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# **National and International Research Articles**

# Thesis Background Issues: Using Technology to Enhance Students' Attention and Participation in Basic Language Courses at CIEX

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## Abstract

This article presents the design of a study about the effects of using technology for English language teaching and learning purposes among basic level courses students as a tool for enhancing their interest to the classes at CIEX, a private foreign language center located in Chilpancingo, Guerrero, Mexico. Specifically, the study aims to identify what is the relation between students' attention and participation, and the use of technology in Basic English classes. The study also addresses: (a) whether the inclusion of technology in the English classes actually gets more results and more attention and participation from the students than other traditional means; (b) the teachers' perceptions about the idea that the previous English teaching theories and teaching methods can be replaced by new ones that include the application of the technology in order to get better advances in the students' learning; (c) the students' attitudes towards the use of technology in a Basic English class and how they feel about using technology for their English language learning; and (d) whether the students prefer to use technology in the class rather than the traditional materials. It is important to mention that in this article only the design of the study will be described.

## Resumen

Este artículo presenta el diseño de un estudio sobre los efectos del uso de la tecnología en el área de enseñanza del inglés y para propósitos de aprendizaje en los estudiantes de los cursos de nivel básico como una herramienta para mejorar su interés en las clases en el CIEX, un centro de idiomas extranjeros privado localizado

en Chilpancingo, Guerrero, México. El estudio pretende identificar cual es la relación entre la atención y la participación de los estudiantes y el uso de la tecnología en las clases de inglés básico. El estudio también hace referencia a: (a) si la inclusión de la tecnología en las clases de inglés de hecho genera más resultados y más atención y participación de los estudiantes que utilizando otros medios, (b) la percepción de los profesores acerca de la idea de que las teorías sobre la enseñanza de lenguas y los métodos de enseñanza pueden ser remplazados por nuevos métodos que incluyan la aplicación de la tecnología para obtener mejores avances en el proceso de aprendizaje de los estudiantes, (c) las actitudes de los estudiantes hacia el uso de la tecnología en las clases de inglés básico y cómo se sienten acerca del uso de la tecnología en su proceso de aprendizaje del idioma, (d) si los estudiantes prefieren usar la tecnología en la clase más que los materiales tradicionales. Es importante mencionar que en este artículo, únicamente se describe el diseño del estudio.

**Key words:** Technology, attention, participation, teaching methods, learning process.

**Palabras clave:** Tecnología, atención, participación, métodos de enseñanza, proceso de aprendizaje.

## Presentation

English language schools in the world have an educational responsibility to raise standards and innovate through new means, consequently they can bring those highly expected improvements

in education, preparing learners for a life in a rapidly developing technological environment.

With the growth and spread of the English language around the world, English is used in many countries as a second or a foreign language and for some people as a first language, and as a result, the role of English teaching and its importance is higher than ever. As the times pass by, English language has been learned and used by more and more speakers all around the world.

Graddol, D. (1997) states that “English is the language at the leading edge of scientific and technological development, new thinking in economies and management, new literatures and entertainment genre...” Substantial opportunities for interesting and significant developments in English language teaching and learning may be provided by technology nowadays.

As the number of English learners is increasing, different teaching methods have been implemented to the students by English teachers in the teaching process. But in the last two decades, the traditional English teaching methodology or teaching manners have been replaced by the use of new techniques, practices and patterns influenced by technology.

Graddol, D. (1997) states that “technology lies at the heart of the globalization process; affecting education, work and culture. The use of English language has augmented rapidly after 1960. At present, the role and status of English is that it is the language of social context, political, sociocultural, business, education, industries, media, library, communication across borders, and key subject in curriculum and language of imparting education”. The importance of technology in many aspects of this new era that the humanity is living in, is undeniable, moreover in the education field.

The tradition of English teaching has been drastically changed with the remarkable entry of technology. Technology in education, as in much more areas, is a part of the modern world, and it is becoming more and more significant in our lives every day and every year, and it is also a method that many studies have observed for

improving the learning in students, no matter their subject or class.

This fast rising and progress of technology has offered a different way to explore a variety of English teaching models and when they come to language teaching and learning we have had a lot of material to choose from the world of technology that has been there, accessible to English teachers for a long time, and other new and more recent tools and resources. Materials such as the radio, TV, CDs, Blogs, electronic dictionaries and audio cassettes, and of course, more modern new products such as tablets, computers, new various technological devices and of course, the Internet, a powerful tool to get to many different instruments that can help the teacher and students in their English language teaching and learning. Even in the classroom, the use of technology may improve the attention and participation in students, helping the teacher to achieve better results in each English learner. According to Pitler, H., Ross, E. & Kuhn, M. (2012), technology enhances the learning process by helping students to organize, clarify and communicate their learning objectives.

The use of technology may have more importance in the area of language teaching that it is now considered. It's a reality that the use of technology has changed the way people interact and work in the society and also the dynamics at schools and universities. Thus, it may be possible to think that these technologies are the clue for the new successful language teaching generations, assigning new challenges and duties on the contemporary teachers in the whole world. However, any particular kind of technology applied in an English language lesson should be approached with caution and, of course, it should have a relevant value for the development of the class. An important reason to make use of technology for the English language classroom is that technology allows teachers and students to access documents, images, sounds, ideas, and people around the world. “We cannot always leave the classroom to go out into the world, but we can bring the world into our classroom”, (Reich, J. & Daccord, T. 2008).

In Mexico, as in many countries of Latin America, technology has been implemented in some of

the English schools, and now English teachers and students can have access to all this technological advances, and their perceptions about this new forms may differ. But all these technologies could bring to the English student a great improvement on their learning by using them appropriately, and relating these technological resources to their classes, for them to develop new strategies to learn English and to communicate using the language.

### **Statement of the problem**

In the last years, the English teaching methodology has been trying to improve to get more efficient and better results in language learners. Chapelle, C. (2003) states in her book "English Language Learning and Technology" that the study of every level of the linguistic system has changed because of technology.

As the use of English has increased in popularity, so has the need for qualified and competent teachers to instruct students in language, and every English teacher teaches in his or her own manner. Although traditional manners used by some teachers are good and helpful to the students, there may be more opportunities for other new techniques, practices and teaching methods, which could include the technology in order to be more interesting and useful to English learners, which also could increase and improve the attention and participation in students, helping them to be more into the class and not to be distracted so easily, and also to catch their attention about the subject, in this case, English language.

Some teachers still use the traditional methods in Chilpancingo, Guerrero, Mexico; and some others are making use of technology. CIEX (Centro de Idiomas Extranjeros Ignacio Manuel Altamirano), a private language school in Chilpancingo, in which the study has been carried out, technology is being used regularly in classes. Also, there are some technological devices and material available in the school for English classes, and now the internet is available for every student of English language of basic courses and teachers to make use of it for academic and learning purposes too. In some schools in Guerrero, these didactic devices have been implemented as they appear in the

market, for English school to be updated, and whether they might be applied in every class or not. Its application could be beneficial in order to get good results in the students.

Although the main goal at CIEX is to prepare quality English learners with a level of excellence, students in here or in another part of the state of Guerrero are never in contact with English. This can affect or complicate the process of teaching and learning, as Spanish is the student's native language. This is notorious on their knowledge and ability to use the language in their classes, though some students have a higher level of English than others and some others learn faster. In order to cope with this problem, CIEX teachers' classes are taught through language functions and interaction most of the time.

Even though both English teachers and basic English courses students may not be completely conscious about their own potential and there could be more chances to get more from their English classes, and it is very significant for them to know what they have available for themselves in the matter of technology and the benefits it could bring to the English course, taking the English teaching methods, the English language learning, and also the speaking communication to another level.

This is why it is important to identify the perceptions that students and teachers of basic courses at CIEX have about the use of technology for their English classes, and detect what ideas they have about technology, their likes and dislikes on this new teaching and learning techniques or manners in order to get the best improvement in the attention and participation in English students at CIEX.

### **Research questions**

Based on the importance that the English classes have at CIEX, and for making students be able to get more and good results, improving the attention and participation in them by using different materials from the world of technology, and for teachers to have new options and ways to teach in their classes, the following questions are stated and focused on the situation of Basic English Courses at CIEX.

## **Main question:**

The main research question that will lead the study is stated as follows:

- » What is the relation between students' attention and participation, and the use of technology in Basic English classes?

## **Subsidiary research questions:**

The specific research questions that will contribute to answer the main research question are the following:

- » Does the inclusion of technology in the English class really get more results and more attention and participation from the students than other traditional ways?
- » What is the teachers' perception about the idea that the previous English teaching theories and methods can be replaced by new ones that include the application of the technology in order to get better advances in the students' learning?
- » What are the students' attitudes towards the use of technology in a Basic English class and how do they feel about using technology for their English language learning?
- » Do students prefer to use technology in the class better than the traditional materials?

## **Objectives**

The objectives of this research are the following, focused on the search of getting better results on the learning process in Basic English students at Centro de Idiomas Extranjeros Ignacio Manuel Altamirano CIEX.

### **General objective:**

- » The general objective of this research is to determine the relation between students' attention and participation, and the use of technology in the English classes.

### **Specific objectives:**

The specific objectives of this research are related to the subsidiary research questions and are stated as follows:

- » To determine if the inclusion of technology in the English class gets more results and

more attention and participation from the students than other traditional teaching materials.

- » To identify what are the teachers' perceptions about the idea that the traditional English teaching methods or approaches can be replaced by new ones that include the application of the technology in order to get better advances in the students' learning.
- » To identify what students' attitudes towards the use of technology in a Basic English class are and detect how they feel about using technology for their English language learning.
- » To identify the student's level of preferences towards using technology in the class better than traditional practices.

## **Significance of the study**

English teachers around the world are thinking in the future of the English teaching, but the future is truly happening right now. The 21st century is the age of the globalization and it is important to notice that English language teaching has been with us for many years and its significance continues growing. One of the greatest reasons of this increase of the English popularity is the Internet, and the internet is a fundamental piece in the world of technology.

This is the reason why technology is highly related to the spread of English language, and why the new techniques and teaching methods are working to implement technology on the area of English language teaching.

The mission of CIEX is to model students with a level of excellence in the use and knowledge on their selected language, in this case English, so they can get a personal and professional development that can have a positive impact on the society of the state of Guerrero.

CIEX is expected to play a significant role in the present generation of students, professors and professionals in the area, to help and to improve the underachievement in urban areas in the city of Chilpancingo and suburban or rural areas as well.

This research about the use of technology to improve student's attention and participation is

focused on English classes at this private school in Chilpancingo and it may bring to the present and future teachers new options for their classes, and more resources to teach with different and innovative technological materials, for the students of Basic English Courses to increase their interest and curiosity in learning English.

It is important for English teachers to analyze what is the present role that technology plays in the area of language teaching, and to get to know in which grade they can use and apply it on their own English classes; all this in order to determine if it turns out useful to the development of English language in the students. Besides, technology improves the student's learning process, including their attention and participation more than when using traditional language teaching methodologies.

With the rapid development of science and technology, the emerging and developing of multimedia technology (audio, visual, animation effects, images) may set a favorable platform for reforming and exploring the English teaching models in this new era, and English teachers should keep this in mind. This research will try to analyze all aspects related to technology, English traditional ways, and the relation between English teachers and students, and their expectations in English teaching and learning, and the experience they lived respectively, so there could be a balance implemented in the next English teaching methods for teachers and students of Basic English Courses, at CIEX, to feel more comfortable and obtain the best possible improvement.

### **Limitations**

This study took place at CIEX (Centro de Idiomas Extranjeros Ignacio Manuel Altamirano) located in Chilpancingo, Guerrero, Mexico. This research is specifically concentrated on teachers but

### **References:**

- Chapelle, C. A. (2003). **English Language Learning and Technology**. USA: John Benjamins B. V.
- Graddol, D. (1997). **The Future of English? A guide to forecasting the popularity of the English language in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**. London: British Council.
- Pitler, H., Ross, E. & Kuhn, M. (2012). **Using Technology with Classroom Instruction that Works**. (2nd Ed.). USA: ASCD.
- Reich, J. & Daccord, T. (2008). **Best Ideas for Teaching with Technology: A Practical Guide for Teachers**. USA: M.E. Sharpe, Inc.

more focused on students of English language of Basic level English Courses. The students' ages range from twelve to eighteen years old. That range was selected in order to get balanced results among the population of teenagers studying in the institution.

The technology and all kind of technological material, resources, devices and software referred in this research is only the technology that can be utilized in English teaching and learning in classes at CIEX, not all types of technology were considered. Therefore, this research refers to technology only as the internet resources, like games, web sites, online English courses, software English programs, videos and music, and some other materials, like projectors, speakers, CD audios, and DVD videos and movies as well.

### **Conclusion**

With the preceding methodologies, this study attempts to identify what the teachers' and students' perceptions are about the use of technology inside the classroom. These research objectives and questions were designed based on the importance that English classes represent at CIEX, likewise for the students to be able to obtain better results in their learning process, improving the attention and participation in them by using different materials from the world of technology, and finally for teachers to have new opportunities and ways to teach the language in their lessons. Therefore, this research aims to contribute to CIEX with a wider idea about the relation that exists between technology and education, providing to the reader with information about how technology is being used by the teachers at present, and the students' perceptions, likes and dislikes about the use of technology in their English classes. The literature review and the research methodology, will be discussed in further articles.

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- a. **Key words**.- five, in English and in Spanish.
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**Purpose:** state and explain the research objectives, intentions, questions or hypothesis.  
**Method:** mention and justify the research method that was selected, describe briefly the subjects, the context and the research procedures, as well as the instruments that were used for the data and information collection.  
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- h. **Main limitations of the study** (related to the geographical or institutional context or knowledge area where the conclusions or suggestions could be applicable).
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**TOPICS FOR THE ARTICLES:**

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**FORMAT:**

Title using Arial font, size 14

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Margins: top 2.5, bottom 2.5, left 2.5, right 2.5.

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**LANGUAGES:**

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