



INCORPORATING MODERN MEANS OF ICT TOGETHER WITH USEFUL APPLIED METHODS FOR TEACHING READING IN EFL CLASSES

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Abstract: This article discusses incorporating modern means of ICT together with useful applied methods for teaching reading in EFL classes. The use of computer-mediated instruction is particularly beneficial for the current generation of students, who are more accustomed to obtaining information through electronic means and may find traditional teaching methods less engaging. Therefore, incorporating computer-mediated instruction into reading education can yield positive learning outcomes and notable improvements in students' reading comprehension skills. As such, educators should consider utilizing computers as a tool for enhancing reading skills, while also minimizing the use of traditional approaches and emphasizing the integration of modern methods, such as connectivism, FVR, extensive reading strategies, cognitive reading strategies, and other innovative techniques, to produce more proficient and capable readers.

Key words: Information and Communication Technology (ICT), EFL classes, Connectivism, EFL Learners, Reading Comprehension, Development through MALL, Computer- assessed language learning (CALL)

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) plays a crucial role in aiding students to locate reading materials from primary sources. By simply sitting in front of a computer connected to the internet, students can easily find articles from international journals. The use of ICT in education promotes a learner-centric approach as students can access and learn from these technologies at their own pace, leading to the development of learner autonomy. Additionally, ICT provides access to a wider range of information and a variety of articles, thus facilitating the teaching and learning process.

Reading, on the other hand, is a fundamental skill in learning different subjects. Irrespective of the aspect of life one is considering, it is evident that the ability to read proficiently enhances an individual's capacity to function effectively. Reading is also a crucial skill in English as a second language. Maduabuchi¹ hypothesizes that comprehension is the outcome of an interaction between the reader and the text during the act of reading. Reading is a process of receiving language. During reading, there is an exchange of ideas between language and cognition as the author transforms ideas into language and the reader converts language into ideas. In view of this, Nwaiwu² expressed the view that reading is a method of

¹ Maduabuchi, C. (2007). Challenges of teaching reading for functional literacy via ICTs. *Journal of Applied Literacy and Reading* 13, 159 – 166

² Wernet, S. P., Olliges, R. H., & Delicath, T. A. (2000). Post course evaluation of web ct (web course tools) classes by social work students. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 10(4), 487-504. Retrieved August 10, 2014 from http://www.ifets.info/journals/13_1/16.pdf.

communication where the recipient (reader) strives to comprehend the thoughts of the sender (writer). By reading, the reader interacts with the writer, who may or may not be known to them, and experiences their ideas. Reading is a multifarious activity that only improves with regular practice. Certain aspects of reading, such as fluency and word recognition, can be acquired over time. Reading has many advantages, including mental stimulation, stress relief, expansion of knowledge, enhancement of vocabulary, entertainment, and improvement in analytical thinking skills, among others. However, there may be some obstacles to reading, such as environmental, physiological, and psychological factors.

Connectivism is a theoretical model for comprehending learning. In connectivism, the learning process begins when an individual links to a learning community and feeds information into it. This activation of knowledge by the learner is the starting point for learning. In the connectivism model³, A community of learners is defined as a hub that is always connected to a broader network. As per the principles of connectivism, information is spread throughout a digital network and can be archived in different formats. Learning and knowledge are believed to flourish in the presence of diverse viewpoints. Connectivism has numerous noteworthy consequences for education and research, such as the following: Connectivism encourages the gathering of the most pertinent and accurate data by tapping into multiple "networks." When it comes to evaluating literature, the capacity to access the latest information transforms the basis for future analysis⁴.

- Rather than relying on memorization of basic facts, this approach aids in the development of connections with information.
- Learners access information through networks, use it to build upon their existing knowledge, and then share it back with others.
- It teaches students how to access and share information within various networks.
- The use of multiple technological devices that connect to the internet is encouraged.
- Connections are established between students, classes, or schools to facilitate the sharing of information.
- Critical evaluation of web-based content is consistently taught.

Throughout my years of teaching English as a foreign language in Uzbekistan, I discovered that while most Uzbek students possess a solid understanding of English grammar, they struggle to communicate effectively with one another. This is in part due to the fact that English is primarily taught within the classroom, with few opportunities for students to use the language outside of school. Consequently, many English language learners have limited interaction with the target language beyond instructional settings.

To address this issue, extensive reading can prove to be a valuable tool for improving language proficiency among EFL students. In this approach, students are exposed to a wealth of reading material that falls within their linguistic capabilities. Moreover, students are encouraged to select books that interest them and read them for pleasure. This fosters an environment that promotes confidence-building and fluency development.

As Arnold notes, the internet has made extensive reading even more accessible and enjoyable. This is especially important for EFL learners who are studying English in non-

³ Nordin, N., Embi, M. A., & Yunus, M. M. (2010). Mobile learning framework for lifelong learning. *Procedia –Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 7, 130-138

⁴ Kerr, B. (2007, February 3). Msg. 7, Re: What connectivism is. Online connectivism conference: University of Manitoba. <http://ltc.Umantoba.ca/Moodle/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=12>

English speaking environments, as they can use computers to improve their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.⁵

With particular emphasis on the reading classroom, Case and Truscott (1999)⁶ The significance of *computers and the internet* as valuable resources for enhancing reading skills is emphasized. It is contended that computer-assisted reading promotes greater engagement with texts, attentiveness to personal requirements, and fosters self-sufficiency by enabling access to texts that may otherwise be inaccessible. Additionally, it facilitates the development of sight word vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension, which are essential for progress in reading. Moreover, Pérez Correa et al (2004)⁷ The following are recommendations for effective computer-based reading instruction in the classroom:

1. Emphasize reading comprehension and meaning in computer-based reading instruction.
2. Encourage active participation and critical thinking through computer-based reading instruction.
3. Utilize a variety of subject areas to support and enhance students' understanding of text structure.
4. Incorporate writing activities in conjunction with computer-based reading instruction.
5. Implementing computer-based reading instruction can shift pedagogical practices from teacher-centered to student-centered.

In addition, teachers may also opt to implement *free voluntary reading (FVR)* as part of their classroom instruction. However, this requires a significant amount of time and effort on the part of the teacher to motivate students to read and maintain logs of their reading progress. The following are the basic steps for implementing FVR:

1. Determine the reading levels of students and gather books at appropriate levels.
2. Explain the FVR program and its benefits to students.
3. Schedule time for classroom discussions to encourage students to share their favorite books and authors.
4. Provide motivation, such as additional time or celebrations, for students or the class after reading a certain number of books.
5. Assess student progress through reading logs and anecdotal records during classroom discussions.

Therefore, the integration of FVR is carried out with a computer-based reading program and a compilation of digital books to substitute the presence of a library and tangible books. I used to attend English literature classes at the Presidential School in Denov. The school administration has specifically included the works of several local writers in their

⁵ Egbert, J. (2005). CALL essentials: Principles and practice in CALL classrooms. Alexandria. Virginia: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.

⁶ Case, C & Truscott, D. (1999). The lure of bells and whistles; choosing the best software to support reading instruction reading and writing quarterly. Overcoming Learning Difficulties. PP.(15-19).

⁷ 22-Pérez Correa, A. Rodríguez Basabe, L & Antonio Tejera Castillo, J. (2004). THE Teaching of Reading Comprehension for Students of EFL Assisted by Computers. Centro de Información y Gestión Tecnológica (CIGET) Pinar del Río Vol.6 No.1 ene. – marzo.

literature textbooks for students to learn from. For instance, the literature textbooks include "Alpomish" from folklore, Chingiz Aitmatov's "The Day of the Century," "Khamsa" by Alisher Navoi, "Treasure of Ulugbek" by Maqsud Sheikhzade, "Boburnoma" by Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur, "Sahibkiran" by Abdulla Oripov, extracts from Otkan Kunlar, Oibek's "Kutlug' Khan," and other literary pieces. Additionally, the use of ICT enables teachers to present audio books, videos, films, and stage adaptations of these works to students while teaching them. Students can quickly and easily master the subject matter by observing and hearing. For example, if a three-hour lesson is assigned to the novel "Treasure of Ulugbek" by Odil Yakubov, the student may endeavor to obtain comprehensive information about the work, but the seven-page excerpt in the textbook may not provide that opportunity. In such circumstances, the educator should utilize ICT effectively. To do so, it is fitting to access online resources devoted to special education. When teaching the novel "Treasure of Ulugbek" to students, the teacher should highlight that Ulugbek was a king, a scholar, and a compassionate father. The teacher could employ videos to encourage learners to think more broadly about the characters in the work. Furthermore, the "Charkhpalak" method can be utilized to analyze images in A. Qadiri's "Otkan Kunlar."⁸ The wheelbarrow method promotes the memorization of topics, logical thinking, independent question answering, and group idea defense among students. The technology of this approach involves:

- Assessing the level of topic mastery at the beginning of the learning process
- Enhancing understanding of new topics during the learning process
- Evaluating the level of knowledge acquired at the end of the lesson, typically after completing a section or chapter in a textbook.

The procedure for the wheel method involves:

- Dividing students into groups
- Explaining the wheel drawing
- Completing assigned questions and tasks within a specified time frame
- Rotating these questions and tasks between groups in a circular fashion
- Resolving any unanswered tasks with the help of the teacher.

The competence-based approach is also a preferred teaching method for imparting knowledge and developing specific skills among students. When selecting texts, three principles are prioritized:

1. Professional relevance: Texts should offer information that has professional value and meets the reader's cognitive needs.
2. Communicative orientation: Texts should reflect the real-life communication activities in modern engineering and professional spheres.
3. Authenticity: Texts should be authentic in terms of their structure, content, and design. However, lengthy texts can be shortened without altering their lexical, grammatical structures, and overall perception.

Let us examine the teaching of English for specific purposes. In this context, the approach to the reading process is based on three fundamental principles: a focus on communication, an emphasis on providing information, and the enhancement of learning outcomes. These principles provide the necessary tools for teaching reading in ESP. For

⁸ Karimjonov I.A. and others. New pedagogical technologies. - Tashkent, 2012. What is advanced pedagogical technology and how can it be used in the educational process. - Marifat Nuri newspaper, Tashkent, 2017.

instance, students attending the Polytechnic School, the School of Engineering and Construction, the School of Engineering Physics and Radio Electronics, and the School of Military Training utilize various tools such as in-class, home, MOODLE, Coursera, and Zoom to prepare for their reading and translating tasks in the final examination of the "Foreign Language" (English) course. The senior lecturers and associate professors from the Department of Foreign Languages for Engineering Science always take into account various aspects of reading, such as knowledge, skills, and comprehension of everyday vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, proper nouns, technical terminology, temporal structure of the source text, syntactic structures, grammatical transformation (e.g., substitution of word forms, replacement of parts of speech, changes in word order, sentence structures, and types of syntactic relations, addition, omission), narrative logic, and style.

In the core definition of Semtin and Maniam, another set of strategies referred to as *Cognitive Reading Strategies* is associated with "specific learning tasks and employed in the learning process, such as relating the new words in mind and writing down the main idea." These strategies aid and guide students in comprehending the reading content through various techniques, such as rereading the text, scanning, analyzing, summarizing, and using the first language to generate ideas. Cognitive Strategies are linked to *Comprehending Strategies* (e.g., dictionary, translating), *Memory Strategies* (e.g., underlining, highlighting, visualizing), and *Retrieval Strategies* (e.g., previewing, using prior knowledge, using context clues to infer meaning). They are utilized to encourage students to read slowly, analyze, and visualize the reading text. According to Semtin and Maniam (2015), Cognitive Strategies are also identified as *Reciprocal Teaching Intervention Strategy* (e.g., questioning, summarizing, clarifying, and predicting), *Planning Strategies* (e.g., pausing, focusing, scanning, reading slowly and carefully, and determining what to read), and *Monitoring Strategies* (e.g., rereading, paying attention, and self-questioning). They regulate the learning process by setting a purpose for reading, predicting, assessing self-understanding, and directing attention..⁹

Using Google Assistant in Classroom Reading Comprehension Activities.

- The quantity of inquiries posed, the quantity of inquiries responded to accurately, and the duration taken to finish understanding exercises demonstrate that Google Assistant is an exceptional resource.
- Favorable impacts on participants' attitudes toward the reading comprehension assignment
- Easily acquiring necessary information, enhanced data display, and a feeling of pleasure and engagement while utilizing the resource.
- Enhanced linguistic abilities and increased student drive.

VR to Enhance Reading Comprehension. Pupils are intrigued by incorporating Virtual Reality (VR) as a learning tool for English.

- This simplifies the students' comprehension of the English language material presented in class.

⁹ AD- Heisat, M., Mohammed, S., Krishnasamy, K., & Issa, J. (2009). The use of reading strategies in developing students' reading competency among primary school teachers. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 12(2), 310-319. Alsheikh, N., & Mokhtari, K. (2010). An examination of the metacognitive reading strategies used by native speakers of Arabic when reading in English and Arabic. *English Language Teaching*, 4(2), 151-160. [elt.ccsenet.org English Language Teaching Vol. 12, No. 6; 2019 101 https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v4n2p151](https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v4n2p151)

• It captivates the students to such an extent that they desire to employ it extensively during their English language lessons, leading to a significant increase in their motivation to learn English.

EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension Development through MALL: Telegram Groups in Focus.

- Pupils who obtain the set of vocabulary via text message exhibit better vocabulary retention compared to those who receive it through conventional means.
- Learners opt for mobile phones as their preferred tool for perusing brief texts.
- The utilization of contemporary mobile phone technologies, such as social media platforms like Telegram, for instructing reading comprehension is advantageous.

Reading and connecting using social annotation in online classes. It could aid in the handling of area-specific expertise, while also encouraging debate, investigation, and knowledge generation, alongside enhancing literacy abilities, instructor and peer assessment, and linking digital learning settings.

Think Aloud Strategy: Enhancing Reading Comprehension in a Digital Environment.

- It provides a shared vocabulary for readers to express crucial metacognitive abilities that assist comprehension.
- Learners display a marked increase in engagement and enthusiasm for integrating technology in their learning.
- Facilitating student cooperation becomes simpler.

The verbalization technique is a cognitive tactic that supports students in enhancing their ability to oversee their reading comprehension by transforming implicit thoughts into explicit ones.

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