

Using Online Tools in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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ABSTRACT

Reaching the mastery of a foreign language is vital in this globalized world; therefore, the aim of this study is to provide important data that can help teachers choose the most productive online tools to help their students learn English using technology in a dynamic manner. This article presents a literature review that utilizes a qualitative method about the use of online tools for the EFL classroom. To locate the publications that met the researcher's criteria, a search of articles was conducted in the Google Scholar database, with an emphasis on the abstract, results, and conclusions. One of the biggest benefits of using Internet resources for teaching and studying English is their flexibility. The analysis of online resources reveals that they have contributed to the development of supportive and competitive environments that have improved speaking abilities, pronunciation, and fluency. They have also helped people find ideas for sentences more quickly when speaking, increase motivation, encourage peer learning, broaden their vocabulary knowledge through reading, engage in conversation, and lessen their fear. Besides, they demonstrate that using the tools effectively has presented some barriers for students, but practice and instruction have helped them get past these obstacles and achieve learning.

Keywords: *english; online; teaching; technology; tools.*

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Uso de Herramientas en Línea en la Enseñanza de Inglés como Lengua Extranjera

RESUMEN

Dominar una lengua extranjera es vital en este mundo globalizado; por lo tanto, el objetivo de este estudio es proporcionar información importante para ayudar a los profesores a elegir las herramientas en línea más productivas para que sus estudiantes aprendan inglés utilizando la tecnología de manera dinámica. Este artículo presenta una revisión de la literatura que utiliza un método cualitativo sobre el uso de herramientas en línea para el aula de inglés como lengua extranjera. Para localizar las publicaciones que cumplieron con los criterios del investigador, se realizó una búsqueda de artículos en la base de datos Google Scholar, con énfasis en el resumen, resultados y conclusiones. Uno de los mayores beneficios de utilizar recursos de Internet para enseñar y estudiar inglés es su flexibilidad. El análisis de estos recursos en línea revela que han contribuido al desarrollo de entornos competitivos y de apoyo que han mejorado las habilidades para hablar, la pronunciación y la fluidez. También han ayudado a crear oraciones más rápidamente al hablar, aumentar la motivación, fomentar el aprendizaje entre pares, ampliar el conocimiento de vocabulario mediante la lectura, entablar conversaciones y disminuir su miedo. Además, demuestran que su uso ha presentado algunas barreras para los estudiantes, pero la práctica les ha ayudado a superar estos obstáculos y lograr el aprendizaje.

Palabras clave: inglés; en línea; enseñar; tecnología; herramientas.

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INTRODUCTION

The incorporation of online resources has emerged as a revolutionary force in the field of English instruction in today's quickly expanding educational scene. As the world becomes more interconnected, competence in the English language has become not just a valued talent, but also a requirement for people of all ages and backgrounds. Traditional methods of teaching English have grown beyond the constraints of physical classrooms with the development of digital technology, resulting in a new era of language training. Thus, technology plays an essential role in English language learning and teaching (Williams, 2016). This trend emphasizes the critical necessity of using Internet technologies in English teaching, as they provide educators and students with unparalleled opportunities to improve language acquisition, engage with varied resources, and foster a worldwide viewpoint.

Because technology is constantly evolving, language teachers will need to grow and upgrade their technological skills in order to keep up with the latest changes in ICTs. As a result, EFL teachers' ICT competencies should be enhanced (Malinina, 2015).

According to Cooperman (2017), it is vital for online teachers to understand technology or have a technical background in order to employ new technologies that can be delivered in teaching online both effectively and efficiently. Each digital skill that instructors have learned is undoubtedly related to the development of their teaching, whether in online or face-to-face classrooms (Morris, 2002).

Students can undoubtedly learn English by utilizing technology, as there are many different kinds of technology, both new and old, that promote English language teaching.

This article examines different online tools that can be used in this dynamic environment.

METHODOLOGY

This section describes the methodologies employed in the current article review. It discusses research design in terms of selecting research papers for sampling, data collection, and analysis to summarize a review of publications.

The current study is a theoretical review that utilizes a qualitative method to learn about various online tools that can be used in the EFL classroom. A search in the Google Scholar database was performed to collect the articles that were part of the literary review; with a temporal delimitation of the last 5 years

(2018-2023); citable documents, and type of literature (articles). The search took place in the month of October 2023.

Following the end of the search using the aforementioned criteria, extra emphasis was placed on titles related to online tools in teaching English. The overview (abstract), results, and conclusion of each paper were examined in order to pick those that fit the investigation's requirements. Articles published before 2018, as well as those whose technique was applied to online tools in a different subject, were expressly removed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this literature review, 10 articles were included that referred to the aforementioned criteria. This sample is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Analyzed sample

Database	Year of publication	Authors	Title	Online tool
Scholar Google	2020	Samad & Ismail	ELSA Speak Application as a Supporting Media in Enhancing Students' Pronunciation Skill	Elsa speak
Scholar Google	2023	Pham	The English Majored Students' Perceptions of Using Flipgrid in Online Speaking Classrooms	Flipgrid
Scholar Google	2018	Islam	Bangladeshi university students' perception about using Google classroom for teaching English	Google Classroom
Scholar Google	2021	Oktaria, Rohmayadevi & Murwantono	Online Game Quiz "Kahoot" in Teaching English for Students of Smp Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta	Kahoot
Scholar Google	2020	Wong & Yunus	Enhancing writing vocabulary using Mentimeter	Mentimeter
Scholar Google	2019	Rashid, Yunus & Wahi.	Using Padlet for collaborative writing among ESL learners	Padlet
Scholar Google	2020	Amalia	Quizizz website as an online assessment for English teaching and learning: Students' perspectives	Quizizz

Scholar Google	2021	Fithriyah	Fostering Students' Positive Attitude Towards Reading Comprehension Through ReadWorks	Readworks
Scholar Google	2023	Umar, Rahman, Mandarsari, Mawarwati, & Amir.	Using Word Wall Website As A Strategy To Improve Students' Vocabulary Mastery	Wordwall
Scholar Google	2021	Syafiq, Rahmawati, Anwari, & Oktaviana.	Increasing speaking skills through YouTube videos as English learning material during online learning in pandemic covid-19	Youtube

The results of the literary review are described below:

Crane (2012) argued that teaching tools for teaching and learning with technology are ideal for students learning English because they provide them opportunities to use authentic language and be actively engaged in learning by motivating them to listen, speak, read, and write.

That's why Samad et al. (2020) aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the ELSA Speak Application in enhancing students' pronunciation skills. It utilized a quantitative approach with a pre-experimental research design. The study focused on first-semester students in the English study program at STKIP Muhammadiyah Enrekang during the 2018/2019 academic year. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, specifically those who were enrolled in a pronunciation course at the time.

Data collection involved pre-test and post-test recordings, and statistical analysis of the results. The findings indicated that the pre-test scores averaged 1.96, while the mean after the test was 5.79, with a significance level of 0.05 at 29 degrees (29). The t-test result of 6.28 surpassed the t-table value of 1.699, suggesting that the use of the ELSA Speak application effectively improved the pronunciation skills of these first-semester students at STKIP Muhammadiyah Enrekang.

Pham, Q. A. (2023) explored how university students perceive the use of Flipgrid in online speaking classrooms. The study involved first-year students from Van Lang University's Foreign Language Department. The findings indicated that students saw Flipgrid as a collaborative platform that reduced

anxiety compared to traditional face-to-face presentations. High-achieving students valued Flipgrid's pronunciation improvement benefits more than lower-achieving students.

The research used both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of students' experiences. While online speaking can be challenging due to a lack of social interaction, Flipgrid created a supportive environment for students to express themselves and enhance their speaking skills. High and low achievers had similar views on Flipgrid's user-friendliness but differed in their perceptions of its pronunciation correction and fluency improvement benefits, likely due to variations in learning strategies and motivation.

The study's limitations included a relatively small sample size and a focus on students' perceptions. Overall, Flipgrid has the potential to enhance online speaking classes when effectively utilized by instructors.

Sadeque (2018) explored the potential of Google Classroom as an innovative online learning platform for teaching English at the university level in Bangladesh. It investigates how Bangladeshi university students perceive the use of Google Classroom to improve their English language skills and addresses the challenges they face while using it.

The study involved 60 students from Daffodil International University, where the use of Google Classroom is mandatory across all departments. These students were enrolled in a "Basic English" course during their first semester, which integrated all four communication skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking.

Data was collected through an electronic survey using Google Forms, consisting of two sections. The first section had 20 prompts for students to rate their agreement or disagreement on their experiences with Google Classroom. The second section included two questions seeking their personal opinions on using Google Classroom for learning English. Additionally, students' comments and problems shared on Google Classroom's stream (timeline) were considered.

The research revealed that while students saw benefits in using Google Classroom for learning English, they also faced challenges, primarily related to a lack of proper technological knowledge and training. Many students lacked essential knowledge of Google Classroom's functions and encountered technical

issues, particularly when submitting assignments. The study suggests that proper training in Google Classroom can enhance performance.

Furthermore, students identified technological barriers, such as the absence of private messaging, domain-related email issues, and concerns about cheating. These issues could be addressed by the Google technical team.

The study also highlights the prospects and techniques for successful English language learning through Google Classroom, emphasizing collaborative learning opportunities.

In addition, Oktaria et al. (2021) investigated how using the Kahoot online application in English classrooms can impact student motivation and improve English vocabulary development. The study involves 30 junior high school students from SMP Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta and one English teacher. The research includes training for the teacher on using Kahoot's online application, followed by students using Kahoot for their daily online quizzes over a week. Data collection involves questionnaires for both students and the teacher to assess their perceptions of Kahoot's effectiveness and its influence on motivation.

The results suggest that utilizing Kahoot as a learning tool significantly boosts student motivation and enhances English learning achievement. The study recommends thorough preparation for implementing Kahoot, teacher involvement in providing character-based lessons, ongoing professional development for teachers to improve their Kahoot-based teaching strategies, and continuous follow-up to assess achievement and address any issues.

Miin Wong et al. (2020) explored the effectiveness of using Mentimeter, an online platform, to improve the writing vocabulary of students. Mentimeter allowed students to collaborate with peers and teachers regardless of time and location, potentially expanding their vocabulary and aiding in writing tasks. The study, following the Kemmis and McTaggart model, involved 40 students with low passing rates. Pre and post-tests, questionnaires, and interviews were used. Results showed a significant improvement in test scores and positive feedback from students, suggesting that Mentimeter is a valuable tool for enhancing writing vocabulary. However, the study's focus was limited to a specific group, and further research is needed to confirm its effectiveness for a broader population. This research can be helpful for educators considering the use of Mentimeter in teaching writing vocabulary.

Furthermore, the use of an interactive online application called Padlet can improve collaborative writing in a language course, according to qualitative research done by Rashid et al. (2019). The study involved 87 language course students (level 3; modest users) from a public institution in Malaysia. Document analysis was employed in conjunction with a variety of qualitative survey questions. Throughout the semester, several assignments were created using Padlet. The tasks were given out in class and on the university's online learning management system. The URL to each student's class wall, where they can post their responses or remarks, was sent to the students.

Students' posts were examined for language use, language proficiency, and comprehension using the Google Forms questionnaire. To evaluate students' commitment to the activities, teamwork, and language use and development, the researcher used observations of the class. In addition to one-on-one interactions with learners, the researcher also gathered data from classroom discussions and online student participation. According to the findings, Padlet engages students to participate in class activities, reduces fear, encourages interaction among class members and the instructor, and enhances language correctness through peer learning. This online learning tool could be utilized effectively in an undergraduate course to improve collaborative writing among lower-competency ESL learners.

Amalia (2020) carried out a descriptive qualitative study to evaluate students' attitudes toward using Quizizz as an online formative assessment tool for English teaching and learning. The study's subjects were 20 students from the Dynamic English Course who were chosen using a purposive sampling method since the researcher was interested in the perceptions of both groups, students with above-average scores and students with below-average scores. The data was gathered by having students complete a 10-question questionnaire. The Likert Scale was used to analyze the data.

Overall, the study's findings revealed that students had favorable attitudes toward the use of Quizizz. Students specifically agreed that Quizizz has an appealing display that is exciting and fun, that they cannot cheat during the test, that Quizizz fosters a competitive environment in the classroom, and that Quizizz is superior to the offline traditional formative test.

Fithriyah (2021) conducted a descriptive quantitative study on ReadWorks usage. An open-ended questionnaire was given to 38 students from an Islamic senior high school majoring in language studies. During the four weeks, students were given an article to read before attending class and completing the

homework. The teacher established the task submission deadline, which was usually three days before the Zoom meeting. They could look at key vocabulary words, definitions, sample phrases, and images. They could also return to the content after completing the multiple-choice and short written comprehension questions about the segment. Learners could look up their scores after the meeting.

The findings revealed that the pupils overwhelmingly favored this online resource and instructions. It shifted their perspective on the reading process. It includes a systematic focus on vocabulary fluency, background development, pace control, and training to be independent readers. As a result, their vocabulary fluency and reading motivation improved, increasing their natural desire to learn. Their motivation will increase if the teacher and student collaborate to discuss issues that they are interested in. Students who are extremely motivated are more likely to improve their reading skills over time through constant practice. They continued to respond correctly to the teacher's questions from the text discussion, even though there were no appreciable score changes for the comprehension questions during the exercise.

Umar et al. (2023) researched the use of Wordwall with a quantitative approach. The study was done for a month with two classes of 27 students each, who were selected randomly. The instruments used consisted of a pre-test, a treatment, and a post-test. There were 10 multiple-choice questions with four possible answers on the pre-test. The following five questions involved word pairing, word arrangement, and word interpretation. This exam was administered at the first meeting, and on subsequent ones, the researcher used a Wordwall website activity she had devised to carry out the teaching-learning process. The assignment involved guessing word meanings, matching words, completing crossword puzzles, and filling in blanks. After each performance, there was an evaluation and feedback. The researcher administered a post-test to the students at the last meeting to compare their vocabulary competence following the treatment.

The use of the Wordwall website as a teaching tool yielded positive outcomes in terms of students' vocabulary knowledge, as evidenced by the fact that the mean of the post-test scores was higher than the mean of the pre-test scores. The post-test mean was 85.56, while the pre-test mean was 55.41. Therefore, in conclusion, the use of the Wordwall website is useful in enhancing the vocabulary knowledge of beginning students.

To help first-semester college students at the Muhammadiyah University of Kudus with their speaking abilities, Syafiq et al. (2021) did a classroom action research study. 85 students, who were the participants, were selected by purposive sampling. Speaking assessment and interview data were collected, and they were then subjected to continual comparative analysis and descriptive statistics. This study found that using YouTube videos as English learning resources helped students speak more fluently and with better vocabulary, pronunciation, syntax, and content.

Additionally, using YouTube videos to teach speaking boosts students' motivation to learn in speaking classes because they offer both visual and aural cues. This allows students to improve their pronunciation, expand their vocabulary, and find ideas for sentences more quickly when speaking. Also, watching movies enables students' automatic acquisition of grammar. Besides, YouTube may be an excellent resource for teaching speaking skills and aiding in the comprehension of lessons for students enrolled in online courses. As a result, using YouTube to help students overcome their challenges with comprehending English, particularly while speaking in virtual classes, can be an effective strategy.

CONCLUSION

All in all, the incorporation of online resources into English language teaching has shown to be a revolutionary and important resource. As technology progresses, so does our ability to connect, learn, and grow. Online tools make it easier to access a multitude of information and resources, while also encouraging dynamic and interesting learning experiences. The possibilities are infinite, from interactive language apps to virtual classrooms.

The adaptability of online tools for teaching and learning English is one of its most significant advantages. Learners may easily access materials, adjust their learning pace, and personalize their learning routes. Furthermore, the interactive aspect of online technologies, such as video conferencing and gamified sessions, makes language learning more engaging and pleasurable.

While the advantages of online resources in English language instruction are obvious, it is important to recognize the value of a balanced approach. Traditional educational methods, such as in-person classes and printed materials, are still valuable and can supplement the accessible digital resources.

Thus, online tools have transformed English language education and learning by providing accessibility, flexibility, and involvement. As students and teachers continue to investigate these innovative resources,

it is essential to achieve a balance between traditional and digital approaches to provide comprehensive and effective language learning experiences. The future of English language education will surely be digital, but it will be based on effective teaching, cultural sensitivity, and an attitude to lifelong learning.

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