THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF TEACHING ENGLISH VOCABULARY TO CHILDREN OF PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE USING COMPUTER PROGRAMS

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Abstract: One of the most significant factors in adapting the English language teaching process to the new educational model was the consideration for teaching a younger group of learners as English instruction is now compulsory from the second, rather than the fourth grade; and using computer programs is important for teaching vocabulary to children of primary schools.

Key words: Teaching English vocabulary, child-computer interaction, computer skills.

In the present study, it was found that there was an increase in the mean scores of the both instruction groups - computer assisted instruction and traditional instruction, when they were examined within themselves. The relationships between words and images were generally well defined by both of the groups. In other words, the children in each group were adept at differentiating the words and the signs cognitively. It can be concluded that learning may undoubtedly occur regardless of the instruction type. The study also revealed that the two groups did not differ in their vocabulary gain although they received different types of instruction. That is to say, both computer assisted instruction and traditional instruction were found effective in teaching vocabulary and there was no significant difference between their effects on the preschool children's vocabulary gain. In contrast to common belief, the findings of the study emphasized that CAVI may not always provide children with superior involvement in vocabulary learning. The teacher is also an indispensable factor in learning vocabulary and computers cannot substitute for teachers. Thus, the findings of the study contradict the earlier research .

In the light of the results, a number of practical suggestions for language teaching can be presented. The most crucial one is that the use of computers may be a valuable aid to preschoolers' foreign language vocabulary learning. It provides encouraging contexts for learning a foreign language, making the learning environment more motivating for preschool children. This study also proved that the computer assisted instruction had a promoting effect on preschoolers' vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, it would be reasonable for language teachers to employ computers to enhance

preschool children's vocabulary knowledge. However, the most fundamental factor in the efficiency of the computer assisted vocabulary instruction is the teacher's ability to control the equilibrium in the child-computer interaction. In the study, it was also found that both computer assisted and traditional instruction positively affected the preschool children's vocabulary gain. Thus, teachers can be recommended to notice that teaching vocabulary in a foreign language incorporates many different types of methods. Consequently, they should adopt an eclectic approach to teaching vocabulary with a combination of diverse instruction types .

The past two decades have witnessed a dynamic shift in the way the computers have been used as a tool in the teaching-learning process. Today, the trend appears to be towards the creation of courses specifically aimed at computer literacy, as well as towards integrating computer technology in other content areas across the curriculum. Further, computer technology has increasingly been applied towards non-instructional (record keeping, grade averaging, communication, etc.) and pre-instructional (developing materials, researching instructional content, etc.) uses. This great change has brought forth a fresh perspective in the use of computers in the teaching-learning process. The recent advancement in information technology innovations and computer usage is rapidly transforming work culture and teachers cannot escape the fact that today's teaching must provide technology-supported learning. Moreover, links have been made between computer use and constructivist, collaborative, and inquiry-based learning and also pedagogical change. Some researchers suggest that computer technology can overhaul education, serving as a panacea, or as an agent of change. Generally, it is accepted that computers have the potential to enhance teaching and learning and provide students with a learning experience that other strategies cannot provide. Therefore, being prepared to adopt and use technology and knowing how that can support student learning must become integral skills in every teacher's professional repertoire.

Over the past decade technology has been used in a variety of ways and for an array of purposes. As new technologies have emerged they have often times replaced or have been used concurrently with earlier technologies, thus dramatically changing the nature of the way the technology has been used in the classrooms. It is important to note that not all of computer usage in schools during the decade is focused on teaching of basic computer skills, those educators who envisioned a more student centered curriculum and learning environment did attempt to employ computers in different ways among subjects other than the computer subject.

Computers are tools that can be used not only to assist teachers as they teach but also to help with classroom management. CMI is an instructional strategy whereby the computer is used to provide learning objectives, learning resources, record keeping, progress tracking, assessment of learner performance, prescribe and control

individualized lessons. The student does not necessarily interact with the computer system. The learner may be on-line to take tests. In addition, the computer can diagnose the learning needs of students and prescribe optional sequences of instruction for them. Carlton provides a list of software designed to function as grade book spreadsheets, databases, question bank, analysis, as examples of CMI. This mode of instruction employs use of computer in management of adjunct functions/instruction-related tasks such as material generation, lesson plan preparation, schedule preparation, attendance monitoring, student's performance assessment, individualized education plans preparation, student reinforcement, communication .

Conclusion: We can learn from computers. Computers function as a source of information, and can be used to expose learners to topics and experiences beyond the classroom walls. Many people have argued that computers will replace teachers in classrooms because they can provide access to so much more information than any ordinary teacher can ever know.

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