies include; WhatsApp, Facebook, twitter, Instagram, TikTok, snapchat and other computer devices (Nwachukwu, 2017).

In education sector, there are countless media which could be used to support the learner to develop literacy skills. The internet services have caused educators to confront issues related to new technologies, as previous technological innovations have been adopted so rapidly. The internet allows for immediate dissemination of information through the click of a single link (NOSEC, 2016).

In education, innovation can appear as a new pedagogic theory, methodological approach, teaching techniques, instructional tool, learning process, or instructional structure that, when implemented, produces a significant change in teaching and learning, which leads to better student learning. These technological devices no doubt, have created many opportunities in the educational system for effective learning experiences. More and more teachers are

introducing learning technologies for training purposes, since they can serve as powerful tools for efficient students' participatory learning. The technology-aided learning environment enhances learning outcomes in English Language acquisition and stimulates the implementation of quality learning.

English Language in the Global Context

The word globalization has been there in the annals of history and it got its significance just a decade ago. According to Jenkins (2003), it started on the point of business then spread like a fire to all aspects of human endeavours. Technological advances in production, transportation, and telecommunication and more advancement with internet, the firms got access to customer's supplies and collaborators around the world. Globalization has brought everything together but, the English language made globalization more possible and effective one (Mckay, 2012). Due to globalization, English language emerged as a global force. As statistics say, English language is most widely spoken tongue in the world today. The English language has taken U-turn after globalization. The English language has become an item of economic value. Due to globalization, the companies are using English language as a medium to sell their products across the globe. There are constant advertisements in print and electronic media. English language sweeps all the advertisements.

Globalization leaves no stone unturned, as current globalization seems to demand comprehensive transformation of a society and its impact on language. The reasons for English language globalization are exchange of socio-economic, political and technological advancements which have become a new trends in education sector. The policy of teaching English as a foreign language is a policy of globalization. It promotes the pulling down of linguistics barriers and encourages languages to travel freely across national frontiers. (Crystal, 2011).

A good knowledge of the socio-political history of Nigeria will enable one understand how English language came into Nigeria and occupied a colossal position in the Nigerian education system. English language plays the role of a second language, considering the multilingual nature of the country. It is the language of instruction from upper primary education, through secondary and tertiary education in Nigeria. The state of English as a second language in Nigeria coupled with the numerous roles it plays, compels every Nigeria citizens to learn and speak it. English language has not only engineered human literacy through education, it has also conferred on Nigerians other significant privileges both on the home front and the global scene. English language provides a link to the global world. Being a major language of communication in the global world, it offers the people of this nation the benefit of participating in global

affairs. Access to adequate information is gained on a global level. English language has also assisted technological development in Nigeria. Ike (2017), assert that, English language is the window to the world of science and technology. It is the language used in space science and computing technology, Nwanchukwu (2017). There is easy knowledge transfer now in quantities and at speed unimaginable in the past.

Therefore, English language has created digital communication of massive data bases via the internet, smart phones, fax machines, television, print media and so on. One can easily connect to data-bases anywhere in the world from the comfort of our rooms. Although, some innovations to technology have some negative effects, but their advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. Most educational institutions, organizations and industries have gone digital. It makes both teaching and learning easier and, provides easy method for storing and retrieving information. Nigerians now are active participants in this digital world because of their knowledge of English language. Presently, many Nigerians can as well read and interpret such information or instructions enclosed in scientific literature and put them into use.

SOME KEY CONCEPTS

Innovation Technology

Frankkevis (2009) defines innovation as a way of doing something more effective and thus as a consequence that will break into the market or society. Innovation therefore implies doing something new or in different ways. It is an improvement of what had existed before.

Innovation means adding more strategy, skills or methods to an already invented process. In life, there are usually traditional or old ways of doing things. But today, innovations that have been brought into the definition of literacy, made the use of technological devices to go global. Therefore, innovations could come through government policies, through the innovators who wants a radical change in an already existing system, through the creation of values, or through new services to enhance existing ones, Henderson (2017).

It is important to note that examples of this innovations can be technological innovations like; the computers, internets and social medias which are brought into a system, to help change the mindset or the physical status of a learning environment. Therefore, all the technological devices used in teaching and learning is refers to innovative technology. That is to say, teachers education programs need a lot of innovations to equip the teacher to become functional and more effective in delivering his lessons.

The Roles of Innovative Technologies in Teaching

It is important to note that emerging technologies are shaping the future of the education

system. Fortunately for modern learners, new useful tools appear every day. Various devices and software facilitate the studying process and help students to master essential skills faster than ever before. Particularly, the latest technologies help to improve the literacy skills of the learners.

Innovative technologies played so many roles in teaching-learning process. According to Ughamadu (2012); & Akudolu (2015) the roles are as follows:

- It provides teaching resources through instructional media.
- It facilitates instructional activities, learning process and a host of other teaching-learning practices.
- It prepares learner effectively for life in the society.
- It enhances, concretizes, and consolidates learning
- It brings into the classroom innovations in English language learning.
- It helps in storing, retrieval and dissemination of information necessary for instructional process.
- It reduces the cost of learning materials without affecting the quality of instruction as teachers and students can produce their own teaching and learning materials.

From the above explanation, the use of technology by teachers would promote active learning and remove teachers from traditional teaching, shaping their roles as facilitators. Thus, it encourages students in classroom activities and ensures continuous learning.

It is important to know that innovative technology according to Duraku & Hoxha, (2020) are very essential when we talk about literacy development. The effort to integrate technology into the learning processes will help in building teachers' knowledge and literacy level, and this would be enhanced on improving teaching methodologies with student-centred approach. There are varieties in which technology can be used to support learning. Price-Dennis *et al.* (2015), observed that using these digital tools to teach can make the curriculum accessible to learners of different abilities while inspiring learners by linking roles with real world platforms. Supporting, Higgin *et al.* (2012) in their research indicated that the impact of these digital technologies on learning consistently, identifies positive benefits. They further enumerated the benefits of these technological devices thus;

- It support literacy in the classroom
- It makes teachers felt fulfilled teaching through technology
- It encourage learners to learn independently.

- It saves time in planning and creating subject contents.

There is no doubt saying that the advent of technology has played a significant role in supporting learning. It has also helped to create new and updated educational materials and curricular, and this has improved the speed of teaching and learning process. It makes teaching more interactive, more collaborative, and more meaningful and engaged students with course materials (Okwo, 2018).

LITERACY AND TECHNOLOGY

Recently, research has shown that technological advances have facilitated access to information. With the digitalization of education, literacy practices, pedagogy and new technologies have become unlimited in number. Teachers are now faced with the challenges of selecting from a limitless number of technologies to integrate into their classrooms, which help them to impact on their students to enable them develop their literacy skills. Calvert (2015), opines that presently, the use of technological devices have refined the whole teaching-learning process, and this has brought about the use of appropriate pedagogy and technology. The learners might explore other sources of information which are not in the curriculum and teachers should play an important role as facilitators.

The use of technology in the process of teaching and learning of English language, is not a new idea, as researchers in the field of language education over the years, have clamoured for the utilization of technology in teaching learning process (Nwachukwu, 2017). Makinde & Shorunke (2013), assert that, it is safe to say that language teachers worldwide have usually been at the forefront of using new technology in their teaching. These technological devices like; video, television, tape, cassette recorders, record players and computer are serving many purposes in language teaching. This broader function of language education is one of the reasons why the use of technology in instruction can be so important. A study carried out by Ike and Nwodo (2020), reveals that some English language teachers used Google classroom, zoom app, e-mail and WhatsApp as teaching and learning. Other web-based platform used for e-teaching especially in a classroom discourse were, Wiki, Facebook, Google +, Instagram, Moodle, e-college, Twitter, YouTube, Skype, zoom, Google drive, Drop box, and WhatsApp.

Ike & Nwodo (2020), further highlights how those technological software and platforms can be used interchangeably to build literacy skills thus;

Table 1.

	Mobile Application	Features	Learning Outcomes Skills
1	WhatsApp	Voice note, sending and receiving pictures, videos and messages	Speaking, listening, reading and writing.
2	Facebook	Voice note, sending and receiving picture, videos and messages.	Speaking, listening, reading and writing.
3	Zoom Meeting	Breakout, rooms, making live videos and audio recordings, chat box.	Speaking, listening, reading and writing.
4	YouTube	Watching videos, listening to audio recording, and sharing content or sending comments.	Speaking, listening, reading and writing.

It is important to know that some features of these applications as shown in the table above, could help in building language skills and literacy development if used appropriately by a competent teacher. The wide spread of devices such as smart phones and tablets, have increased the wealth of reading material, making them available and affordable for writing, speaking and listening, this has been reflected in growing number of studies exploring the interplay of technology and literacy in recent decades.

Building English Teachers Task and Literacy Level through Innovative Technology

Recently, there are researches that investigate how teachers might learn with innovative technologies. As Kukulka-Hulme & Sharpless (2019), state that, "teachers need to have a good understating of what innovative technology can offer". According to Clark & Hollingsworth (2012), teacher growth becomes a process of the constitution of a variety of the knowledge types, (content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge) by individual teachers in response to their participation in the experiences provided by the professional development programme, and through their participation in the classroom. In this connection, Walsh (2011), substantiate the key role by innovative technologies in providing effective teacher literacy development. Walsh (2011), maintained that such teacher literacy development could be provided with the help of innovative technologies, consisting of a variety of teacher professional development materials and different kinds of classroom resources (eg; pirate, audio and visual) delivered via innovative technology, facilitating teacher's literacy development and language acquisition process, thereby creating interactivity and necessary pedagogical knowledge to teach communicatively. In support, Coutinho & Lisboa (2013), opined that innovative tools provide teachers with opportunities to develop their knowledge and competences, contributing to lifelong learning and professional development. Shohel & Power (2010), assert that innovative tools and materials will help teachers achieve most of their literacy development, not in face-to-face training workshops, but back at home and at school, by working with new tools and materials, on their own and with their project partner.

Shohel & Power (2010), further highlighted the benefits inherent in using innovative tools thus:

- Developing teachers pedagogic knowledge;
- Supporting teacher's own learning of English language and pronunciation;
- Improving teachers' use of English language in their classes;
- Working collaboratively with their peers;
- Having access to materials at different times and places;
- Creating new opportunities for professional learning;
- Enhancing teachers' determination and engagement in mastering the language, pronunciation and the classroom practices;
- Increasing confidence in using English language;
- Introducing more active learning practices;
- Facilitating access to learning;
- Improving the quality of teacher education and training (Pp 212-213).

Mackay (2012) supports that these innovative tools are regarded as one of the most effective ways to expand teachers' digital competence by enhancing literacy development and providing teachers and educators, considering the educational implication of innovative technology on sustaining the process of teaching and learning in this present era. It is expedient for English teachers to have some competencies in order to apply technological devices into their professional practices. Crystal (2011), revealed that there are some exciting information and communication technologies frameworks which provide general guidelines to pre-service teachers for the appropriate use of digital technologies across education. Examples of such frameworks are the UNESCO ICT competency framework for teachers, the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) and the European Framework for Digital Competence of Educators (DCE, 2016).

Fatimah (2020) outlines various tasks expected of English teacher who have acquired competencies in applying these technological devices thus:

- **Pedagogical Skills:** English teachers should understand the fundamentals of online teaching and

pedagogy. The teacher must demonstrate this understanding through applying a large number of principles and strategies like learning theories, students' engagement techniques, promoting group interaction etc.

- **Content Skills:** English teachers must express and master extensive knowledge of the content, draft and develop learning and assessment activities that align with learning goals and objectives.
- **Design Skills:** English teachers is expected to have a designed and production team, which consists of an instructional designer, instructional technologist, and graphic and media designer.
- **Technological Skills:** English teachers must have adequate technical literacy skills in order to be able to access various technical resources and tools, like email, internet browser, productivity software and applications. It is also very important for teachers to be aware of the technical procedures used to create e-content, such as e-books and instructional videos. Being alert to the latest versions of educational technology and software is also very important.

It is important to note from these enumerates facts that, English teachers should be conversant with the latest as far as computational linguistics is concerned. The knowledge gained through the use of these technological devices will enhance effective delivery of curriculum contents.

Learning to Read English through Technology

We live in a world where learning and technology are intrinsically linked, especially in the

minds of our young learners. Today, students process information differently because it comes on a digital devices. The correlation between technology use and the literacy rate, have impacted positively in the literacy growth of our learners. Innovative technologies have helped in the spread of all kinds of information, displacing traditional formats of usually more carefully curated information such as encyclopedias and newspapers (NOSEC, 2008). NOSEC (2016), research found that laptops and connection to the internet provided scaffolding for many classroom topics, thus building background knowledge. He noted increased students' engagement in wireless classrooms as students participated in more diverse writing activities, analysis of reading, and use of media-production software. He further stated that, students gain control of reading on the page as well as the screen. Thus, students realized that there was more to a computer than games or challenging and gained practice in reading for a variety of purposes, such as interpreting the textual and visual elements in a document and knowing how to navigate and find information.

Dunleavy *et al.* (2007), supported that, "as more classrooms and schools adopt one-to-one laptop instruction, the need to document the work of teachers and students in such settings is important". There is no doubt saying that, there has been a growing interest in the application of technology to address challenges in English language teaching and learning. According to Shohel & Power (2010), in their research findings, there are benefits associated with delivering professional English language course materials via mobile technologies (iPods, MSNS etc.) thus:

Table 2. English Language Course Materials Delivered through Mobile Technologies

Module	Key points
1. Active listening	* Elicitation Techniques * States of a listening lesson
2. Choral dialogue	* Scaffolding students * Setting up pair-work
3. Listening and responding	* Active involvement * Different learning styles
4. Information gaps	* Creating an information gap * Authenticity
5. Practice	* Pronunciation models
6. Predictive listening	* Elicitation techniques * Creativity
7. Role play	* Using dialogues * Pair-work and group-work
8. Songs for language practice	* Automatization * Grammar integration
9. Using visuals	* Classroom interaction * Skills integration
10. Creative writing	* Personalization and creativity * Stages of a writing lesson
11. Listening to the	* Real-life purposes

world	*	Listening for gist/key points
12. Grammar games	*	Grammar integration
	*	Motivation

It is believed that integrating innovative technology into language learning will enhance teaching process. More so, English language learning requires continuous interaction. According Graddol (2017), technology lies at the heart of globalization process which affects education, work and culture. Researchers submitted that using innovative technologies in teaching language would surely help to improve, motivate, promote zeal and sustain them for long learning process for engaged tasks. Crystal (2011), maintained that the use of technological devices in language learning can be of great help to student's motivation, engagement and commitment towards English language learning.

Recommendations

Most often, language teachers at all levels of education in Nigeria encounter many problems in their attempt to improve the teaching and learning of English language. Some of these problems include; lack of resources for teaching, inadequate knowledge of the current trends in the teaching and learning of English language, because of the need to transform the educational sector. The following recommendations are made;

- Government should provide the needed resources for the teaching of English language in our schools. Such resources include; laptop, tape recorders, flannel boards, interactive/magnetic boards and, language laboratories.
- There is need to update teachers knowledge and skill so that they will be exposed to the current trends in the use of technological devices in language teaching.
- As for tackling the attitude and psychological problems of the learners, the use of these innovative technologies would go a long way in restoring the confidence of the learners as well reduce their anxiety.
- There is no doubt saying that the use of these innovative technologies will facilitate teaching and learning, if teachers and students should embrace it, it will create opportunity for learner-centered which will bring about positive attitude.

CONCLUSION

It is important to note that, English language is not fixed but constantly changing, it is the media which are extraordinarily rich sources of language in use. In order to expose English language learners to the target language, the use of technology need to be taken in the classroom as much as possible. For this reason, a great tendency towards the use of technology and its integration into the curriculum developed by English

language teachers, has gained a great importance particularly, the use of video has received increasing attention. In the recent studies, technology integration into teacher education curricular, has improved students' academic performance drastically. Though, traditional classroom teaching may still be prevalent but, many educational institutions are coming forward in embracing technologies. For instance, the use of digital whiteboards, flipped classroom and chrome books replacing textbooks. It is now clear that, innovative technology is having a significant impact on educational system at all levels.

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