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Perceptions of English Teachers towards Teaching English through Information & Communication Technology in Pakistan

Qaisar Mahmood

Lecturer (English), The University of Lahore Pakpattan Campus, Pakistan

qaisarm78@gmail.com

Muhammad Javed Iqbal

M.Phil Scholar Department of English, The University of Lahore Pakpattan Campus, Pakistan

javed786707@yahoo.com

Muhammad Waqas Nadeem

M.Phil Scholar Department of English, The University of Lahore Pakpattan Campus, Pakistan

mwaqasnadeem84@gmail.com

Muhammad Asif Javed

M.Phil Scholar Department of English, The University of Lahore Pakpattan Campus, Pakistan

asifjavedvhr@gmail.com

Mahmood Ul Hassan

Lecturer (English), The University of Lahore Pakpattan campus, Pakistan

mehmood.uol@gmail.com

Abstract.

This study investigated into the perceptions of teaching English through information and communication technology in Pakistan. Population of the study were English teachers from all secondary and elementary schools of Punjab. It was survey study and questionnaires were used to collect data and collected data were analyzed on statistical package for social sciences. The results of this study revealed that English teachers were enthusiastic to the use of information and communication technology for teaching English. Further the study also explored that there were not enough ICT provisions to make maximum use of it to accelerate learning outcomes of the students.

Key words: English, Pakistan, secondary schools, teachers

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I. Introduction

The radical changes and rapid development in technology has affected the attitudes and behavioral changes of people very sharply. Due to the use of information communication technology (ICT) the ways of communication, activities, habits and how the people spend their spare or leisure time. Even the life style of people are changed and affected to a great extent. This modern era is the age of communication, science and technology. Without the use of science and technology, we cannot imagine that one can make development and prosperity in the world. "Education is being transformed by new technologies of science. In the past, students could learn a small but fixed body of knowledge. However, at present, the enormous amount of available information, coupled with the fact that amount of knowledge in world continuously to be double at an increasingly quick rate, requires a transformative approach toward education. It is an important thing that student of present times learn how to be an information manager rather than information regulator.

Majoka et al. (2013) explored the implementation of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in education in teacher training programs in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces in Pakistan. Seven teacher training institutions (three from the Punjab and four from KP provinces) were the target population of this research where ADE/B. Ed (Elementary) pioneer programs session 2010-11 were in progress. The study explored how successfully this course was implemented in the pioneer institutions which provided baseline information for further development in the implementation process. The research proved how the teacher-educators followed the course guide and how far the course guide helped in implementing the course. Through mixed method research design data were collected from the surveys of heads and prospective teachers, and they used semi-structured interviews with teacher educators. Findings revealed that only in a few classrooms, different activities/ experiences as proposed in the unit were properly implemented, while in most that was not the case due to issues such as shortage of electric power supply, scarcity of ICTs tools and lack of training and skills in ICTs application. The extent to which teachers followed the course guide was another factor contributing to the implementation process.

Hussain et al (2010) conducted research on Language Reforms and potential use of ICTs in business English teaching in Pakistan. They described about Efforts being accelerated to incorporate fast expanding ICTs to bring qualitative improvement in language instruction in higher education. This paper found out how university teachers are benefitting from ICTs to make their English class effective and what type of problems they face in practicing ICTs during their lectures. An in detail qualitative study was used to understand why language teachers want to use ICTs in their instruction and how they are practicing it. A sample of twenty teachers from five universities located in Islamabad, three from public sector and two from private sector, was selected on non-random (Snowball) sampling basis. 15 semi-structured items was worn as research instruments to collect data. The achievements show that business English teaching is facilitated and enhanced by the use of ICTs. The language teachers need special training regarding the to furnish university language teachers with modern methodology incorporating ICTs as focal area and efforts might be made to remove barriers regarding the training of language teachers and proper usage of ICTs.

Jamil et al (2012) conducted research on Computer assisted assessment (CAA). According to them, CCA is a general procedure of evaluation in higher educational institutions in Western countries. But it is a new concept for students and teachers in Pakistan. Therefore it is necessary to explore students' perceptions about CAA practices from different universities of Pakistan .they collected data through a questionnaire, completed by 1877 students. It was noted that overall sampled students were aware of CAA. Absolutely, female students were found to be more highly liable towards CAA. Different department and universities showed a particularly positive response towards CAA. However, overall sampled students felt that CAA is very difficult for them, and created some administrative and executive problems. So teachers should not use this technique of assessment. Advantages regarding CAA referred to by the students were, time saving. Disadvantages included hardware and software related problems during examination. Adil et al (2013) explored that Information & Communication Technology (ICT) usage in Pakistan is expending tendency. There is large interest of apprehension about how ICT is in usage in progressing countries; there is deficiency of information about how ICT is used by the university teachers in developing countries. The study recognized of university teachers about use of ICT, in Pakistani universities. Data were collected from 57 teachers, belonging to the public sector universities of Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

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Their study consisted of 29 males and 28 females and ages vary from 26 to 50 years. They have availability of internet to easy access. Findings revealed the frugal negative involvement between level of age and quantity of daily time spent on computer. It showed that no alliance exists between category of teacher's gender and quantity of daily time spent on computer. Improvement of ICT assimilation into education, it was recommended that teachers must have access to communications relating ICT and there should be provision of adequate instruction to teachers.

Haider (2013) investigated about, perceptions of ESL Intermediate college teachers towards Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) evocative research study was carried out with ESL teachers working at different Intermediate Colleges who were using computers in their teaching. Ten English teachers participated in this study. He collected data through questionnaires and revealed their perceptions towards CALL. Moreover, semi structured interview was also taken from teachers to maintain the results of the questionnaires and to gain accurate teachers' perceptions. Descriptive investigation was performed and frequencies and percentages were also calculated to explore the investigation. He conducted interviews and analyzed qualitatively. His explorations of the study exposed contender teachers' perceived computer competence, general perceptions towards CALL and their implementations of CALL in class. The research also revealed that perceptions of teachers towards CALL are usually positive and most of the teachers are aware of the advantages of CALL.

Mwalongo (2011) investigated teachers' perceptions about the use of Information and Communication Technology tools for teaching, administration, professional development and personal use. Seventy four teachers were involved in the study. Data were collected through an online survey research where qualitative data were collected from the blog and from Survey-Monkey. Through this research he pointed out that the access of computer enhanced the use of Information and Communication Technology. By the trainers and; teachers used Information and Communication Technology. In a wide range for teaching, administration, professional development a persona use. Teachers used Information and Communication Technology. By using their traditional pedagogical practices, this limited research solely depending on self - reports; and the role of school leadership for amalgamation of Information and Communication Technology in the teaching-learning procedure needs to be examined.

Obiefuna (2014) researched that the realities of climate change are influencing everyone including children. The use of mobile technology reduces the disaster reduction education. The research examined pre-service teachers' awareness of using mobile technologies in teaching climate change in the primary school. One hundred and fifty pre-service teachers in two Colleges in the erosion disaster zones of Anambra and Imo States in the south eastern state of Nigeria were used for the study. The realities of climate change are gradually dawning on everyone including children. The need for a disaster reduction education requires the use of mobile technologies to recognize some of the impact of climate change within an environment and generate consciousness on the dangers related with climate change. This study showed that the pre service teachers were hopeful that the use of the mobile devices in teaching climate change will to a great extent create awareness that would enable the children participate in the climate change reduction exercise. The use of the mobile phone will also enable the children take safety action especially in emergency situations. The pre-service teachers' lack of skill in the use of the mobile devices in teaching however is a major dilemma. The teachers who were not taught the use of mobile devices in teaching and learning and would find it difficult to teach the primary school children with mobile devices. There were recommendations ensuring that the use of mobile devices in teaching were included in the pre-service teachers' training. The Federal government should also guarantee that the promise made towards integration ICT into the school curriculum is actualized as Nigeria strives to achieve idea 20:20 through Information and Communication Technology.

In Pakistan the idea of introducing information and communication technology in teaching of English language is novice which requires considerable effort on the part of the government of Pakistan to take curative measures to provide and equipped secondary and the elementary schools with ICT. The current study is to highlight this area through perceptions of the teachers. Following objectives were set to conduct the study:

1. To explore the effectiveness of information and communication technology for teaching English.
2. To investigate existing available sources which can support the utilization of ICT in English language classes.

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II. Methodology

It was survey based study which was to describe the results qualitatively. So a population of 60 English teachers from secondary and elementary schools was selected for this study and the researchers went themselves to visit schools. The researchers got permission from the Head teachers to approach English teachers to avoid inconvenience.

Tools

Research tools are very important to conduct a study. For this survey of the study questionnaire was the research tool to collect data. The researchers themselves distributed the questionnaires among the teachers and got it filled at the spot.

Analysis

The collected data were analyzed on SPSS and interpretation of the data was made qualitatively.

Table1 Showing Effectiveness of ICT in the teaching of English

Descriptive Statistics					
Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ICT. Gives easy access to sources of English learning.	60	1	2	1.52	.504
Use of ICT saves time and energy for English teachers/		1	2	1.42	.497
We get awareness of international teaching method through ICT.		1	3	1.58	.696
ICT provides effective motivation to English Teaching techniques		1	4	1.73	.756
ICT provides facilities of Audio& video material for improving English Teaching		1	4	1.58	.889
ICT helps English teachers developing interest among students		1	4	1.78	.904
ICT makes class room environment to be attractive.		1	4	1.70	.720
Through ICT students can learn English quickly.		1	4	2.03	.956

In the above table the mean scores is more than 1.5 which shows clearly that most of the teachers are in favor of using Information and communication technology because in this way students are able to learn English quickly and they take much interest in learning English. While only where the mean score is 1.42 it shows that only few teachers do not think that it will help the students learning English.

Table 2 reveals that in Pakistan information and communication technology sources are not available. Mean score 2.58, 2.70 and 1.60 is evident that there are many schools where there are no computers and internet facilities. That is why most of the teachers are of the view that if such facilities are provided to the students in their schools, they can improve their English.

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Table2 Showing existing available sources which can support the utilization of ICT in English language classes

Descriptive Statistics					
Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Your institution is fully equipped with facilities of ICT.	60	1	5	2.85	1.246
Teachers use audio and video aids for teaching English.		1	4	2.70	1.030
Teachers want to use ICT for teaching English		1.00	4.00	1.6000	.74105

III. Discussion

The current study has highlighted the need to introduce information and communication technology in the teaching of English in Pakistan. The results of the study prove that ICT is very useful and helpful in producing rapid impact on the learning of English. Most of the teachers of secondary and elementary schools who have appointed by the provincial governments are well aware of using internet and computers and English related software. If they are provided and further trained in this regards, they can teach English effectively. During the survey, it was also discovered that in the schools of the most of the remote areas, there are no computer labs for the children even to those students who are studying the computer subject and they have to join private classes to cover their course. Most of the teachers also said that there should be special English classes on regular basis in computer labs for the students who are studying English. The reason behind this they told that in this way, students would be able to be well aware of use of high frequency words which are current in use and they could see synonyms and antonyms and different idioms with just few clicks of the on their computers.

IV. Conclusion

Findings of the research revealed that if computers and internet facilities are provided to the students for learning English language, they can improve their English and not only their vocabulary would be increased but they would also know how to pronounce the words correctly. However government will have take initiative to provide such modern technology to the students so that they might be able to learn English to meet international requirements.

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