



TECHNOLOGICAL AIDS, IT-APPLICATIONS AND ONLINE EDUCATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract:

This article deals with online education in learning English. The article presents the effective ways of employing online education in teaching and learning English. Examples are given of good teaching practice. Furthermore, the article deals with the efficient use of some of the technological aids and IT applications in learning English.

Keywords:

online education, IT applications, English.

INTRODUCTION

There are two reasons for writing this article, first, to describe the practice in the author's teaching supported by the use of modern technology and contemporary applications to support online education. Second, the article deals with using technological aids.

The goal of this article is to describe and present the ways of language teaching by using modern technology and different technological aids frequently found in many modern classrooms. My teaching experience lasts for ten years and within it I used many ways to employ modern technology in teaching.

Many modern classrooms have computers that can be used in many ways. For example, the Microsoft office package can be used for using PowerPoint presentations to support course books. PowerPoint presentations are an ideal way to highlight the most important aspects of class, present lessons, insert text, point out the important questions, and insert interesting and relevant pictures and illustrations to follow the lesson as well as graphs and tables. PowerPoint presentations are presented to students on the whiteboard by using overhead projectors and, of course, by using computers.

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Interactive presentation software is Genial.ly for making online presentations and creating engagement in class. A teacher can add slide(s) situated on the left side on Figure 1, texts and images, quizzes, etc. to a presentation to create an entertaining presentation. The examples of its usage are illustrated in Figure 1 (see Figure 1).

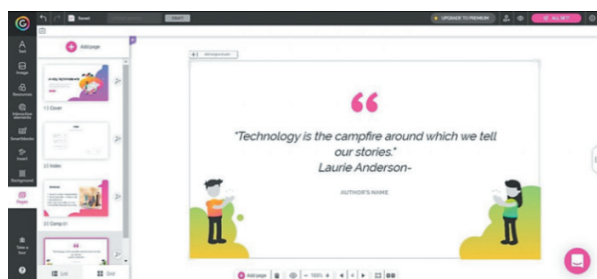


Figure 1 Genial.ly app for making presentations

2. COMPUTERS AND IT APPLICATIONS IN LEARNING ENGLISH

Learners of English are especially interested in the use of modern technology in learning. To support their writing and finding the unknown words, students use computers to find electronic dictionaries to help them in learning [1], [2], and [3].

2.1. IT APPLICATIONS

The Internet is used in (online) class to find out relevant information on different topics or simply to do the research necessary for writing case studies found in many books with computer-based research using the Internet. Also, digital presentation or story writing is current and applicable in teaching. Learners of English are especially interested in the use of modern technology in learning. To this end, various computer applications (for example, British Council) that can be mobile phone applications as well are used to learn English independently. One of the useful smartphone quiz apps in English and tool for teaching is Quizlet. The cognitive modality stands out when solving tasks on these applications.

2.2. VIDEO/DVD PROJECTIONS

Important parts of the lesson are video and DVD projections on different topics (everyday life, jobs/careers, solving problems, moving house, friendship, film and music, entertainment etc.). Depending on the way we learn, different modalities stand out. For example, through video watching, a visual-sensory modality develops because students concentrate both on watching the projection and hearing the content.

2.3. ONLINE EDUCATION

Online education is used in the Moodle application. Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) is used in schools and at colleges in Serbia. This application was invented by Martin Dougiamas [4]. The research helped him in inventing Moodle. Martin Dougiamas did his Ph.D. on "The use of Open Source software to support a social constructionist epistemology of teaching and learning within Internet-based communities of reflective inquiry" [5]. The application is used to publish presentations, lectures and tests, audio and video content and different audio recordings.

Collaborative online spaces are Skype, Zoom, Google collaboration tools, forums etc. Video communication is supported by Google Meet developed by Google. People who have Google account may create an online meeting. The number of participants is 100 and each meeting may last an hour and longer per meeting.

In order for you to participate in a meeting using your mobile phone you must have a Gmail account created. The approach to the Internet is necessary as well as built-in camera and a supported operating system.

A sense of having company in online education is supported by the Zoom application. Zoom is a way to communicate online with many students, hold classes, chat, make use of speaking activities and it enables us audio-visual experience and the presence in an online environment and texting in comments. To bridge the gap between the classroom and the workplace a teacher can organize job interviews simulation via Zoom. Always make sure that the sound/ camera is turned on while using Zoom. In what follows are some tips and tricks for teachers educating on Zoom [6].

- ◆ Starting a class:
 - If it's your first time using Zoom, visit the Educating Guide: Getting Started on Zoom and complete the steps in advance of your class to get you set up.



- Schedule your class in the Zoom application for your desired date/time and copy the invitation details to send to your students. Please note that students will not need to register for an account to join.

It is also important to join your class a couple minutes early to ensure a proper connection then follow the below tips for a quality online learning experience.

- ◆ Tips and Tricks for Virtual Lessons:
 - For your first class, set aside some time to introduce your students to Zoom and ensure that they're able to connect their audio and video.
 - Take time to promote questions, comments, and reactions from your class. Give a minute to allow your students to utilize reactions, write their questions in chat, or be unmuted to ask their questions live.

Students can be divided into smaller groups for a discussion on a certain topic. You can use Zoom's Breakout Room feature to either pre-assign or auto-assign students into groups for a short period of time so they may discuss things together.

- ◆ Teaching Over Video - Delivery Tips and Tricks:
 - Look at the camera to create eye contact with your students. This helps to create a more personal connection while teaching over video. And the last one in this level.
 - Speak as if you're face-to-face with the class while ensuring you're at the appropriate distance from the microphone for the best audio experience.

Give your students a moment to open or take in what you've shared (presentation, shared images, files or video).

- ◆ Great Tools Built into Zoom for Engagement:
 - Breakout Rooms: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476093-Getting-Started-with-Breakout-Rooms>
 - Chat: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/203650445-In-Meeting-Chat>

There are two types of meetings online: synchronous meeting and asynchronous meeting.

2.4. SYNCHRONOUS AND ASYNCHRONOUS E-LEARNING

E-learning has two types: synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous e-learning is Zoom meeting, video conferencing, instant messaging and chat. An asynchronous meeting is discussion forum, e-mail and blog. The synchronous discussion makes it easier for learners to find more facts, to have a look in a book and do detailed postings [7]. Synchronous e-learning makes it easier for learners to respond quickly, because they do not want to disrupt the conversation [7]. The work of Hrastinski was to determine when, why and how a teacher should incorporate asynchronous or synchronous e-learning tools and what are the advantages and disadvantages of asynchronous and synchronous e-learning [7]. Table 1 illustrates when, why and how to use asynchronous and synchronous e-learning [7].

Synchronous communication, as e-learners reveal in the interviews, is "more like talking" in comparison to asynchronous communication. It serves to discuss less "complex" problems. The synchronous meeting provides students with the psychological action and motivation because a quick response is expected. It is similar to face-to-face communication. Students become psychologically active in synchronous meeting because of the ability to convey and observe facial expressions and body language.

Questions	Asynchronous	Synchronous
When?	Reflecting on complex issues When synchronous meetings cannot be scheduled because of work, family, and other commitments.	Discussing less complex issues Getting acquainted Planning tasks.
Why?	Students have more time to reflect because the sender does not expect an immediate answer.	Students become more committed and motivated because a quick response is expected.
How?	Use asynchronous means such as e-mail, discussion boards, and blogs.	Use synchronous means such as videoconferencing, instant messaging and chat, and complement with face-to-face meetings.

Table 1 Asynchronous vs. Synchronous Learning



These are especially evident in smaller classes. Learners are also more motivated in synchronous e-learning because synchronous communication enables monitoring the receiver's reaction to the message and receiver is immediately more motivated to read and answer the message. Of course, the response is also immediate. A drawback of synchronous e-learning is that the emphasis is often on quantity (trying to write quickly as in chat) rather than the quality of words, because "someone else will say what I meant to say". In asynchronous communication the receiver has more time to understand the message, since the sender does not expect immediate answer (as in e-mail, e.g.).

The example of using asynchronous way of communication is for example a teacher leads and writes a blog about the course or a student may have his/ her blog. Synchronous way of communication is a teacher giving an online lecture via Zoom for many students at the same time. Another example is a chat on any topic.

The combination of synchronous and asynchronous e-learning is the best to exchange information between teachers and learners, collaborate and get acquainted with each other. The author of this paper uses the combination of these two ways of online learning, Zoom is synchronous and writing a blog is asynchronous way of online learning to support e-learning.

2.5. TECHNOLOGICAL AIDS

The most used technological aids in classroom are CDs and audio tapes supported by the course book package. CDs and audio tapes are useful in listening practice for learners. Teachers must check if the tapes are in the correct place before the lesson, and use the counter on tape recorder so that the tape can be rewound to the original correct position. Students usually need to listen to the recording more than once. Students can also be recorded when speaking and in this case their motivation is high. Learners can speak freely and listen to the tape and correct mistakes that they hear or that the teacher highlights [8].

Second, video or DVD provides a variety of input through the combination of listening and visual information while we listen, such as the body language. Some videos and DVDs are especially for English Language Teaching and that have the advantage of grading language and tasks that are appropriate for lower level classes and worksheets that follow by. Learners can also be recorded while they perform a role-play and it is similar to a DVD recording in their production [8].

Overhead projectors serve to prepare before the lesson and teachers in this way can control what they want to show students. The transparencies can be prepared using coloured pens or can be photocopied on to. The biggest advantages of this are that teachers can take time to prepare diagrams, examples sentences, grammar exercises, without having to write them on the board under pressure during the lesson. By covering the parts of transparency with paper, teachers can control when things are revealed. Useful activity is to use the overhead projector in students' writing activities, to do them in small groups or in pairs, and they can be written on a transparency and displayed immediately for the rest of the class to read [8].

Computers can be used in variety of purposes in English Language Teaching. The Internet is the biggest source of teaching material and learning material. There are also software packages that can be downloaded and used in teaching and for learning. When used in classroom, computers enable learners to do group work and share ideas in English and different experience to that possible when studying alone [8]. The best is a mix of traditional teaching supported by using technological aids and digital tools in online education.

3. CONCLUSION

To conclude, using technology in class is an essential tool for English language teaching and learning. The author of this paper wanted to present IT applications used in teaching and in learning English. The paper offered modern applications and platforms for learning English with examples of good practice. The ways of learning online and online education are presented in this paper. Furthermore, different and modern technological aids are described in detail as well as their usage in class.

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