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## THE IMPACT OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES ON THE PROCESS OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

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We live in a world where it is impossible to get along without modern technologies. Interactive technologies are great tools for helping students learn, so they can change the way that learning takes place making it more engaging and memorable. Thus, using technologies is the future of education system.

Technology plays a large role in many aspects of day-to-day life, and so does education. Technology is rapidly changing the way students learn and how instructors teach. Undoubtedly technology has impacted the lives of everyone more or less. In recent years, advancement and ease of using technology has made everyone wonder how technology can improve the way we do things. The key is awareness and to determine how technology can add value. The impact of technology on education has been tremendous recently and that is the reason distance education has soared. Online education has made it convenient to enroll in a course from anywhere. This allows enrolling and learning a less popular language that locally may not be available<sup>1</sup>.

The purpose of this research is to explore how technology has evolved to change education in general and languages in particular. The instructors have always faced the challenge of motivating, engaging, and getting students involved regardless of the teaching method used. The instructors are taking different approaches to face this challenge such as using technology and hands-on activities. It is possible that teaching online can be a bigger challenge than teaching offline.

Learning a second language has always been a passion of many people around the globe. Many have learned and are learning foreign languages for different reasons including studying abroad, business, and hobby. The advancement of technology has impacted our lives greatly in many ways. For example, technology has improved our personal lives, the way we teach, learn, and do our businesses. Technology has made it possible to form a virtual team collaborating and communicating regardless of the location and culture of team members. Technology has removed the distance barriers and has made it possible for higher education to effectively teach anyone and for businesses to easily reach anyone around the globe. This has made more people interested in learning

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<sup>1</sup> **Allen I, Seaman J.** *Learning on demand: online education in the United States. The Sloan Consortium. 2009.*

foreign languages. Technology can be used to facilitate teaching and learning foreign languages in efficient and effective ways. Therefore, a foreign language can easily be learned without the worry of traveling and finding a well qualified teacher.

The main purpose of this endeavor is to explore the impact of technology on teaching and learning languages. Some technology tools enable teachers to differentiate instruction and adapt classroom activities and homework assignments, thus enhancing the language learning experience. Modern technologies can enable language educators to expand language-learning opportunities to all students, regardless of where they live, the human and material resources available to them, or their language background and needs. In sum, technology continues to grow in importance as a tool to assist teachers of foreign languages in facilitating and mediating language learning for their students.

Language teachers have been avid users of Technology for a very long time for effective teaching. Gramophone recorders, for instance, were among the first technological aids to be used by language teachers in order to present students with recordings of native speakers' voices, and broadcast from foreign radio stations were used to make recordings on reel-to-reel recorders. Other examples of Technological aids that have been used in the second language classroom include slide projectors, film-strip projectors, film projectors, videocassette recorders and DVD players.

During the 1970s and 1980s standard microcomputers were incapable of producing sound and they had poor graphics capability. This represents a step backwards for language teachers, who by this time had become accustomed to using a range of different media in the foreign language classroom. The arrival of the multimedia computer in the early 1990s was therefore a major breakthrough as it enabled text, images, sounds and video to be combined in one device and the integration of the four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. With the development of modern technologies new devices came into use such as iPad and tablets that make learning easier due to their portability and multifunctioning.

Nowadays technology has changed and enhanced teaching both online and offline. This is particularly true about teaching languages. For example, 3D virtual worlds like Second Life are now being used by language teachers to provide simulation of real life environments and allow students to discover more creative and more realistic ways to improve their language skills. The 3D online world allows its virtual residents known as "avatars" to build their own creations, allowing for an imaginative virtual world to include what exist in the real world such as airports, markets, banks, libraries, and cinemas. Avatar Languages is an online language school which uses 3D virtual world

Second Life. The native speaking teachers who are professionally experienced and qualified are offering customized language classes to students around the globe<sup>2</sup>.

The unique qualities of a 3D virtual world can provide opportunities for rich sensory immersive experiences, authentic contexts and activities for experiential learning, simulation and role-play, melding of complex scenarios, a platform for data visualization and opportunities for collaboration and co-creation that cannot be easily experienced using other platforms. Second life is completely user-generated 3D environment that comes with relatively easy-to-use building and scripting tools that anyone can learn. This makes it an ideal platform for engaging students in creating their own learning activities, experiences and environments, and not just be passive consumers of learning. One main feature of second life is “images” that is a good way to get students attention and should increase their interest and involvement. These images are all related and tied to what is being taught. These images are related to the vocabulary of the language being taught and therefore reinforce the lesson.

Second life might be better suited to younger learners of foreign languages because of their experience with the internet. They greatly value and appreciate the Internet. They are computer and internet literate and they have no fear of technology. They consider internet as a natural place to learn<sup>3</sup>.

This new medium using technology to teach a language offers many opportunities and calls for a new way of teaching language. Therefore, one should not try to exactly duplicate the classroom activities to teach the language online and second life as a medium. The second life itself should be viewed as a classroom providing new set of activities to practice in teaching the language. The second life gives students an opportunity to practice what they have learnt instantly. It is usually easier to learn vocabulary in context and related images the virtual world provides. Further, the informal settings of the virtual world should help emphasize understanding slang expressions and grammar<sup>4</sup>.

In a review of studies that focused on technology’s impact on language acquisition, Zhao (2005) examined studies that researched the use of digital multimedia and language.

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<sup>2</sup> Hay A., Hodgkinson M., Peltier J.W., Drago W.A. *Interaction and virtual learning* ( *Strategic Change* 2004);13:193-200.

<sup>3</sup> Manouchehr Tabatabaei, Ying Gui. The impact of technology on teaching and learning languages. *Education in a technological world: communicating current and emerging research and technological efforts* A. Méndez-Vilas (Ed.) <http://www.formatex.info/ict/book/513-517.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Yong Zhao *Technology and Second Language Learning: Promises and Problems: Michigan* ( *working paper January 2005*);16. <http://www.slideshare.net/sakthivelkrishnan10/influence-of-multimedia-technology-in-english-language-teaching>

Zhao concluded that technology can be used to enhance language acquisition in the following ways<sup>5</sup>:

- Enhancing access efficiency through digital multimedia. Multimedia presentations (video, images, sound, text) can create stronger memory links than text alone. In addition, digital technologies allow instant playbacks, which provide the learner with quick and easy access to different sections of instructional materials than when they are using a textbook.
- Enhancing authenticity using video and the Internet. The Internet provides learners with access to authentic materials, like news and literature, while video can offer context-rich linguistic and culturally relevant materials to learners.
- Enhancing comprehensibility through learner control and multimedia annotations. Video materials online can be enhanced with full captions, key-word captions, and speech slowdown, allowing the reader to more easily digest the information. Digital reading materials can be hyperlinked to different media, which students can choose to help their comprehension of the material.
- Providing meaningful and authentic communication opportunities. Students can engage in authentic types of communication through e-mail, chat rooms, and other digital means.

The advancement in technology has allowed the educators to be more creative and therefore more efficient and effective teaching online or offline. Technology has helped enhancing classroom activities, motivate students, and engage them in classroom activities. The more students are involved the more they should learn while enjoying their time. This is especially true with teaching foreign languages as more interaction is needed in the classroom.

It is important to provide context and have students practice what they are learning in a language course. People seem to remember what they have learned by experiencing just reading and memorizing. This is the reason people learn a language faster in a foreign country than in a classroom in their home country. Therefore, students should be provided with opportunities to practice and experience as they are in a foreign country. They should be in a situation that the need to remember is important. This makes Second Life valuable as it provides the ability to set up scenarios where one can create the need to learn words rather than just trying to cram vocabulary into their head. Second Life technology provides the simulation of being in a foreign country and not just in the

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<sup>5</sup> **Grandzol J. R.** *Teaching MBA statistics online: A pedagogically sound process approach* (*Journal of Education for Business*, 2004, 80:237-244).

classroom. It provides the necessary practice and learning from experience or learning by doing. This technology helps students learn what they want to learn in most cases and learn more than a teacher wants them to learn. Thus, new technology after another has been introduced into our lives with the promise of revolutionizing education. Universities, colleges and schools are challenged to prepare young people to navigate and prosper in this world, with technology as an ally rather than an obstacle.

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**ՊԵՏՐՈՍՅԱՆ Մ. Ի.**

*Ամփոփում*

*XXI-րդ դարում՝ նորագույն տեխնոլոգիաների ժամանակաշրջանում, ուսուցման ավանդական ձևերը աստիճանաբար զիջում են իրենց տեղը: Նորագույն տեխնոլոգիաներն ավելի լայն հնարավորություն են ստեղծում ուսուցում կազմակերպել՝ անկախ գտնվելու վայրից և ժամանակից: Նմանատիպ ուսուցման կազմակերպումը բազմաթիվ նոր հնարավորություններ է ընձեռում ուսանողներին և առավել դյուրին դարձնում ուսուցման գործընթացը:*

**ВЛИЯНИЕ СОВРЕМЕННЫХ ТЕХНОЛОГИЙ НА  
ПРОЦЕСС ОБУЧЕНИЯ ЯЗЫКАМ**

**ПЕТРОСЯН М. И.**

Резюме

В XXI веке, в эпоху современных технологий, традиционные методы обучения постепенно уступают свое место. Развитие современных технологий качественно улучшает образовательный процесс в любой точке земного шара, упрощая обучение.