TRANSFORMING THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING STYLE BY INTEGRATING ICT: SIGNIFICANCES AND CHALLENGES

Elsa Ernawati Nainggolan
batuarabornengelsa@gmail.com
Universitas Negeri Jakarta
Indonesia

Abstract

The development of foreign language teaching is in purpose to search for the best teaching and learning method. This development is influenced by the language teaching trends from the past and will be continuously improved in the future. In the twenty-first century, the trend of language teaching is supposed to be in line with the massively growing information, communication, and technology (ICT) development. The purpose of this article is to highlight the significance and challenges of integrating ICT in foreign language teaching as the current transformation in the world of education. The initiatives of transforming language teaching integrated with ICT can come from the teachers as knowledge practitioners. Its integration can be done by teaching and learning based on e-learning, computer based instruction, and blended learning by utilizing online application. As a teaching aid, ICT has purpose to shape the learners' motivation, learners' independency, and students' learning outcomes in acquiring the target language. Unfortunately, these merits of integrating ICT tend to be bias when confronted by classic problems such as the unequal infrastructure and the unpreparedness of teachers' competency. This causes the opportunity to utilize ICT in transforming the foreign language teaching remains a challenge. It is high time that the Indonesian government should make investment by providing ICT facilitation and teachers' training that could support the integration of ICT in language teaching. Thus, ICT's roles as a media could be actively involved in the teaching and learning to support the new transformation of pedagogical innovation.

Keywords: foreign language teaching, integrating ICT, significances and challenges.

1. Introduction

Foreign language teaching has shifted from time to time appropriated with the development of language teaching itself. It was initially started in the nineteenth century where the approach of language teaching was concerned with abstract grammar rules, million lists of vocabulary, and sentences for translation. This was known as the grammar-translation method. Grammar-translation method was identical with the language learning environment that was deliberately created by having students read aloud the sentences they have translated to construct the target language grammatical system (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). However this approach was fail to bring the success in the language learning for it has no correlation with the real communication.

Moving to the twentieth century, the language teaching method has been continuously improved from the previous. In search for the best method, the twentieth century language teaching refers with the use of various method and approach to find the more effective teaching. The problem is, the language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) are integrated one another and it makes no sense to learn one skill by ignoring the others.

This issue of language teaching has also seen by Indonesia government. It was marked by the development of curriculum and the focus of foreign language teaching on it. Now, the language teaching is directed to the thematic language learning in which the language skills is developed through the learning activity. Thematic language learning is based on inquiry

approach where the students get involved in planning, exploring, finding, associating, and communicating. Through the thematic learning the students are encouraged to participate actively based on their own experience. Moreover, in the twenty first century, where the information, communication, and technology (ICT) development grows massively, the learning becomes easy to be assessed supporting the inquiry learning where students can learn independently. Moreover, many students today have a great interest in computers and tablets since it is a part of their daily life

In the twenty first century, ICT integrated with language learning actually has been applied by countries which have updated their style of teaching. It is due to the positive impact influenced by ICT in language learning. The research conducting in Swedish confirms that incorporating ICT in the English foreign language (EFL) classroom can increase students' motivation (Kreutz, 2016). Another study coming from Turkey, conducted by Isisag (2015), also reveals that ICT helps empower positive learning environment like motivation, curiosity, independency and confidence in EFL classroom. Now, what about in Indonesia?

2. A New Era for foreign language teaching

The massively growing of ICT demands innovative teaching and learning style. The EFL teachers in Indonesia are also supposed to adapt their way of teaching to savor the positive effects of ICT in language learning. Yet, are our EFL teachers ready for this? And what challenges that they must face towards integrating ICT in language learning?

Education around the world is experiencing major paradigm shifts in educational practices of teaching and learning under the umbrella of ICT. Due to this change, the language educators are offered new opportunities for enhancing the quality and effectiveness of language teaching and learning.

Refers to the 2013 curriculum which has been applied in Indonesia, ICT particularly computer, no longer stands as one subject that must be learned by the students. Instead, ICT becomes the media of teaching and learning in which its applications are integrated and involved in all subjects and in EFL classroom without exception.

Unfortunately, many teachers do not seem to know this ICT utilization. The teachers still ask the students to turn all their electronic devices off, such as mobile devices, as they assume that the use of mobile devices will disturb the process of teaching and learning in the classroom. This possibly happens because the teachers do not know yet how to integrate or use technology to support the teaching and learning process. It means that the teachers must adapt to the era of technology, not only their knowledge but also the skill to integrate the technology itself in their way of teaching. Thus, ICT tools no longer considered as a disruption the teaching and learning process but as the teaching tools facilitation.

3. The Use of ICT in the English Teaching

The positive effects of ICT utilization on foreign language teaching and learning is no doubtful. Referring to Kumar (2014), the advantages that support the utilization of ICT can be listed as;1) the possibility to adapt easily the teaching materials according to circumstances, and learner's needs and response; 2) ICT allows to react and enables the use of recent/daily news. Moreover, it offers access to authentic materials on the web; 3) Possibility to combine/use alternately (basic) skills (text and images, audio and video clip); 4)

Lectures become more interesting and less ordinary which boosts learners' engagement; 5) ICT enables to focus on one specific aspect of the lesson (pronunciation, vocabulary).

Based on those advantages, ICT that can be integrated in English foreign language teaching and learning can be applied by utilizing some media such as e-learning, computer based instruction, and blended learning, etc. Those are explained below.

a. E-learning
The utilization of Web-based learning (e-learning) is a learning media based website accessed through the internet. The four skill of language skill (listening, speaking, reading and writing) can be put into the web to make it interactive in various ways. One of these ways is internet communication tools such as m-learning, e-mail, blogs, and chat which provides integrated environment for teachers and students.

The e-learning is characterized as follow;
a) Interactivity. E-learning provides many ways of communication either in synchronous (chatting/messenger) or asynchronous way (forum and mailing list).
b) Independency.E-learning is really flexible from the aspect of time, space, trainer, and unlimited material. This cause the learning tends to be centered on the students.
c) Accessibility. The sources of learning material are easily to be accessed through the internet connection which is wider compared to conventional learning.
d) Enrichment. The learning activity, learning material presentation and training material is possibly conducted by using the ICT tools like video streaming, simulation, and animation.

b. Computer Based Instruction
Computer-based instruction (CBI) refers to a teaching approach incorporating computer software programs with other teaching materials in the classroom (Jacobs, 2015). Computer based instruction enables the students to learn by self-evaluating and reflecting on their learning process. It also motivates children to learn better by providing them with the immediate feedback and reinforcement and by creating an exciting and interesting game-like atmosphere.

The use of CBI in EFL classroom, offers the delivery of a wide variety of authentic multimedia content which easily accessed by individual control. CBI also presents another source of target language knowledge and examples and relieves the EFL teacher as the sole font of target language knowledge in the classroom. Moreover CBI is the channels of communication between class members and distant learners as well as supplemental practice exercises and tutorial feedback. The advantages of CBI utilization also confirms by Mui-Herzig in Alsied (2013) which stated that the CBI moves the traditional 'teacher-centered' towards the 'learner-centered' approach in which EFL learner as passive entity to a student who is active in the search for the fulfillment of his or her own learning needs and to use the language in an authentic situation.

c. Blended Learning
Blended learning refers to combining online digital media with traditional classroom methods. It requires the physical presence of both teacher and student, with some element of student control over time, place, path, or pace. Blended learning is considered to be

significant in EFL classroom because it breaks down the traditional walls of teaching, ones that do not work for all students and now with access to present day technologies and resources, blended learning can tailor the learning experience for each student.

Blended learning offers flexible time frames that can be personalized to each person, offering them the ability to learn at their own pace. For students, blended learning can increase student interest and dispose students' self-advocacy.In addition, students become self-driven and responsible, tracking their individual achievements**,** helpingdevelop the ability to find the resources or get the help they need, self-advocating so they can reach their goals. While for teacher, blended learning teaching is less expensive to deliver, more affordable and saves time. Blended learning also offers flexibility in terms of availability of anytime, anywhere. In other words, blended Learning enables the student to access the materials from anywhere at any time without depending on the teachers.

From the three media presented above, it is seen that the change in language teaching support that language learning is not a transfer of knowledge, rather an active construction. This paradigm shifts give the learners a completely new role that was not earlier described in the transmission model of teaching. ICT can influence the way students are taught and how they learn. It would provide the rich environment and motivation for teaching learning process which seems to have a profound impact on the process of learning in EFL.

In addition, ICT can play the role in language learning in which ICT as tools of teaching, promote effective instruction that is more engaging, learner centered, interdisciplinary, and more closely related to real life events and processes, adaptive to individual learning styles and needs. It also encourages higher order thinking skills and help to construct knowledge socially.

4. The Bias of ICT Utilization in Indonesia

The integration of ICT in EFL classroom is considered as a medium in which a variety of approaches and pedagogical philosophies may be implemented. However, the ICT utilization is confronted by many problems which hinder the use of ICT in EFL classroom. The factors that hinder ICT utilization can be described as follow.

1. Physical Aspect

Physical aspect problems are related with inadequate facilities and infrastructure especially for schools located in remote areas. Even if there is already facilities equipment, the quality and quantity are poor and insufficient.

2. Non-physical Aspect

Non-physical aspect that hinder the ICT integration in EFL classroom tend to be directed to the teachers factors such as teachers' less confidence, lack of competences, and teachers' attitude which ignores the change of technology era. In addition, teachers are afraid to fail to teach through the use of ICTs that are currently highly recommended. The teachers also seem not to update their knowledge and skills about the changes and integration with learning using computers in their classrooms.

5. Conclusion

As we become increasingly supported by ICT, teaching and learning will not be the same as before. English foreign language learning does not only occur in the classroom and should not stop after the learners leave the classroom. So, ICT devices should be always used by students and teachers.

However, Indonesia has not completely grabbed the advantages offered by ICT yet, due to the problems like inadequate infrastructure and teachers' unpreparedness in integrating ICT in EFL classroom. It is high time that Indonesia should make worthy investment to provide the good, sufficient, effective facility of ICT as well as make the program for teacher training in integrating ICT in language teaching and learning. Thus teacher professional development in the use of interactive technology could embody and model the forms of pedagogy that teacher can use themselves in their classroom as the new pedagogical innovation.

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