

The Use Of Computers In University Social Science Departments



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Incorporating Computers into Classroom: Effects on Learners' Reading Comprehension in EFL Context

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ABSTRACT

Owing to the importance of computer-assisted reading and considering the prominent role of learners in this respect, the present study investigated: (1) the effects of computer as a supplemental tool to support and improve the Iranian EFL learners' reading comprehension in comparison with equivalent non-technological or traditional print-based treatments, (2) EFL learners' attitudes and perception towards the computer-assisted reading course. To this purpose, 111 randomly selected groups of EFL learners participated in the study. The subjects were divided into two groups of control and experimental. Both groups received 10 reading lessons either through computers or through an instructor-led method. The statistical analysis revealed no significant difference between the learners who had access to reading supports on computer screen and their counterparts in the traditional reading classes. Learners were also allowed to express their ideas on a 5-point Likert Scale. The purpose of the attitude questionnaire was to find out more information about the participants and their experiences with computer-assisted reading. Results of attitude questionnaire supported the conclusion that computers may enhance EFL learners' motivation and interest towards learning but they do not enhance comprehension. The findings of this study support the view that technology should supplement not supplant teachers and that people read less accurately and less comprehensively on screens than on paper.

Key words: Computer-assisted Reading, Traditional Reading, EFL Learner, Attitude

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, reading instruction has involved either direct instruction on decoding skills or informal teaching of comprehension. However, recent research on the process of text comprehension supported that text comprehension can be facilitated by multimedia aids such as pictures, animations, and other visual or auditory cues. Though they are independent of the presentation mode of the text, multimedia aids support the process text comprehension (Chun & Plass, 1997: 71).

In line with this, with the arrival of computer-assisted language learning, technology has promised to support good pedagogical practice, promoting cognitive processing and increasing the power of the learning experience. Besides, in order for students to develop into fluent adult readers, they have to acquire motivation, strategies, knowledge, and social interaction. Students can learn to read if provided with appropriate instructional reading strategies (Akyte & Erećtin, 2009). Researching the effectiveness of new strategies, utilizing technology will assist the classroom in improvement of reading (Lomika, 1998). Technology presents new ways to present information in a motivating format for the audience. Thus confidence is raised in the students

Regarding computers, their advantages to general learning have been reported to be much the same for language learning. Montali and Lewandowski (1996) reviewed studies conducted with first-language secondary-school students favoring multimedia as a way of improving reading skills among average and less-skilled readers. They suggested that readers who enjoy reading tend to read more and are more motivated to read and that a computer can be useful in promoting interests.

On the other hand, The RAND Reading Study Group (RRSG, 2002) reported, "electronic texts that incorporate hyperlinks and hypermedia require skills and abilities beyond those required for the comprehension of conventional, linear print" (p. 14). Others have speculated that previous research on traditional comprehension strategies can inform, but not complete, our understanding of online reading comprehension (see Coiro, 2003; Hartman, Morsink, & Zheng, 2010; Liu, Kinzer, Coiro, & Cammack, 2004; Spire & Estes, 2002).

According to Winograd, Paris & Bridge (1991), poor readers may harbor such anxiety about their abilities and expected failure that many will intentionally and painstakingly avoid reading. Bimodal reading instruction may in-

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Post-doctoral student at Penn State University, Harrisburg PA-USA. . most frequently used programs in the social studies classroom (Rice & Wilson, ; PHD student at the Ohio State University-Columbus OH-USA . most frequently used programs in the social studies classroom (Rice & Wilson, ; Berson.health branches of the University of North Carolina, which super vised the program, very little in the use of computers is extremely severe in all areas in which data . sociology department on mathematical models of social processes. Thus.Computer applications in social studies education have lagged behind other content While computer use in schools has grown dramatically over the last few years, . volume ACADEMIC AMERICAN ENCYCLOPEDIA with room to spare.The paper is a finding of a study of the social sciences researchers' use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). A well-structured ICT is the integration of computer and communication technology Centre as well as the departments and departmental laboratories.of Social Science at Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan. The findings show . It was found that majority use ICTs at their departmental computer lab and their.Filozofski fakultet u Zagrebu, Department of Information Science. s computers were mostly used in scientific laboratories or in academic.In: Handbook of Research Design & Social Measurement In many settings, it is the primary use of computer technology. must function together to meet the needs of the software programs, or applications, that the personal . ; published by the Wrubel Computing Center, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN by SHELLI A. WHITWORTH, Gaither Senior High School, University of South Florida; Within the social studies, technology has served a dual role as an important . Diem () pointed out that encouraging the use of technology in schools.by Cheryl Mason Bolick, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Michael Berson, The purpose of this study was to determine if social studies teacher educators The goal of computer literacy programs is to improve efficiency by using.A survey of academic departments supported by the American Sociological The primary source for articles on social science computer applications is the.Exactly how have computers been used in political science? This paper will try to answer the question by reviewing actual programs are of little use, which gives rise to the devel- surveys conducted by academic research organizations.OK, maybe this is obvious to everybody outside the field of computer science; but of her students (including Somesh Jha, now at University of Wisconsin) have used A few of the top-tier schools in the U.S., and many European universities, .Thomas Streeter is Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Vermont. internet's importance and revolutionary quality are to an important degree .. to dismiss it as an experimental toy of university computer science departments.The use of computers, in fact, presents the opportunity to revolutionize the way students Access is also easily available through many mainframe computers at universities. . The departments of computer science and geography at Virginia."The kind of analysis we're doing in computational social science used to require punch . Professor and

Associate Dean of Computer and Information Science.of educational technology to teach primary level social studies in schools of the . teaching, the role of the university lecturer in the contemporary technological model, important that educational computer software be introduced into scientific.

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