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Digital Transformation in Foreign Language Education

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Abstract: Every day new technologies push space, time limits. Intensive exposure to digital environments necessitates new positions in many areas of education and training. Digital transformation has now become a necessity in transitioning to professionalism all over learning and teaching, and also through lifelong learning, digital transformation has become compulsory in educational institutions in order to enable the participation of everyone at any time and everywhere. Digital transformation in foreign language teaching makes learning and teaching possible not only in the classroom environment but also anywhere and anytime with the internet and other technological developments. It gives both teachers and learners new opportunities and roles to take advantage of the digital transformation of unlimited and multiple materials. Therefore, preparing and passing digital transformation environments in foreign language teaching will also make important contributions to benefit and to achieve results. It is clear that a limited number of course environments are not sufficient in foreign language teaching.

Keywords: Digital transformation, foreign language learning, computer assisted language.

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Yabancı Dil Eğitiminde Dijital Dönüşüm

Öz: Her gün yeni teknolojiler mekan, zaman sınırlarını zorlamaktadır. Dijital ortamlara yoğun maruz kalınması eğitim öğretimin pek çok alanında yeni pozisyonlar alınması gerekli kılmaktadır. Dijital dönüşüm, artık öğrenmenin ve öğretimin her yanında profesyonellliğe geçmede ayrıca hayat boyu öğrenmeyle de öğretim her zaman ve heryerde ve herkesin katılımını mümkün kılması bağlamında eğitim kurumlarında dijital dönüşüm zorunlu hale gelmiştir. Yabancı dil öğretiminde dijital dönüşüm internet ve diğer teknolojik gelişmelerle sınırları sadece sınıf ortamı değil her yerde ve her zaman öğrenim-öğretimi mümkün kılmaktadır. Sınırsız ve çok sayıda materyal içeren dijital dönüşümden faydalanmak için hem öğretenlere hem de öğrenenlere yeni imkanlar ve roller vermektedir. Bundan dolayı yabancı dil öğretiminde, dijital dönüşüm ortamlarını hazırlamak ve geçmek faydalanma ve sonuç alma da önemli katkılar sağlayacaktır. Özellikle yüksek öğretimde sınırlı sayıdaki ders ortamlarının yabancı dil öğretimi-öğreniminde yeterli olmadığı çok açıktır. Diğer zamanlarda yabancı dile maruz kalmada; öğrenme platformları, eşzamanlı iletişim kanalları, forumlar, bloklar, mobil uygulamalar ve oyunlar vb. yabancı dil öğretiminde kullanılabilir. Bunların dışında kalmak yerine dijital dönüşümleri sağlayıp en iyi ve en verimli bir şekilde eğitim hayatımıza koymamız yabancı dil öğrenmede yeni bir ivme kazandıracaktır. Beceri temelli etkinlikler için dijital dönüşüm oldukça faydalı olacaktır. Yüz yüze öğretimin yanında bu beceri temelli yabancı dilde dijital dönüşüm yabancı dil öğretiminde katkı sağlıyacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Dijital dönüşüm, yabancı dil öğrenimi, bilgisayar destekli öğretim.

Giriş

The use of technology in the teaching and learning environment has become prevalent among most learning institutions. For foreign language learners, the incorporation of technology in the teaching process has had a significant effect because it enables teachers to facilitate the learning process readily. The use of technology in foreign language learning incorporates the innovative application of tools, systems, strategies, materials, and tools that directly translates to the teaching process and attainment of the desired objectives. While technology is widely accepted as an essential tool learning tool across various learning and teaching environments, it is particularly true for teaching foreign language since it provides numerous opportunities for enhancing delivery and content. The use of technology in foreign language learning facilitates faster and overall learning progression among students. In the process of digital transformation in foreign language learning and teaching, the educational sector must keep pace with global technological developments through the adoption of new technological resources such as mobile phone applications for learning, computerization, audio and visual aids, and multimedia devices.

Digital Transformations That Should Be Applied in Language Teaching for Teachers and Schools as Advantageous

Personalized learning is a type of digital transformation in education that enables teachers to address the students' diverse learning needs using technological resources. For instance, in various schools, there are gifted students and the slow learners. These students need different level of attention from their teachers to master concepts. The use of technological resources such as Dragon Speak and audio books helps teachers to ensure that all students get help in reading and writing vocabularies and sentences. The use of these resources helps both teachers and the entire learning institution to accommodate the needs of the special students by giving them a chance to learn by voice. This way, teachers ensure that the students' learning abilities are not

only limited to their writing and spelling comprehension (Bates, 2018).

Role of Teachers in Digital Transformation in Foreign Language Teaching And Learning

Technology is a significant part of students' foreign language learning process. In the digital transformation process, it is the role of teachers to model the use of technology that supports the curriculum so that students get an adequate opportunity to improve their language learning skills (Xiao, 2019). It is the role of teachers to facilitate the creation of better learning environments both in classrooms and on various online platforms. The teachers must also ensure that they effectively utilize the available digital media tools to help in enhancing the students' learning abilities (Macías, 2018). With their knowledge and expertise, teachers have to adopt the global educational platform effectively to provide students with regular updates on practical technological resources that support students' learning process. Besides, teachers must work together with students in helping them master new learning opportunities that will improve their language learning process. Furthermore, it is the role of teachers to find effective methods for applying technology in the curriculum as an essential educational instrument for students (Bond et al., 2018).

Role of Institutions in Digital Transformation in Foreign Language Teaching And Learning

According to Bates (2018), educational institutions also play a critical role in enhancing the process of digital transformation in foreign language teaching and learning. It is the role of the various learning institutions to provide the appropriate infrastructure that incorporates appropriate technology for teaching and learning a foreign language. Institutions play a critical role in providing funds and recognition of digital transition in the curriculum to meet the technological needs of learners. As such, institutions work to enhance the professional development of teachers and developing state-of-the-art, tech-

nologically equipped learning environments that accommodate the needs of different students (Ahmadi & Reza, 2018). In ensuring that students obtain quality learning outcomes, institutions must build and maintain appropriate designed structured and unstructured learning environments, continuous processes, and constantly testing new technologies to provide sufficient support to innovative language teaching and learning process. Through versatile digital tools, institutions are also creating both synchronous and asynchronous personal learning environments for students by allowing students to gain access to relevant language learning services and resources (Aydın, 2018).

Role of Students in Digital Transformation in Foreign Language Teaching And Learning

For a successful digital transformation of foreign language learning and teaching, students must be receptive to the technological resources that are provided to aid their language learning process. Without students' cooperation in the learning transition process, it may be difficult or become quite impossible for educators to succeed in the digital transformation process (Baser, Kopcha&Ozden, 2016). For instance, the digital transition process involves an integration of various technological resources into the curriculum. To validate the efficiency of these resources, students must express the diverse educational needs that they need to be addressed through the use of technology. Through working together with their teachers, it becomes easier for educators to create an interactive environment that encourages their language learning process (Panagiotidis, 2018).

Significance of the Study

The study was conducted to evaluate the role of technology in enhancing the process of teaching and learning a foreign language. By identifying students' and teachers' perspectives in the position that they play in strengthening digital transformation in foreign language learning and teaching, the study provides insightful information that can be used in the education

sector to improve students' learning outcomes for foreign languages (Klimova, 2018).

Methodology

Descriptive and experimental research was conducted to study the impact of digital transformation in foreign language learning and teaching. A group of 100 volunteer students from Stockholm University responded to open-ended questionnaires for the study about their perceptions of the importance of the use of technology in teaching and learning foreign languages. Fifteen foreign language teachers from the art department also took part in the study. The study also performed a review and comparison of secondary sources from reports and previous studies to obtain data (Summers, 2019).

Research Questions

1. Do institutions have adequately trained teachers to use modern technology in teaching a foreign language?

2. How effective are the foreign language learning technology aid students' learning process?

3. How effective is the use of modern technology aid in the digital transformation in foreign language learning?

Results and Discussion

The interview questions were asked to a mix of ten teachers and students as a part of the interview processes. The questionnaire has been attached in the Appendix. Their responses were recorded for the purposes of content analysis. After transcribing and analyzing recording, their key points have been included in this section. As per the results, 60% of the participants were teachers, while 10% of them were students. In relation to their age groups, 30% of the participants belonged to 20-29 years, while 40% of them were 30-39 years. 20% of them belonged to the age group of 40-49 years, while 10% were more than 50 years.

Digital technologies in Foreign Language Learning

All of the participants believed that the use of modern systems is highly beneficial for both students and teachers. Nevertheless, everyone had their own reasons for considering digital technologies as an important part of Foreign Language education. T1 believes that without the use of suitable digital amenities, such learning would be exhausting and boring for students. She believes in using sound effects as a driver of the learning process. T2 states that digital technologies can help in Foreign Language learning classes that have to deal with a range of topics. She focused on the use of visual memory and visual teaching through video presentations. These presentations help students memorize and learn words easily. T3 focused on technological involvement in the classes in relation to sound practices and listening activities. The use of digital technologies is of great significance in Oral Translation. As per S1, young students lean towards technologies in the learning process.

Types of Digital Technologies

T3 states that Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) applies technologies in foreign language teaching and learning. It improves and facilitates educational learning. As per T4, Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) are modern approaches to foreign language teaching (Alshahrani, 2017). Some of their benefits include process approaches, task-based learning, and communicative language teaching to language learning strategies. The benefits of these tools include the provision of targeted and independent reading practice, immediate feedback, and learning support to the learners. It helps them in achieving progress in individuality, connectivity, context awareness, and social interactivity.

S2 is of the opinion that technologies like iPads, cell phones, and computers make learning more autonomous and language learning/teaching more flexible. These technologies help in breaking the constraints of conditions in learning, time, and

space. New technologies like Android tablets, phones, iPhones, Pocket PCs, and mobile computers interact in a multimodal way that involves text, image, and voice. Their effective implementation is known to embrace the connectivity and mobility of mobile devices. In addition to this, they have a direct link with the way in which teachers consider their functionality and use. New technologies need to be effectively incorporated into their practices. Advancements in mobile technologies enable teachers to utilize mobile devices and connections for educational purposes (Ostanina-Olszewsk, 2018).

AS per T5, an audio-video recorder helps in the improvement of language skills such as speaking and listening. Audio recorders can be used for comparing the pronunciations of different students. There are digital tools available that can help in analyzing the recordings. Thus, it assists in improving both the pronunciation and attitude of students. Another valuable tool is the Internet that has the potential for powerful and purposeful use of writing and online classes. The web sources can be accessed by the teachers to resources for classes. In addition to this, they can communicate their own ideas, knowledge, and materials to other teachers and students over the Internet. Internet tools can be used by the teachers to offer teaching based on learner's situations.

Advantages of Digital Technologies

Most of the participants believed that using technological facilities in the teaching process can offer better performance and atmosphere (Gonzalez-Vera, 2016). Young students cannot imagine classes without suitable digital facilities. This increases the engagement level of the students. In addition to this, it has been stated that visual learning helps in learning things easier and faster. Some of the key benefits that have been related to digital technologies are:

• Providing opportunities for foreign language teaching outside the classes.

• Creation of conductive teaching environment in a class.

- Enhancing interactions between students and teachers and among students.
- Improvement in teaching efficiency.
- Widening knowledge related to the background and culture of the language.
- Development of communicative competencies in students.
- Motivating students to learn a new language.

In relation to benefits of ICT technologies in language learning, the participants revealed that they retain more information as learners have an active role. In addition to this, they allow follow-up discussions that make leaners more independent. The learners are able to process learner-based educational materials in order to their language learning skills. Through technology, learning can be made more interactive and interesting to increase their engagement, social interactions and motivation. As the technology is more user-friendly, learners are able to learn at a faster pace.

In relation to recommendations related to technological integration, the participants stated that teacher attitudes towards digital technologies need to be changed. It can be done by educating them about the advantages of provided by digital technologies. Computer teaching can be used transfer skills to learners. For this purpose, technology must be used as an important part of the learning and teaching programs. Also, it is seen that ICT can offer learner-centred instructions instead of teacher-centred instructions. Teachers need to act as facilitators and guides of the learning process.

Conclusion

Language teaching and advanced technology have been collaborating for a long time to guide language classes. Nevertheless, teachers seem to shy away from the use of digital technologies in the teaching process. It is mainly because of certain insecurity and gaps in using those technologies. Global interaction has been possible because of the Internet to contribute to

language teaching. Effective use of such technologies can develop suitable language skills easily. Thus, there is a need for offering training to the teachers to make them proficient in using different technologies. There is a huge potential for digital technologies and devices to make foreign language learning and teaching more effective.

The findings suggest technology allows interaction between learners and teachers in order to offer understandable input and output. It helps in the development of thinking skills by making teaching more learner-centred. In addition to this, digital technologies encourage learners' autonomy. Thus, a learner is able to feel more dependent. Overall, it results in learners feeling more motivated towards learning a foreign learning.

Limitation of the Study

The scope of the survey was significantly limited by time and resources. The study used a relatively small sample and heavily depended on secondary sources for information. Therefore, it only made generalized conclusions about the importance of using technology in teaching and learning a foreign language. The study did not incorporate the impact of digital transition in foreign language learning among several institutions. Therefore, it used inconclusive results for analysis and making conclusions.

Recommendations

Future research on digital transformation in a foreign language should use a larger sample group with several institutions, students, and teachers. To establish appropriate strategies for digital transformation in foreign language learning, future research should also focus on understanding the role of technology in creating a conducive learning environment for students.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

1. Identify yourself.

a. Teacher

b. Student

2. What is your age group?

a. 20-29 years

b. 30-39 years

c. 40-49 years

d. Above 50 years

3. Do you see digital technologies in the form a tool for facilitating Foreign Language Education/Teaching?

4. What are some digital devices that are important for Foreign Language classes?

5. What are some advantages of the use of digital technologies in Foreign Language Education/Teaching?