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The importance of using ICTs or technology for teaching and learning English in Kurdistan of Iraq

Nabaz Noori Kareem

Valparaiso University, nabaz.kareem@valpo.edu

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Nabaz Kareem
TESOL

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An applied linguistic study

How using ICTs or technologies facilitate English language learning in Kurdistan of Iraq?

As the field of applied linguistics has developed to cope with the quick changes of the profession, the implication of using information and communication technology ICT throws itself into the arena of education and schooling with the concept of pedagogical outcomes. Using ICTs for teaching English has been so common around the world. Kurdistan also tries to cope with such approach in its education since the ministry of education has started to change the curriculum for a new and modern one. As a result, there are benefits and challenges of imbedding ICTs in education in Kurdistan in the perspective of the students and the teachers. For that reason this study tries to shed light on the benefits and challenges of using ICTs in general in Kurdistan. Also demonstrates the attitude of the teachers and students for using ICTs in Kurdistan.

The data for this study depends on two surveys that were launched on Google forms online through Facebook Messenger accounts to the students and the teachers in Kurdistan. There are 38 participant teachers, male and female, and their age is between 22-38 years old. They all teach English in private and public schools in Kurdistan. Regarding the students, there are 69 participant students, male and female, and their age is between 15-24 years. They study English as their second language in public and private schools.

After receiving the data, the results show that teachers and students in Kurdistan are very interested in using ICTs for learning English language in different ways such as using technological devices in the schools, or using social media networks independently, they also show interest in online courses which is encouraged by the ICTs. Among all those kinds of ICTs that are commonly used for teaching and learning English, the results show that Kurdish students and teachers are mostly use cellphones, laptops, data show/projectors for enhancing their proficiency in English language. In addition

to that, according to the skills of learning English the students and the teachers indicate that using ICTs help them to improve the skills of speaking 22.4%, reading 53.1%, writing 44.9%, and listening28.6% parallel to the other skills of grammar, vocabulary, fluency and spelling. Relating another benefit is that teachers and students are agreed on that ICTs provide collaboration and communication inside classroom. This is one of the main aims of the system of education in Kurdistan of Iraq which depends on the CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) approach. In addition to those benefits, the results also show that there are many challenges of using ICTs in Kurdistan such as lacking access to technological devices, shortage of electricity, and interment, lacking training courses for teachers and students.

This project concludes with the recommendations for improving using ICTs for English language teaching and learning. Most of the issues can face government; as a result, teachers and students should care more for imbedding ICTs in education for improving their language skills.