

ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION PERCEIVED BY LANGUAGE EDUCATION STUDENTS IN THE NEW NORMAL EDUCATION: A NARRATIVE INQUIRY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this narrative investigation is to explore the perceptions of language education students towards the role of technology in education. The study has utilized narrative inquiry as its research design and a structured, short-answer type essay to gather the necessary data. There are 30 language education students who are currently enrolled in the college of teacher education who served as participants in the study. The instrument consists of only one question: "What are the roles of technology in education in contemporary times?" and seven themes emerged based on the inputs of thematic analysis. Based from the results that technology accelerates educational advancement by providing diverse materials, enhancing learning experiences, empowering teachers, transforming education, making it accessible, affordable, and enabling accelerated learning. It also supports collaboration and communication, facilitating teaching and learning during the pandemic. Technology should be seen as a tool for effective teaching and learning, not a substitute.

Keywords: education, educational transformation, language education, new normal education, role of technology

INTRODUCTION

The impact of technology on a variety of fields, including education, cannot be denied (Paje, Rogayan, & Dantic, 2021). It has become an essential part of our lives. In the field of education, technology has been recognized as a potent instrument that has altered conventional teaching techniques into ones that are interactive and engaging (Halim, Javaid, Qadri, & Suman, 2022). Consequently, technology in education allows individualized instruction and adaptive learning, but its usage must be critically evaluated for efficacy and ethical standards (Vandewaetere & Clarebout, 2013).

The benefits of technology in education, such as enhanced learning opportunities, teacher empowerment, and access to information and resources, have been noted in recent literature and studies. Technology offers students quick access to knowledge, rapid learning, and enjoyable opportunities to put what they have learned into practice. It allows them to delve deeper into challenging ideas and explore new diverse concepts (American University School of Education, 2013). Teachers can now develop technology-integrated learning activities (Hrastinski, 2019), foster student engagement (Frosythe, 2022), and increase learning outcomes (Lei & Zhao, 2007). Technology has also transformed knowledge acquisition, access, and sharing, making education more accessible and affordable. It has greatly impacted

education by enabling students to practice what they learn, investigate new topics, and gain a deeper comprehension of complex ideas.

Technology facilitates collaboration and communication, allowing students and teachers to digitally communicate even in distant locales (Thakur, 2022; Additionally, it fosters critical thinking and creativity, enabling pupils to realize their creative potential and succeed in a technologically advanced society (Nussbaum, Barahona, Rodriguez et al., 2021).

Technology is undeniably significant in today's education. But how do education students see its implications?

The aim of this narrative investigation is to explore the perceptions of language education students towards the role of technology in education.

METHODOLOGY

The study has utilized narrative inquiry as its research design and a structured, short-answer type essay to gather the necessary data. The present study investigates the role of technology in education in contemporary times. There are 30 language education students who are currently enrolled in the college of teacher education who served as participants in the study. The instrument was validated by a language specialist and a grammarian. The instrument is only one question: "What are the roles of technology in education in contemporary times?" Seven themes emerged based on the inputs of thematic analysis. In addition, Braun and Clark's (2019) procedures in thematic analysis were used in detecting, interpreting, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The table presents the themes emerged based from the results.

Table 1. Perceived Roles of Technology in Education

Generated Themes	Sample Significant Statement	Theme Description
Access to Information and Resources	Technology gives students quick access to information, accelerates learning, and offers engaging chances for practice of what they have learned. (P2)	This theme describes how technology accelerates educational advancement by offering diverse materials, accelerating learning processes, and allowing users to access information efficiently.
Enhanced Learning Experience	The role of technology in the education process is the technology provides students with easy-to-access information, accelerated learning and fun opportunities to practice what they learn. (P19)	This theme emphasizes that technology enhances learning experiences through interactive multimedia tools, allowing personalized experiences and active engagement, which makes complex concepts relatable.
Teacher Empowerment and Instructional Design	"The use of technology during whole class introduction can foster student engagement for auditory and visual learners. Integrating simple technologies power points, games, internet homework, assignments, or online grading systems can be difference makers in student's growth in the classroom." (P7)	This theme explains that technology empowers teachers to create innovative learning experiences that cater to different learning styles and promote student engagement.
Educational Transformation and Accessibility	Technology has also made education more accessible and affordable for learners across the globe, breaking down geographical and socio-economic barriers (P8)	This theme emphasizes that technology revolutionizes education by making it accessible, affordable, and enabling accelerated learning while overcoming barriers.
Supporting Collaboration and Communication	Teachers can use interactive software and programs as learning technologies so that students can respond to questions and lectures digitally. Moreover, technology can foster collaboration and communication among students and teachers. (P19)	This theme highlights that technology supports collaboration and communication during the pandemic, enabling teachers to connect and facilitate teaching and learning.
Technology as a Tool, Not a Substitute	"However, it is important to note that technology is not a substitute for effective teaching and learning. It should be utilized as a tool to enhance and support the educational process." (P8)	This theme justifies that technology should be seen as a tool for effective teaching and learning.

Theme 1: Access to Information and Resources

The teaching and learning processes have been revolutionized by technology, which has emerged as a potent ally in the dynamic educational environment. Information is readily available online, and there are numerous instructional materials available nowadays. Learning is now more flexible and accessible for students because of these resources and information that are available whenever and wherever (Kajal, 2023). Like the Participants (P1 & P5) described, "Technology can help the teachers by make use the internet by providing the students with extra study material and resources such as interactive lessons, educational quiz as well as tutorials, teachers can also record their lectures and provide it to the students for revisions which is better than reading from notes." and " Students can study a variety of topics, conduct a study and research and can also access instructional materials that might help them understand more the topics." Technology can assist teachers in giving students more resources and study materials. Teachers can use the internet to offer interactive lessons, test prep materials, tutorials, and other learning resources to their pupils (Evans, 2021). In relation to this, there is another remarkable response from a participant (P2) m" Technology gives students quick access to information, accelerates learning, and offers engaging chances for practice of what they have learned." P2 also highlighted that technology allows students to access information quickly, which can enhance their learning experience. Additionally, technology gives students the chance to actively engage with the material they have learned, allowing them to successfully practice and reinforce their knowledge. Technology gives students the chance to actively engage with the material they have learned, allowing them to successfully practice and reinforce their knowledge (American University School of Education, 2020).

Theme 2: Enhanced Learning Experience

According to Dayal (2019), the way that students learn and teachers instruct has been influenced by technology, which has become a crucial component of the educational landscape. The use of technology in education has created new opportunities for individualized and engaging learning. Technology integration in the classroom has created new opportunities for individualized and interactive learning. A participant (P10) also described technology as this, " Technology has made learning more engaging and fun with interactive multimedia tools like simulations, games and virtual reality. It also helps teacher to create personalized learning experiences for each student based on their strengths and weaknesses." By creating learning paths that are specific to each student's requirements and transforming classrooms into connected communities, personalized learning gives students the power to take care of their education (Basye & Grant, 2014). Another notable response states that, "Technology provides interactive and multimedia rich content, enhancing learning through interaction. Immersive learning experiences are offered by educational videos, simulations, virtual reality, and augmented reality applications. These tools improve comprehension and make difficult ideas more understandable and relatable (P12)." The learners' results have been positively impacted by the technologically improved learning environment. Students now have access to a wide range of digital tools and materials that improve their comprehension of and interest in the topic (University of Edinburgh, 2022). Technology's evolution and integration will significantly

shape education's future, offering transformative learning experiences for students, preparing them for success.

Theme 3: Teacher Empowerment and Instructional Design

Technology is now an effective instrument in education, giving teachers the capacity to improve instructional design and produce fun learning activities. It is essential for developing engaging educational experiences. It accomplishes this by offering the platforms and tools needed for users to interact with the material directly (Das, 2023). A participant (P16) described. "Teachers tend to have a lot of opportunities to design and create learning activities and tools that embed technology." Online discussion forums, virtual simulations, and interactive multimedia presentations are a few examples of these tools and platforms. Technology in education allows teachers to accommodate to various learning preferences and offer individualized training (Dantic, 2021). By incorporating technology into teaching, educators can create dynamic activities that captivate students' attention and facilitate deeper engagement. In relation to that another participant (P7) justified it, "The use of technology during whole class introduction can foster student engagement for auditory and visual learners. Integrating simple technologies power points , games, internet homework, assignments, or online grading systems can be difference makers in student's growth in the classroom." This technology-driven approach creates an interactive and immersive learning environment, fostering student growth and academic achievement. Overall, technology gives instructors the ability to create and implement powerful teaching methods that promote students' achievement both inside and beyond the classroom (Drexel University School of Education).

Theme 4: Educational Transformation and Accessibility

Technology has revolutionized education by transforming knowledge acquisition, access, and sharing. Like the participant (P4) said, "Technology has revolutionized the educational process by transforming the way knowledge is acquired, accessed, and shared." It changed how we learn and acquire knowledge, transforming educational apps and online learning platforms (Clark, 2023). Digitalization is transforming all facets of society, and in educational settings, the change is occurring with or without intentional actions that uphold the standard of the teaching and learning environment (Schmidt & Tang, 2020). A response highlighted that " Technology has also made education more accessible and affordable for learners across the globe, breaking down geographical and socio-economic barriers (P8)." Through the use of digital tools and online resources, which transcend geographical boundaries and enable global access to a vast body of knowledge, students today have unmatched access to information. This accessibility has made education more inexpensive and available to students from many backgrounds, which may help them in their future aspirations (Beyene, Tulu Mekonnen & G Giannoumis, 2023).

Theme 5: Supporting Collaboration and Communication

The pandemic outbreak had a significant impact on education, which has led to a shift to distance learning. Technology has become an essential tool for collaboration and communication between teachers and students in this demanding environment (Rogayan & Dantic, 2021). Technology has played a crucial role in supporting collaboration and communication between

teachers and students, maintaining educational continuity and fostering student engagement (World Bank, nd). In relation to this, a participant (P5) says "" In the midst of pandemic, technology provides the teachers the opportunity to connect with their students. This allows to open up lines of communication and use the internet to explain curriculum materials, which is very helpful to students." Teachers have conducted courses, explained curricular materials, and provided guidance in real-time using online platforms and virtual classrooms to ensure uninterrupted learning. Additionally, they must manage, handle, and communicate a variety of instructional instruments to successfully instruct students and assist them in comprehending and utilizing the variety of information provided to them (Korisztek, 2021). Another participant (P19) said "Teachers can use interactive software and programs as learning technologies so that students can respond to questions and lectures digitally. Moreover, interactive software and programs have made it possible for students to participate in discussions and lectures online, fostering collaboration and communication between them and their teachers. When teachers are digitally literate and can use this effectively, then they can influence learning positively (UNESCO, nd).

Theme 6: Technology as a tool, not a substitute

The integration of technology in education has brought about transformative changes, revolutionizing the way information is gathered, accessed, and presented. According to Intel (nd), technology is revolutionizing education, altering when, where, and how students study while also empowering them along the way. In the process of personalizing learning, technology gives students control over their own learning processes, makes learning relevant to their digital lives, and gets them ready for the future. Technology supports educators and learners, allowing engaging and dynamic learning environments. However, effective teaching and learning should not be replaced by technology. A participant (P8) emphasized, "However, it is important to note that technology is not a substitute for effective teaching and learning. It should be utilized as a tool to enhance and support the educational process." **Simply adding ed tech to a learning environment doesn't guarantee better learning. In fact, using ed tech to replace teachers or to scale ineffective practice guarantees poorer learning outcomes (Mohammed, 2018).** A participant (P22) emphasized that "Technology should be seen as a tool for effective teaching and learning, enhancing information gathering, access, analysis, presentation, and transforming traditional practices." A successful teacher promotes deeper conceptual comprehension, critical thinking, and creativity. By reinventing how knowledge is obtained, accessed, analyzed, presented, and conveyed via technology, traditional teaching methods can be transformed (University of Washington, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

Based from the results, it concludes that access to Information and Resources describes how technology accelerates educational advancement by offering diverse materials, accelerating learning processes, and allowing users to access information efficiently. Enhanced Learning Experience emphasizes that technology enhances learning experiences through interactive multimedia tools, allowing personalized experiences and active engagement, which makes complex concepts relatable. Teacher Empowerment and Instructional Design explains that

technology empowers teachers to create innovative learning experiences that cater to different learning styles and promote student engagement. Educational Transformation and Accessibility emphasizes that technology revolutionizes education by making it accessible, affordable, and enabling accelerated learning while overcoming barriers. Supporting Collaboration and Communication highlights that technology supports collaboration and communication during the pandemic, enabling teachers to connect and facilitate teaching and learning. Technology as a Tool, not a Substitute justifies that technology should be seen as a tool for effective teaching and learning.

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