Strategies of Teaching English for Specific Purposes in the Post-Pandemic Era

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Abstract: *The world we live in is almost technological. Due to its omnipresence, the strategies of teaching have changed dramatically in recent years. Nowadays, practical courses are totally different from what they used to be, and the COVID pandemic accelerated the use of technology when it comes to teaching, regardless of the subject.*

As an overwhelming amount of data stored on computers is in English, it stands to reason that English proficiency is becoming increasingly important.

The use of technology has revolutionised the teaching and acquisition of languages, as there have appeared many platforms, applications, and web resources for facilitating oral speech skills, grammar, and vocabulary. The access to various topics presented by native speakers has allowed learners to overcome time and space barriers.

In this paper, we present several strategies used for teaching students at a technical university using technology, be it via interactive tablets, digital resources, or innovative exercises that were seen to challenge the students so that they willingly and creatively took part in the ESP courses.

Keywords: *post-pandemic era; teaching; English for Specific Purposes; technology; online; apps;*

Introduction

The tactics of teaching have seen a significant transformation in recent years due to their pervasiveness. The COVID pandemic has increased the use of technology in teaching across all subjects, and practical courses now are completely different from what they were in the past.

It makes sense that having a strong command of English is vital because the vast majority of data kept on computers is in that language.

Numerous platforms, applications, and web-based resources for enhancing oral speech skills, grammar, and vocabulary have emerged as a result of the extensive use of technology in language instruction and acquisition. Access to a variety of topics presented by native speakers has allowed students to overcome barriers of time and space.

It is clear that adapting and changing are not options; they are prerequisites. Humans have extremely social adaptations, claims evolutionary researcher Tomasello (Tomasello 106). We cooperate with other local,

regional, national, and international groups as well as with our own families. According to Vygotskian theories on human development, participation in our sociocultural contexts is crucial for the development of our "uniquely human forms of thinking."

One of the cultural goods and tools we use in our interactions in sociocultural situations is language. These serve as a mediator in our interactions with others and the outer world.

The language used in language classes is sometimes considered to be both the subject of study and the method by which language acquisition is accomplished.

Concerns are being made regarding the calibre of instruction that English language learners receive as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic forcing schools and universities all over the world to use distance learning.

With the COVID-19 Pandemic, ESP lessons and other educational services have been delivered online. The teacher's responsibilities have changed from being the only source of knowledge to being the activity's facilitator, manager, and assessor.

Discussions

Virtually everything is now digital. Daily tasks, such as purchasing tickets, booking a hotel room, ordering food and beverages, and reserving local transportation, can now be performed online with the quickest possible services.

To meet the demand for highly qualified human resources, everyone, regardless of educational level, must be endowed with digital literacy in order to thrive in the highly competitive digital era. The *fundamental competencies of digital literacy* are outlined below (Bates 622). He asserts the significance of the following matters:

- To have communication skills: in addition to reading, speaking, and writing clearly and coherently, there must be social media communication skills—being able to make the best use of social media for promotional purposes and control and distribution of information; to be able to learn independently: this means being aware of what is required; and how to fulfil the requirements; without being told what to do in response to the emergence of a new requirement; to be able to adapt to change.

- To have ethics and responsibility: trust has become a crucial asset of an individual as a member of social networking, despite various business competitors relying on others to complete a variety of tasks; to be skilled in teamwork and flexibility: collaboration, knowledge sharing, and teamwork are essential despite an individual's professionalism in his or her job. Everyone in a company must be flexible enough to assume the responsibilities of others. Thus, the ability to perform both online and offline contributes significantly to

one's career success. In hectic times, tasks are frequently distributed equally among employees, regardless of their professional talents and abilities, in order to achieve the company's vision.

- To work with consumers and/or partners, interpersonal skills are necessary. No one shall refuse to perform any conceivable task; to possess critical thinking skills, one must expose novelty or something novel. Year after year, new product varieties are introduced to the market. Without creative employees, it is impossible for businesses to remain competitive. Colleges face the challenge of equipping their graduates with these non-management-level skills. Instead, the most desired production lines are those that require critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. It is therefore essential to distinguish oneself from the competition in terms of contributions to the company's sustainable objectives.

- To be proficient in teamwork and adaptability: collaboration, knowledge sharing, and cooperation are indispensable to an employee's individual professionalism. Everyone in a company must be flexible enough to assume the responsibilities of others. Thus, the ability to perform both online and offline contributes significantly to one's career success. In hectic times, tasks are frequently distributed equally among employees, regardless of their professional talents and abilities, in order to achieve the company's vision. To work with consumers and/or partners, interpersonal skills are necessary. No one may decline to perform any conceivable task;

- To develop cognitive abilities, one must be exposed to something novel or unique. Year after year, new product varieties are introduced to the market. Without creative employees, it is impossible for businesses to remain competitive. Colleges face the challenge of equipping their graduates with these non-management-level skills. Instead, the most desired production lines are those that require critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. It is therefore essential to distinguish oneself from the competition in terms of contributions to the company's sustainable objectives.

- To possess digital skills: as everything has been digitised, technology has replaced manual working systems. Therefore, workers are required to have basic-to-advanced digital literacy in order to comply with the job(s) assigned by management. These may include regulating and operating robotic instruments, monitoring sales trends across various geographies, and integrating subject matter expertise;

- To be proficient in knowledge management: technology changes rapidly in response to immediate product diversification requirements. It is erroneous to presume that colleges can teach the necessary workplace skills. As daily technological updates and enhancements are implemented, learning will occur regardless of time or location. Importantly, it is the management and engineering of information to support the company's evolving requirements

(Bates 622). The above competencies must be incorporated into ESP instruction. The students' communication skills (presenting and debating) would be enhanced by assigning them a 'presentation' task. They must determine the information required for the presentation through Internet research and close reading. They must also be conversant with the operation of a variety of classroom management-related devices. They must be proficient in word processing and PowerPoint presentation creation. As digital natives, students will find it easy to adopt and acclimatise to digital technology advancements.

The *fundamental competencies of digital literacy* are:
- To be proficient in teamwork and adaptability;
- To develop cognitive abilities, one must be exposed to something novel or unique;
- To possess digital skills;
- To be proficient in knowledge management.

What can we make out about the predicted ESP trend at the moment?

A class in ESP is described as an independent sort of learning where students have complete access to knowledge resources for their personal growth.

ESP seminars must incorporate the following activities, among others:

1. Critical Internet navigation entails the ability to investigate information as needed;

2. Critical reading is the ability to read any text critically to determine what must be accepted as new knowledge, what must be rejected as misleading information, and how to advocate against or for an issue of interest.

3. Critical reasoning - the ability to recognise a problem and propose a solution;

4. Critical speaking entails the ability to articulate opinions in response to contemporary issues using permissible rhetorical strategies without violating intercultural norms.

5. Critical writing is the ability to express opinions in response to current issues in writing, generating texts that are cohesive and coherent depending on the purposes.

In this new highly technologized post-pandemic era, these are the most effective teaching strategies:
- Visualization
- Cooperative Learning
- Differentiated Instruction
- Using Technology to your Advantage
- Student-centred Inquiry
- Professional Development

In order to get to the strategies, here are some techniques used during our English practical courses:

● Interactive whiteboards (IWBs) have become more prevalent in courses over the years. And it's easy to see why: the benefits are immense, providing teachers with inventive new methods to demonstrate fundamental and complementary concepts. As students acquire knowledge of smart technology at home, the classroom catches up, and instructors utilise technology to their advantage. Even more thrilling are the benefits this technology offers to students. By using interactive whiteboards teachers have significantly more opportunities to engage students. The majority of students are visual learners, which means they use colours, and images to organise, separate, and learn information; therefore, the existing programme can be supplemented with videos that move Diagrams, stories, or online content. In other words, teachers can increase student interest by incorporating visually stimulating new and existing study programmes, and everything that is done on the computer can be viewed on the IWB. We must note that the IWB is a digital tool that requires power. If it abruptly stops, teachers must improvise and find an alternative way for students' learning processes to be innovative and engaging.

The advantages of using interactive whiteboards is the fact that there are specially designed courses for this type of technology, such as the series Career Paths from Express Publishing, which can be used also for online courses, as they have the possibility of handing in the control to the students.

(Source: https://www.expressdigibooks.com/reader/read/245)

At the same time, the whiteboards offer the opportunity of designing your own materials and exercises, to reorganize the material whenever needed in various ways. Below there is an example in point:
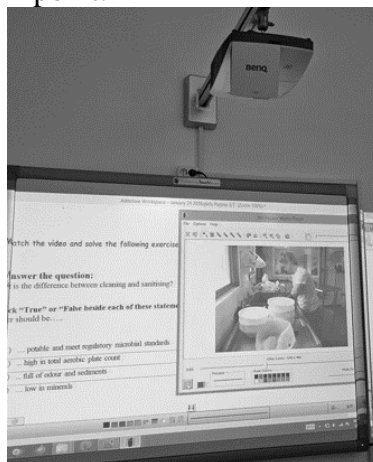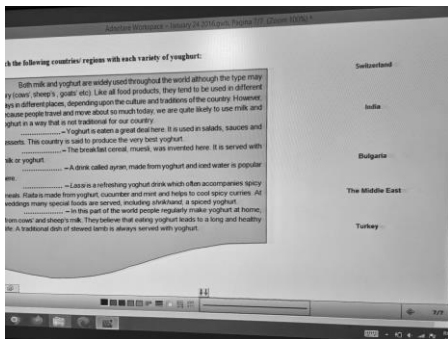
(Source: *Lab of Foreign Languages, IULS*)

- Online vocabulary exercises

When students upload their posts and receive comments and feedback from their peers and teachers, they feel highly motivated and learning is much more effective.

Using online games in language classes requires significantly more preparation than using textbooks, but students will be anxious to solve problems, answer questions, and complete missions in order to advance to the next level once they begin playing the game. This view is also supported by research indicating that English students who play online language games tend to learn more effectively, are able to retain and recall new words for a longer period of time and a greater number of words than those who do not have access to such games. Learner interest will increase if the activities are entertaining, relaxing, inspiring, and confidence-building. Nevertheless, effective learning necessitates games that provide students with a sense of accomplishment and opportunities for development.

3.Match the following words with the right definition.

Issues   Dams   Loss   Reforestation
Depletion   Ozone layer   Acid rain   Pollution

....	damage caused to air, sea, rivers, or land by chemicals, waste and harmful gases.
....	belt of gases that serves as a shield from the harmful ultraviolet B radiation emitted by the sun.
....	any form of precipitation with high levels of nitric and sulfuric acids. It can also occur in the form of snow, fog, and tiny bits of dry material
....	subjects or problems people are much thinking and talking about.
....	a wall built across a river which stops the river flow and collects water to store it in a reservoir.
....	the planting of trees on an area of land which has become bare or spoiled
....	when you no longer have something or have less of something
....	reduction in size or amount

4.Complete the passage below with suitable words:

The effects that _____ produce on the _____ environment, whether they are positive or _____, deliberate or _____, are amongst the most significant _____ modern society has to _____.
Topics such as the construction of _____ to supply dry areas with _____, the reforestation of bare _____, the progressive reduction of the ozone _____, the intensive use of agriculture thanks to the introduction of

(Source:
https://www.eslprintables.com/vocabulary_worksheets/environment_and_nat
ure/How_human_actions_modify_the_n_366442/)

Word sneak - vocabulary game
Word sneak is a vocabulary game inspired by Jimmy Fallon's *Tonight Show*. It can be heavily used when learning new vocabulary both online and offline.

Here are the stages for any educator wishing to replicate this incredibly entertaining vocabulary review game:

Start by playing a segment from *The Tonight Show* so that students know what the instructions are.

Students are given five words. They can add other two arbitrary words to their partner's paper. As they "sneak" words into discourse, they are able to cross them off their list. A meaningful conversation must come out. The winner is the individual who effectively inserts the most words into the conversation.

Learningapps.com
This website offers the opportunity of creating interactive exercises easily. For example, an ordinary fill in exercise can be put online:

(Source: https://learningapps.org/watch?v=pz7uow4ot23)
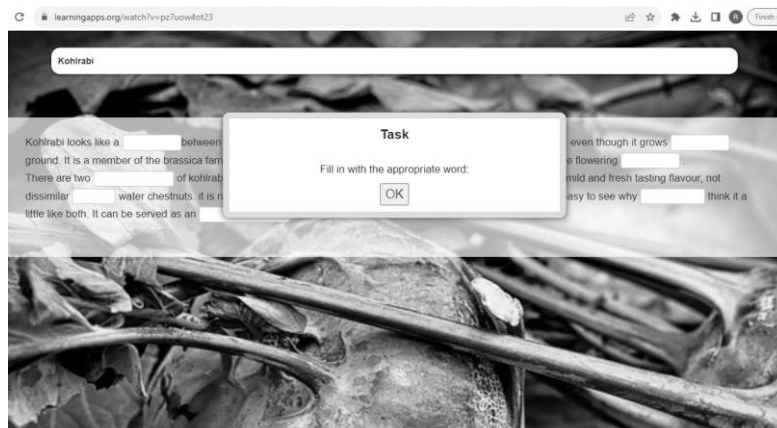
Then, the site can be reached with a QR code generated online, and thus the students can use their laptops or telephones in order to do the exercise.

Learning with mobile apps
There are several **benefits** to learning with mobile devices
1) When individuals discover information, they are able to share it via the Internet.
2) Learning without spatial limitations: learning is ubiquitous. Students can, for instance, study inside or outside of the classroom.
3) Learning in the real world: students can observe or receive information and then engage in online interactions with their classmates.
4) Documenting students' portfolios of learning: students' learning

(Source: https://parallelwork.jp/parallelwork/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/s_shutterstock_534995965-720x440.jpg)

Mobile learning is a student-centered approach, which also includes the theory of constructivism and cognitive theory in multimedia learning.
The authors discovered that students had a high level of instrumental motivation, as evidenced by their strong agreement regarding items related to learning English to obtain a high-paying job, achieving excellent grades, and

travelling abroad. In Jordan, Tahaineh and Daana (Tahaineh, Daana 159) did a study of a similar nature and discovered that undergraduate students had a great desire to learn English and were actively seeking out ways to achieve high marks in the subject. According to the survey's findings, pupils were motivated to learn English for practical purposes. Nonetheless, a number of studies in the Saudi EFL context indicate that students have high levels of both instrumental and integrative motivations.

In order to teach these digital natives, teachers need to understand how to inspire their learning motivation instead of forbidding them using tablets or smartphones

Conclusions

This article drew attention to the creativity that has to be highly used when both designing and teaching lessons, especially for ESP. Also, we all have to adapt fast to this ever-changing teaching/learning environments. Many apps that can be used both online and offline have appeared and they have made our lives easier.

Technology makes the courses more interactive and attractive to students. They do not necessarily substitute the course books. They can be adapted to make language teaching more relaxed, friendlier and goal-oriented.

There isn't going to be an issue whenever the teaching method changes (i.e. from physical courses to online courses), because many of the online platforms also offer printed course books and they can be accessed through a QR code.

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