

Saida AFANDIYEVA

Western Caspian University efsaida@yahoo.com

E-mail: efsaida@yahoo.com

TECHNOLOGY AND BLOGS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Abstract: This article is about technology in Teaching English as a foreign language. Various types of technology like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Blog, Edmodo, Microsoft Teams, Skype, Zoom and others are introduced. We can use all them to teach students, but for that we should teach them to use technology and guide them. Positive and negative sides of technology and how to use it in teaching English as foreign language are also investigated in this article. The importance of decision when, how and why to use technology and the role of teacher in motivating students is stressed in this article. The idea of careful learning of new sites before introducing them to students is one of the main ones too.

There is careful description of blogs which are very helpful in teaching English as foreign language. Some sites are also introduced. Advantages and disadvantages of blogs are analyzed in order to help teachers and students to decide which purpose they can be used for.

Keywords: teaching, foreign, language, English, blog, technology.

UOT: 811.1/2

DOI: doi.org/10.54414/luam2732

Introduction

There are two organizations which help to provide teacher development in English. One of them is AETA (Azerbaijan English Teachers' Association), but the other one which is Baku American Center introduces not only seminars, lectures, workshops, but also webinars and various online educational programs. To be expert in teaching English as a foreign language, educators have to master technology.

Alongside with proficiency in English, methodology of teaching, the skill of using technology for education is the one which defines innovative contemporary teacher. There is organization named ISTE (The International Society for Technology in Education) which has two offices. One of them is situated in Washington D.C. and the other one is in Eugene, Oregon. There is

well known teacher and computer analyst like Gwen Solomon who wrote a number of articles about using technology in education. The other expert is Lynne Schrum who is professor and editor of Journal on Research on Technology in Education (JRTE).

Today children spend a lot of time with computers, laptops, iPods, mobiles, but at the same time there are some points which maybe difficult for them when they become University students.

Main part

Web 2.0 is World Wide Web which helps to communicate and to work online. For example, blogs are parts of Web 2.0. The goal of teacher is to motivate students to study well and if they are good at technology this maybe helpful. Students often are good in technology, but when

there are any news in technology for education, they need guidance of teachers to master them and use effectively. It is important to teach students how to use technology in education. Many people share information and photo in Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, write posts. To use this opportunity is the way to help students communicate online, because most of them write comments under posts and photos of their friends in everyday life. The only difference is the focus: the comments, posts, photos should be connected with education. Most educators claim that technology helps in project based learning, student centered lessons, formative assessment, development of critical thinking and communication.

Web 2.0 helps students to write essays and illustrate them with photos. They can also use their own photos, because this motivates them even more to communicate and share. This is the way to encourage students to be more creative. Students can write a post, essay, story, share it and get comments from all over the world. Technology in education is different from its daily use, because, the result of activity is the product which is evaluated and responded by others. Thus, the educators should help students to adapt by using their prior abilities and helping to acquire new ones. There are challenges as well. Teachers should help students to learn from various sources, create their own presentation or essay, but avoiding plagiarism. The ability of citing is priority. The other challenge is the possibility that students may lose motivation to use technology in education. Teachers working online can find other professional communities, share their teaching experience and learn from each other, but motivating students requires the most of attention.

Because content, pedagogy and technology are three essential parts of teaching, they will not be separated, but integrated while teaching. There is wonderful site <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/convergence> where it is possible to start a page by writing a word (for example "convergence") into the search box which is usually on the right top corner of the screen and then press "Enter". We find out that:

1. pronunciation of the word "convergence" is - /kan`vo:jens/

2. its meaning is - a) the act of moving toward union

b) the place of meeting

E.g. We built a homestead at the convergence of two river.

Students should revise what they know to gain new knowledge and later use it when necessary.

Sometimes when we find some sites and tools for educating students we quickly share them, but the most important is to learn it deeply and learn why we need this one and why it is important for teaching or learning. Teachers should find out which tools are valuable and important in teaching English as foreign language, how and when to teach them.

Some teachers started their teaching career when no technology was used in teaching English. Some colleagues used social media for their personal needs only, but the goal of integration of content, teaching and technology is to show to teachers and students how, when and how technology is helpful, motivating and valuable in teaching English as a foreign language.

There are such social networks like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and people use them as it is convenient for them or some of them choose only one tool of the

network and use it instead of learning many of them which they never use. There are specific tasks and to do them we need video, photo sharing abilities. For that we can use Skype, Zoom and others. Teachers should clearly distinguish which tools, sites and networks are for professional development and which of them are for teaching.

For students it is important to learn information, to remember it, to analyze, create own opinion and then use it to communicate.

The most important is that students will learn to find the best opportunities which are suitable for their learning styles and it does not matter how many tools there are in websites. What suits me is the best for me! Some students learn better by using games, some of them are good in drilling and both of them can find suitable exercises (games, flashcards). Those who want to demonstrate can create video, write a post. Skype can be used to study together; to read together, to listen to each other. Sometimes they can use all these opportunities: writing blog, creating video or photo slides, communicating in Skype and etc. Again the most important is how students will learn to study. For teachers the goal is to keep them motivated.

Blog is a website where we can write and other people can leave their comments. Besides there maybe photos, videos and people can discuss any topic introduced by blogger.

Nowadays blogs are very important, because they provide the blogger with a voice and he or she can express his/her own opinion about policy, education, feelings and share them.

In such field like education bloggers are usually prominent educators and leaders. They share their ideas. This is very effective

way of communication and especially for those for whom English is foreign language: both teachers and students.

For blogs of educators there is such website like www.epals.com where it is possible to find pen pals in order to develop writing skills and find friends with the same interests all over the world. At the same time it is a Global Community where learners can join classrooms.

Teachers of English as foreign language teach not only all four skills of English and its Grammar, but also manage classroom, use technology. There are so many aspects, but to motivate and encourage students should not be the last work of educator.

Alongside with such contemporary methods of teaching like Communicative Approach, there is also Humanistic one. Teachers should be attentive to their students and prevent their demotivation, depression. Technology and blogs, in particular, are helpful for this.

There is such a wonderful blog like www.gaggle.net to help students who are demotivated and depressed. There was also a case when gaggle spotted the document where a student was going to commit a suicide. By efforts of educators it was prevented and it is great example of using technology in education.

Blogs are excellent for teaching because writing is involved in this process and that makes teachers and students think, analyze and create. It is easy for students because blogs are usually quite short including few paragraphs where the point is clear and concrete. They are also easy because to publish text we should only press the button and publication is ready. Students get feedback in form of comments very quickly too.

While writing a blog students or teachers can attach some videos or photos which illustrate the information and give full idea what the blog is about.

Writing a comment to a blog helps students to become better writers. Then they can write comments to each other, at least two comments to other commenters. These comments are evidence of writing, analyzing, creating own opinion about definite topic. This is like portfolio of student's activity.

4. Writing blogs develops critical thinking too, because students try to express themselves so that others understand what they mean.

Writing blogs makes students to think clearly. At the same time while writing them students express not only facts, but their own thoughts and ideas. The difference between writing a blog and essay is that the essay is introduced to teacher only. Blogs are accessible for classmates, parents and for all the other people around the world who can read it and write their own comments, share opinions, agree or disagree. The similarity between the essay and blog is that student prepares and plans his/her writing.

Conclusion

There is wonderful site [3]. It is for teachers of English as second language (ESOL). There you can read blogs. It is very easy to sign in and create your own blog too.

When students write blog they are happy that not only their teacher, but other people will read it and if the purpose is education, then their writing will be academic one. Thus students think carefully before writing, they want to make their ideas clearer, pay attention to grammar, punctuation and spelling. They reread their post to do necessary corrections before submitting it.

Students write blogs and other people comment on them. Besides there is another option and that is when students comment each others comments too. They make suggestions, ask questions about topics of English as foreign language. It is very encouraging for students that many people read their comments and blogs. That also encourages them to write academically.

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Səidə ƏFƏNDİYEVƏ

Qərbi Kaspi Universiteti efsaida@yahoo.com

E-mail: efsaida@yahoo.com

İNGİLİS DİLİ XARİCİ DİL KİMİ: TEXNOLOGİYANIN VƏBLOQLARIN ROLU

Xülasə: Bu məqalədə xarici dil tədrisi zamanı texnoloqiyanın necə istifadə edilməsi barədə məlumat verilir. Feysbuk, tvitter, skayp və digər social şəbəkələr haqqında danışılır. Müəllimlər və tələbələr bu sosial şəbəkələrdən istifadə etdikdə, onları nə üçün, və nə vaxt

istifadə etməklərini anlamalıdır. Yalnız mü-kəmməl öyrəndikdən sonra müəllimlər onları tələbələrə öyrədə bilərlər. Bu mə-qalədə texnologiyanın inqilis dili tədrisində mənfi və müsbət tərəflərindən və müəllimin tələbələri motivasiya etmə bacarığından söhbət gedir. Məqalənin əsas ideyalarından biri ondan ibarətdir ki, müəllim yalnız mükəmməl sosial şəbəkə istifadəçi olduqdan sonra tələbələri öyrədə bilər.

Müəllimlərə və tələbələrə kömək etmək məqsədilə, məqalədə bloqlar və onların üstün və çatışmayan cəhətləri analiz edilir.

Açar sözlər: təhsil, xarici dil, ingilis dili

Саида АФАНДИЕВА
Западно-Каспийского Университет
E-mail: efsaida@yahoo.com

“ТЕХНОЛОГИЯ И БЛОГИ В ПРЕПОДАВАНИИАНГЛИЙСКОГО КАК ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА”

Резюме: Данная статья описывает как использовать технологию в препода- вании английского как иностранного языка. Здесь представлены такие со-циальные сети как твиттер, фейсбук, инстаграмм, скайп и др. Препода- ватели могут использовать их при условии, что они будут объяснять сту- дентам: как, когда и с какой целью они будут использовать их. В данной статье также рассматриваются положительные и отрицательные стороны технологии в образовании и мотивирующая роль учителя. Подробно описывается как использовать блоги при обучении пись- му, дается анализ их преимуществ и недостатков с тем, чтобы помочь учителям и студентам решить для какой цели их использовать.

Ключевые слова: преподавание, иностранный язык, английский.

Daxil olub: 14.10.2021