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THE USAGE OF WEB2.0 TOOLS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The present article aims to investigate the role that Web 2.0 tools can play in enhancing the productive and receptive language skills of students studying English as a foreign language. Nowadays, Web 2.0 is becoming the preferred environment for communication, collaboration, and sharing information, especially among the younger population. Web 2.0 tools are handy, simpler to deploy, free or inexpensive, and ready to be used in different contexts. This prompts many educators worldwide to explore possible ways to apply these technologies in the educational field. This study adopts a quantitative research approach using a questionnaire for data collection. The questionnaire is designed to explore teachers' perceptions of using Web 2.0 applications as a method for teaching English as a foreign language. The results indicate a high self-perception among teachers regarding Web 2.0 and its use for improving students' language skills, attributed to their awareness of the importance and benefits of Web 2.0 in education.

Key words: Web technology, language skill, digital tool, teaching, educator.

MAIN PROVISIONS

This article is a study among English language teachers on the use of Web 2.0 technologies in teaching English as a foreign language. In this regard, the following points and theses are submitted for analysis and discussion in the text:

1. Focus on Web 2.0 Services in EFL Classrooms.

The study concentrates on exploring the utilization of Web 2.0 tools in English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom, investigating the personal factors influencing their usage across diverse countries.

2. Role of Modern Technology in Education.

Emphasis is placed on the increasing significance of modern technology in education. Specifically, in language training, technology plays a vital role due to its ability to enhance motivation, reduce anxiety, facilitate student-centered activities, and provide access to authentic audio and visual materials. Educational technology enriches the learning environment, particularly in language education where the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills benefits extensively from new technologies.

3. Challenges in Teaching English in Non-English-Speaking Countries.

The article highlights challenges faced by students and teachers in non-English speaking countries like Kazakhstan. Difficulties in teaching English to learners occur from various factors such as differences in pronunciation, limited exposure to native speakers, struggles in understanding spoken and written English, variations between taught English and natural spoken English, and limitations in teaching methodologies that emphasize overused word constructions and sentence structures.

4. Aim of Utilizing Web 2.0 Tools.

The primary goal of using Web 2.0 tools in teaching English in Kazakhstan is to overcome these challenges. Traditional classroom materials primarily consist of static text-based resources, necessitating the integration of dynamic, interactive tools to enhance classroom engagement and learning experiences for EFL students.

INTRODUCTION

The current study focuses on the use of Web 2.0 services in the EFL classroom, and the personal factors influencing their use in the different countries. Although the integration of Web 2.0 tools into the methodology of teaching English as a foreign language makes it crucial to investigate the use of Web 2.0 applications in a rigorous way.

Nowadays, modern technology plays a vital role in our lives, especially in the educational space where its usage has gained popularity. Frankly speaking, in comparison with other subjects in social sciences, language training requires the use of technology even more. There are many benefits to using technology in a foreign language classroom. It can increase motivation, decrease anxiety, facilitate more student-centered activities, and provide students with authentic audio and visual materials. Educational technology enriches learning in the teaching environment [1, p.25].

According to Dr. Vildan, in language education, where we develop four skills of language such as: listening, speaking, reading, and writing power of new technologies is limitless. The use of audio and visual E-Tools is becoming widespread in foreign language classrooms. English language teachers are now taking innovative steps to integrate technology into their teaching environments, with a wide variety of choices available [2].

While decreasing the significance of the computer itself as a platform for information delivery, Web 2.0 continues to develop new ways for large groups of people to interact and exchange information [3].

In Kazakhstan, learning English can be challenging for students of all ages. Some teachers may struggle to explain the nuances of English grammar and pronunciation, especially for Kazakh and Russian-speaking students. This challenge arises because we live in a non-English speaking country, both teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Knowing the basic grammar and correct pronunciation of words does not guarantee that learners can express their ideas, thoughts, or sentences clearly in the English language [4].

Comparing the teaching of English to Russian-speaking learners and Kazakh-speaking learners with teaching Russian or Kazakh presents more challenging obstacles. Students may become disinterested in learning English for various reasons. Young learners are often unaware of the importance of acquiring this globally spoken language. They may struggle to find and engage in conversations with native speakers from English-speaking countries, leading to difficulties in understanding English content, whether it be a book, text, or video material. The English they learn in secondary schools, universities, or courses may differ from natural spoken English. While British

English is usually taught, encountering various accents and dialects during conversations with foreigners can be confusing for students. Another weakness of our teaching method is the overemphasis on overused word constructions, collocations, and sentence structures. Consequently, the English found in textbooks may differ from that of native speakers.

Research conducted by the Kazakhstani scholar A. Toleuzhan and her colleagues on the usage of Web 2.0 applications in enhancing EFL learners' speaking skills provides interesting data. They conducted experimental work at schools for gifted children in the central part of Kazakhstan, revealing that the use of the Web 2.0 tool, YouTube, helped advance learners' oral production. The participants demonstrated a positive attitude towards using educational YouTube videos to develop their speaking skills. They highlighted that the main reason for the positive perception of educational YouTube videos by secondary school students lies in the platform's ability to make the process of language acquisition easy and enjoyable [5, 6].

Research conducted within the undergraduate education course at L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University provides data on the outcomes of the implementation of the technological approach in the preparation of future English language teachers. The research, conducted among 1st-year undergraduate degree students aged between 20 and 35, proves the effectiveness of implementing Web 2.0 applications in EFL classroom. Overall, Kazakhstani and foreign research emphasize the importance of the right implementation of Web 2.0 applications in teaching English as a foreign language [7, 8].

The aim of using Web 2.0 tools is to overcome struggles and create more interesting and involving methods of teaching English to Kazakhstani learners. Traditional classroom materials primarily consist of static, text-based resources, including main course books, workbooks, lecture notes, and handouts. These resources are largely static, making it the duty of EFL teachers to inject life and engagement into their classroom settings [9].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Design

This study adopted a quantitative research approach employing a cross-sectional survey for data collection. To achieve this, the survey was conducted online, utilizing an anonymous questionnaire developed to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions of using Web 2.0 services and their impact on learners as an effective method for teaching and learning English as a foreign language.

Participants

The participants comprised 32 EFL teachers from 7 countries: Kazakhstan (23), Indonesia (2), Afghanistan (1), the USA (2), Canada (1), South Africa (1), and Russia (2 participants). They were randomly selected by sending a questionnaire link to thematic Facebook groups for EFL teachers and educational organizations. However, it was important to ensure that they teach English as a Foreign Language in their classrooms, as explained by a brief description of the questionnaire at the beginning. The group consisted of both male (33.3%) and female (66.7%) participants, each with at least 1-2 years of work experience and academic degrees in the field of education. Participants' ages ranged from 18-24 to the 45-54 age group. Additionally, it was essential to confirm that participants were familiar with Web 2.0 applications and had some experience using them in teaching and learning.

Instrument

A comprehensive questionnaire was developed based on the literature review. The questionnaire comprised two sections and was posted online in the English language.

Section 1 focused on collecting demographic data, including gender, working experience, and the frequency of using Web 2.0 services in everyday classrooms.

Section 2 contained 5 questions examining four indicators: teachers' perception of Web 2.0 tools and services, the impact of Web 2.0 applications on learners' performance, the extent to which teachers want to use Web 2.0 tools and services, and the actual usage of Web 2.0 tools and services. For the last question, a ten-point Likert scale was used to measure the questionnaire item. As we

know a Likert scale is a rating scale used to measure opinions, attitudes, or behaviors. It consists of a statement or a question, followed by a series of five or seven answer statements [10]. The items for the first and second indicators were ranked from strongly agree (10) to strongly disagree (1), with undecided as the middle point (5). Items for the third and fourth indicators were ranked from always (10) to never (1), and neutral was used as the middle point (5).

Data collection

The study employed a specially developed questionnaire to address the four research questions. Data were collected from 33 participants through random sampling, including both pre-service and in-service EFL teachers from various secondary schools and universities. The questionnaire was deployed online using Google Forms, and the link was sent to randomly selected participants. Recipients were requested to fill in the questionnaire and informed that participation in the study was voluntary, with no obligation to take part.

Data analysis

Using the summary from Google Forms, descriptive statistics and independent sample t-tests were employed to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics were utilized for calculating the overall mean scores of the different investigated variables. The independent sample t-tests were applied to compare male and female participants, as well as to assess the use of Web 2.0 applications based on years of experience and country of origin in using computers and the internet.

Research questions

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do EFL teachers use Web 2.0 applications?
2. Is there a significant difference in the usage of Web 2.0 tools among EFL teachers from different countries? (Kazakhstan, Russia, the USA, Indonesia, South Africa, Canada, and Afghanistan)
3. Is there a significant difference between male and female users of Web 2.0 applications?
4. Is there a significant difference among Web 2.0 users based on their work experience and academic degree?

RESULTS

As Figure 1 shows, the years of EFL teachers' work experience vary from two to more than 11 years. The majority of EFL teachers with less than 2 years of work experience come from Kazakhstan.

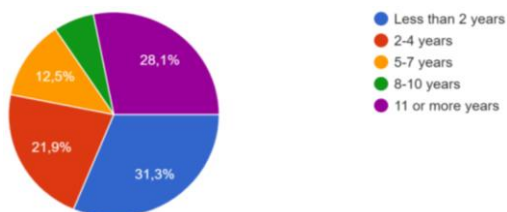


Figure 1. EFL teachers' work experience

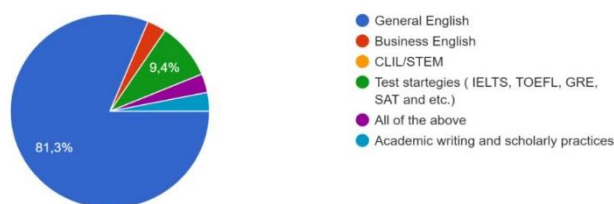


Figure 2. Types of English

According to our research, 68.8% of them (22 participants) teach secondary school students, 15.6% (5 participants) teach undergraduate students, and 9.4% (3 participants) teach postgraduate students. Only one female participant in the age group 45-54 from the USA, Lanesboro, Massachusetts, has mentioned that she teaches both K-12 and college students.

From Figure 2, we see that 81.3% (27 EFL teachers) use Web 2.0 services to teach general English. Three EFL teachers use Web 2.0 tools to teach test strategies, one of whom teaches Business English. Additionally, one female participant in the age group 45-54, originally from South Africa and currently working in Astana, Kazakhstan, has mentioned using E-tools to teach academic writing and scholarly practices to postgraduate students.

Figure 3 provides information about the frequency of Web 2.0 tools usage by EFL teachers in their classrooms. From the questionnaire responses, we observe that 62.5% (20 participants) of EFL teachers use Web 2.0 tools in almost every lesson. Additionally, 21.9% (7 participants) prefer to use Web 2.0 applications once a week, 9.4% (3 participants) use them once a month, and one participant never uses any E-tools in her classroom, while another participant uses E-tools depending on the contract.

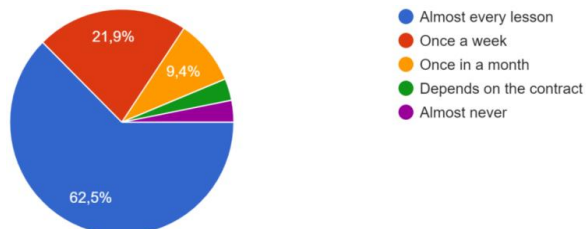
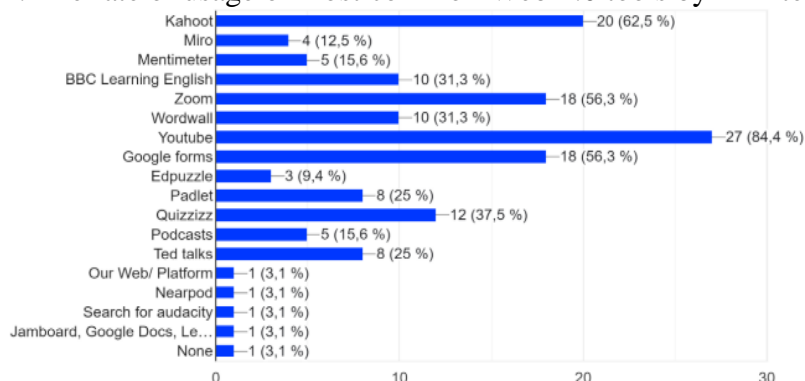


Figure 3. The frequency of usage of Web2.0 applications in the EFL classrooms

Table 1 illustrates the types of Web 2.0 applications well-known among EFL teachers from 7 countries. YouTube is the most popular E-tool among EFL teachers; almost all participants use it in their EFL classrooms to teach English to their students. In the second place stands Kahoot. In conclusion, Zoom and Google Forms apps take the third place.

Table 1. The rate of usage of most common Web 2.0 tools by EFL teachers



DISCUSSION

Based on the results presented above, this section discusses the findings of the study. The results indicate that teachers in the age group between 18-24 years old use more Web 2.0 technologies in their EFL classrooms. From the questionnaire responses, it is evident that teachers with less work experience use Web 2.0 applications in almost every lesson. Teachers who face obstacles in using computers and modern technology in their classrooms, due to organizations not providing enough computers in every classroom, use fewer Web 2.0 tools in their classrooms [11]. Well-experienced teachers from foreign countries and local cities prefer to use E-tools once a week. Regarding the differences between male and female users of E-tools, there is no significant difference between them. Both genders prefer to use E-tools at least once a week in their EFL classrooms. However, there is a significant difference in the usage of Web 2.0 applications among Kazakhstani, Russian, Afghan, Indonesian, Canadian, and South African, American teachers. The first group of teachers strongly believes that using any E-tools can immediately make their lessons involving and interesting for students. There are some responses from Kazakhstani and Russian teachers to the question: **Do you believe that using E-Tools in EFL classrooms can be an effective way to teach English to students in your country?**

1. *Yes, I completely believe. E-tools help to keep students' interest in the subject.* (Female participant, in the age group 35-44 years old from Russia, Kamensk-Uralskiy. Bachelor's degree teaches general English to undergraduate students with 5-7 years of work experience.)
2. *Of course. It is interesting and very useful for students.* (Female participant, in the age group 45-54 from Kazakhstan, Almaty. Bachelor's degree teaches general English for undergraduate students with 10 years of work experience.)

There are, of course, more responses, and almost all of them claim that using E-tools is a good supplement for a bad curriculum and can help EFL teachers make their lessons more interesting and engaging. The highly used tools among them are Kahoot, YouTube, Google Forms, Quizzizz, and Zoom. Some responses come from teachers who live in small villages or remote areas with low internet connections. They mention that they would use more Web 2.0 tools in their EFL classrooms if there were a good internet connection. Let's take a look at responses from teachers in the USA and South Africa. Both of them worked in Kazakhstan to teach Kazakhstani students both offline and online.

1. *It can be effective depending on who's using them and how they are exploiting the methodology to make sure that the skills-based lesson is taught. I have seen people use the technology for just technology without any substance or content and I don't think that's okay. There has to be a reason that the tool is being used the best benefit the learner.* (Female participant, in the age group 45-54 from Lanesboro, Massachusetts, The USA. Doctorate, teaching English as a Foreign Language for more than 11 years. Uses Web 2.0 tools depending on the contract and teaches K-12 and college students. In her classroom prefers to use Padlet, Ted Talks, Podcasts, YouTube, and Wordwall.)

2. *Yes, if you use the tools to facilitate student engagement, extend their learning, and consolidate their understanding.* However, if you use it only because it creates interest, then it is not a pedagogical tool. Not all E-tools can be pedagogical, and teachers need to understand the difference. (Female participant in the age group 45-54 from South Africa, but works now in Astana. Doctorate, teaching Academic writing and scholarly practices to graduate students with work experience of more than 11 years. In her classroom prefers to use Mentimeter, Google Forms, Zoom, YouTube, and Kahoot. From these responses, we see, that American and South African teachers use Web 2.0 tools only for specific reasons and are highly accurate to use them in their EFL classrooms to improve certain skills. Padlet and Mentimeter are highly used E-Tools among of them.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study examines how Web 2.0 tools are used in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), with a specific focus on teachers' perspectives in various countries. The findings reveal that the majority of EFL teachers, especially those with less work experience, actively incorporate Web 2.0 applications in their classrooms, emphasizing the potential of these tools to enhance language skills. The study highlights the increasing significance of modern technology in education, specifically in language training, where it can motivate students, reduce anxiety, and provide access to authentic materials. Effective use of these e-tools depends on how they are implemented, requiring the right teaching method and clear language teaching goals [12].

Challenges in teaching English in non-English-speaking countries, such as Kazakhstan, are identified, including issues related to pronunciation, exposure to native speakers, and differences between taught and natural spoken English. The study underscores the aim of using Web 2.0 tools to overcome these challenges and create more engaging teaching methods. The research also provides insights into the types and frequency of Web 2.0 tools used by EFL teachers, with YouTube, Kahoot, Zoom, and Google Forms being among the most popular choices. Hallem asserts that the globalization of education has already required the use of digital technologies. Online platforms become accessible for conducting classes, sharing resources, conducting assessments, and managing day-to-day activities in academic institutions [13].

The study's quantitative approach, employing a questionnaire, helps to assess teachers' perceptions and usage patterns. Results indicate a positive attitude among teachers towards the

effectiveness of Web 2.0 tools in enhancing language skills, with variations based on factors like work experience and country of origin. The findings emphasize the need for effective implementation of these tools in teaching English as a foreign language.

In summary, the study contributes valuable insights into the role of Web 2.0 tools in EFL education, shedding light on their potential benefits, challenges, and the preferences of teachers. As technology continues to play a pivotal role in education, further research and ongoing exploration of innovative teaching methods will be essential for maximizing the positive impact of Web 2.0 tools in language classrooms.

Teachers and technology play crucial roles in education. However, it is essential to impart the right methodology for teaching English as a foreign language through Web 2.0 applications, making it a mandatory aspect of EFL teacher education worldwide [14].

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Ағылшын тілін шет тіл ретінде оқытуда Web 2.0 құралдарын пайдалану

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Мақаланың мақсаты-Web 2.0 құралдарының ағылшын тілін шет тілі ретінде оқытын студенттердің тілдік дағдыларын арттырудағы рөлін зерттеу. Қазіргі уақытта Web 2.0 әсіресе жастар арасында байланыс және ақпарат алмасу үшін қолайлы ортаға айналууда. Web 2.0 құралдары ыңғайлы, жүктеуге оңай, ақысыз немесе арзан және әртүрлі контексте пайдалануға дайын. Бұл бүкіл әлемдегі көптеген оқытушыларды осы технологияларды білім беру саласында қолданудың мүмкін жолдарын зерттеуге итермелейді. Бұл зерттеу деректерді жинау үшін сауалнаманы қолдана отырып, сандық зерттеу әдісін қолданады. Сауалнама мұғалімдердің Web 2.0 қосымшаларын ағылшын тілін шет тілі ретінде оқыту әдісі ретінде қабылдауын зерттеуге арналған. Нәтижелер Web 2.0-ге және оны оқушылардың тілдік дағдыларын жақсарту үшін қолдануға қатысты мұғалімдердің өзін-өзі қабылдауының жоғары екендігін көрсетеді, бұл олардың білім берудегі Web 2.0 маңыздылығы мен артықшылықтарын түсінуімен түсіндіріледі.

Кілт сөздер: веб-технология, тілдік дағдылар, сандық құрал, оқыту, ұстаз.

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Использование Web 2.0 инструментов в обучении английскому языку как иностранному

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Цель настоящей статьи – исследовать роль, которую инструменты Web 2.0 могут сыграть в повышении продуктивных и восприимчивых языковых навыков студентов, изучающих английский как иностранный. В настоящее время Web 2.0 становится

предпочтительной средой для общения, совместной работы и обмена информацией, особенно среди молодежи. Инструменты Web 2.0 удобны, просты в использовании, бесплатны или недороги и готовы к использованию в различных контекстах. Это побуждает многих преподавателей по всему миру изучать возможные способы применения этих технологий в сфере образования. В этом исследовании используется количественный исследовательский подход с использованием анкеты для сбора данных. Анкета предназначена для изучения восприятия учителями использования приложений Web 2.0 в качестве метода преподавания английского языка как иностранного. Результаты свидетельствуют о высоком самовосприятии учителей в отношении Web 2.0 и его использования для улучшения языковых навыков учащихся, что объясняется их осознанием важности и преимуществ Web 2.0 в образовании.

Ключевые слова: веб-технологии, языковые навыки, цифровой инструмент, обучение, педагог.

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USING MIND MAPPING FOR TEACHING VOCABULARY AND WRITING AT ENGLISH LESSONS AT THE UNIVERSITY

The article presents the study of the effects of employing mind-mapping techniques to improve students' vocabulary and writing. The aim of the article is to show how effective mind mapping technique can help to teach vocabulary and writing at the English lessons. Teaching vocabulary and writing skills are difficult areas for English language teachers. They are constantly trying to find effective techniques to help learners to memorize new words and improve essay writing. The relevance of this work is seen in the need to help English teachers to upgrade their teaching methods and make the learning process easier for learners. It is a nice technique that can help to enrich students' vocabulary and improve writing skills, because it enables them to arrange the facts and ideas. The results of the analysis showed that mind mapping technology has many benefits and advantages for students. Learning new vocabulary with the help of mind maps was more effective than using traditional memorizing and note-taking. Constructing mind maps helped students to achieve better results in essay writing, especially expressing their opinions and producing well-organized ideas in written form.

Key words: mind maps, writing skills, vocabulary, reading, creative strategy, mind mapping technique, critical thinking

MAIN PROVISIONS

Mind maps are a modern tool that enables teachers and students to get the most out of their learning experience. This technique can help teachers to enrich their teaching methods and make the learning process more interesting and effective.

Modern teaching process requires useful and creative techniques. Nowadays many teachers are constantly trying to find effective tools to use them in teaching writing and vocabulary. These areas,