

Information and Communication Technology and its Impact on Communicative Competence.

It's noticeable that Information and Communication Technology raises educational quality and makes teaching and learning engaging connected to real life. It offers them tools for educational change and reform. Then, with the help of technology, self directed learning becomes a way to acquire education and autonomy. Thus, many researchers believe that ICT materials play a major role and present a big challenge in helping EFL students to enhance their communicative skills, motivate them to speak fluently and develop their communicative competence as well.

It is known that the advent of the internet and web-based materials has given birth to information and communication technology (ICT) which is considered as the most important element in the teaching process. It is very important to use (ICT) in the education programs since it provides the learner with opportunities to learn the language. Additionally, it helps the teacher to make the lecture easier thanks to the innovation of tools and methods that aide the EFL students to enhance and develop their communicative competence.

With the availability and utility of the new technological supports, today's learners are labeled the digital generation; their main communication activities are done through digital texts by exchanging SMSs or emails.

1. Definition

The acronym ICT stands for Information and Communication Technology, that means the technology that supports activities involving information .Such activities include gathering, processing, storing and presenting data. Increasingly, these activities also involve collaboration and communication. There is a useful definition about (ICT) provided by *Toomey(2001.3)* that is:

“generally relates to those technologies that are used for accessing, gathering, manipulating and presenting or communicating information. The technologies could include hardware (e.g. computers and other devices); software applications; and connectivity (e.g. access to the Internet, local networking infrastructure, video conferencing). What is most significant about ICT is the increasing convergence of computer-based, multimedia and communications technologies and the rapid rate of change that characterizes both the technologies and their use.”

While it effectively refers to a broader domain, ICT tends to mean computers and their peripheral devices as deduced in the previous citation. But the term “computer,” particularly in a school setting, is a connotative rather than denotative term because it may refer to anything from high-speed connected state-of-art machines to something which is dated, stand-alone, or poorly maintained.

1.1 Components of Web-Based Materials

ICT deals with all the systems involved in creating, storing, sending or transmitting, receiving and manipulating these kinds of information. The system behind ICT includes both software and hardware.

Software

Is a set of instructions, data or programs used to operate computers and execute specific tasks. Such as the operating system (OS), internet, Microsoft tool like Word, Power Point, etc.

□ **The Operating System (OS)** is the powerful and useful programs that controls and manages the hardware and other software in computer.

□ **Internet** is defined by the Oxford Dictionaries as a global computer network providing a variety of information and communication facilities, consisting of interconnected networks using standardized communication protocols.

□ **Microsoft Word** is a word processor published by Microsoft. It is one of the office productivity applications include in Microsoft office, originally developed by Simony and Brodie (1983).

□ **Microsoft Power Point** is a product that provides users with interface to design multimedia slides to be displayed on a projection system or a personnel computer. The software incorporates images, sound, videos, text and charts to create an interactive presentation.

Hardware

It refers to all the new technological devices used nowadays in which distance is no longer a problem in accessing information from all over the world with an internet connection, such as: computer, projector, video camera, cell-phones, interactive whiteboard, etc.

□ **The Computer** is a programmable machine that performs processes, calculations and operations based on instructions. Students can use computers or laptops to manage assignments such as typing papers, create presentations or to make video slides. Computers can be used in different ways in a classroom. For example, they can be used to research teaching materials and produce an instructor's lesson guide.

□ **The Data-show/ Projector** is a device that projects an image onto a surface. It is defined by the Advanced English Dictionary as: "an optical instrument that projects enlarged images onto a screen".

□ **The Video Camera** is a camera that records video and usually audio especially CAMCORDER

□ **The Cell-Phone (Mobile Phone)** is a small telecommunicating device which shortens the distance between people and facilitates communication. It allows users to make and receive calls and to send text messages among other features.

□ **The Interactive Whiteboard (IWB)** has the potential to be the second revolutionary teaching tool. Just as the blackboard was seen as a key part of the nineteenth- and twentieth century classrooms, the IWB has the capability to become synonymous to the new digital classrooms of the twenty-first century. So, the availability of these tools in the classroom can help students to have a better education based on internet.

2. Internet Based Education (IBE)

Twenty- first- century blended learning models advocate a mixed use of traditional and new teaching and learning modes, combining face-to- face with online learning. The recent and rapid growth of the Internet as a global telecommunication medium has also led to significant innovations in relation to the delivery of education.

2.1 Definition:

Web-based education is a reality but it is also a changing reality. Web-based education is more students centered rather than professor centered education of traditional education. Technology provides a remarkable new plateau to launch education for the creative university and professor. Web-based education means that time and place are no longer barriers. This made some intercultural communicative aspects of language more universal.

Therefore, Internet-Based Education (IBE) is an evolving practice that is taking hold around the globe. It is highly agreed that Internet is providing a new, powerful, flexible and efficient tool for learning. Higher education has led to advances in the use of the Internet for educational purposes. IBE is that learners can engage with material and the course. IBE can enable better mastery through distributed practices (shorter, more frequent) and not mass practices (less, less often); it can increase productivity because students can learn at peak times. Thus, it can promote critical thinking and lead to effective pedagogy. Educators will realize successful

2.2 Difficulties

Even though, many educators consider IBE as a successful leap towards better education, both teachers and students face a lot of difficulties in IBE. The teacher is responsible for assessing where academic students are, where they should be, and how to gain insight into the specific needs and progress of students. The teacher must also deal with the choice of general learning activities and rules for student involvement. The expectations of parents, the community, and the general code of conduct of the teacher make this profession interesting. Adding technology to education adds complexity to the equation and raises many new questions. Despite the numerous benefits of using web-based materials in classrooms and Internet –Based Education, it has several disadvantages that hinder their application. Sometimes improving infrastructure is often expensive, both in terms of resources and labor. Therefore, schools may not have the workforce needed to work with new equipment. Then, Depending on the number of students, bandwidth usage can vary, which requires additional investment in Internet resources and buying a laptop and tablet is a risk of additional costs because schools need to train teachers about best practices to ensure the effective entry of technology in the classroom. Teachers need to build an online environment to not only help students with content and interactivity, but also how they use the environment itself.