What is Digital Literacy? How is it used in the Classroom?

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ABSTRACT

This article is aimed at figuring out digitalizing in the sphere of the English language teaching in education and formulating recommendations on its further improvement. Despite sounding similarity of computer literacy, digital literacy comes with a completely different meaning. Digital literacy is also about creating an awareness of the standard governing online behavior. It is a combination of -critical thinking, social engagement and the wide knowledge of various digital tools. Hence, one of the recommendations was that as today's generation is already familiar with technology they should be the starting point for the teachers and educators to enhance the students' learning.

KEYWORDS: Digitalization, Digital Citizens, E-Safety and Online Teaching

Introduction

Technology that is impacting every sphere of human life has a widespread influence on the lives of pupils. While students are tending to the digital world to learn, it pays to safeguard them from the challenges posed by technological advancements. It is as if they are breathing technology in every step they take. With so much going in favor of digital media, it is also important to prepare them for the threats that are a part of this emerging educational trend. All these are possible by relying on digital literacy as the whistleblower of online learning platforms. Despite sounding very similar to computer literacy, digital literacy comes with a completely different meaning (Robert, 1994). This is a branch of study that requires a deep understanding of the communal issues emerging out of digital technologies. Digital literacy is also about creating an awareness of the standard governing online behaviour. To proceed with this arm of education, you also need to put your vital thinking skills to the ultimate test. Hence to sum it all, digital literacy is a combination of -critical thinking, social engagement and the wide knowledge of various digital tools. After understanding the definition of digital literacy it is time to learn about its significance in the classroom.

One of the most effective ways to improve on the process of learning foreign languages is the use of computer and Internet technologies in the education system. The computer-information model of education is a kind of transitional phase from a system of traditional teaching methods foreign languages to a modern system of open education Information Society. The basis for the introduction of information technologies in the process of training a specialist informatization. It is an application of the following computer technology: the creation of virtual libraries, educational software means (electronic libraries, electronic textbooks, dictionaries), creating information databases of universities and schools, multimedia programs, Virtual debate clubs, counseling centers, teaching information environments of universities and schools, databases, directories containing all educational courses for different types of educational institutions

(Yang, 2001). The introduction of computer and information teaching methods significantly increases the level of information competence students, in

particular, developing skills such as the use of Internet capabilities to find the necessary educational information; use of reference electronic publications; application information resources in training activities, the use of communicative potential of information and computer technology for advice, the necessary information, etc.

The Emergence of a Class Called Digital Citizens

As you all are aware that reading, writing and mathematics are the three pillars of education, here is a fourth pillar that comes in the form of digital literacy. All set to create a unique fraternity named as digital citizens, students through this field of education will learn the tips connected to the use of technology.

E-Safety Cover

Most of the online lives of people are distorted; very far from reality. Drifting away from ethics, digital interfaces come in as thriving grounds for bullies and criminals. These anti-social elements try to rope in innocent youngsters and prompt them to accept fake information. It is also through misrepresented facts that a lot of children fall prey to such harmful netizens (Frolova and Nizhni, 2000). The end result of such unlawful acts shows up in the form of mental health issues along with feelings of detachment and loneliness amongst students.

So what is the way out? You may ask.

It is here that the educational curriculum should step in so that students are taught the ethics concerning digital literacy. A host of lesson plans should be initiated by teachers to shed light on the need for online safety. Students should be taught to not only secure their personal online information but also to be vigilant about sharing photographs on social media platforms. It is through this e-safety education that students should be cautioned against sharing personal data to unwarranted sites or people.

How to Use Internet Appropriately

Everything concerning digital literacy is linked to ethics. Students in their pursuit of learning or entertaining themselves should pay heed to what sort of online behavior is acceptable and what attracts corrective action. Since the online space does not clearly compartmentalize your private and public spaces, it pays to tread the online path with caution. Teachers step in here to address this issue when they prompt students to think about their personal information that is publsished online (Polat, 2000). This exercise will be an eye-opener to students who will try to assess the reactions of others with regard to their public presence. With digital literacy, you will be able to enjoy the benefits of a modern classroom which employs digital lessons as learning tools. Modern classrooms which are governed by collaborative learning and student-centric learning can make the most of digital literacy as the much needed educational tool.

For instance, an English teacher can look at blogging as a promising tool to teach her wards about the power of words. On the flipside, a social-science teacher can present the scenarios of real world issues that are available online and encourage students to understand them and prompt

them to offer solutions. Learning English is not possible without the bright clarity that the teacher can find on the Internet and use in the classroom. By studying the theme of «House» in the 5th grade, I bring vivid pictures on the screen. A variety of forms of work: the introduction of vocabulary, room description, description of the item of furniture in the form of puzzles, find hidden objects, etc. Creating presentations teacher and students — another means of using ICT in the classroom in English. Presentations acquaint students with the customs, traditions and culture of other countries. Pupils great desire to prepare a presentation on the regional geography, as well as presentations on the basis of their own materials, for example, «My Street», «My friendly class», «Photo Wall», «My trip to London, Egypt, Turkey» and others. You can quickly make a presentation, if you go to the site www.geo.ru. Where you can find a map, information on any country, download materials from the pictures. Sort them by topic, grade. Make a series of presentations and obtained excellent electronic manual, which can be changed and supplemented in subsequent years. Electronic manual "Britannica" helps in the creation of reports and presentations. This encyclopedia is a handy tool for finding information and helps students explore and learn about the world. Thus, the use of ITC in the classroom of English teacher helps make the lesson richer and interesting, it helps to raise students' interest in the subject under study, encourages teachers to improve teaching skills

The XXI century - the era of digitalization and modern technologies has brought significant changes to all spheres including education. Information technology has widened access to education. The way people learn and get an access to education, particularly learning languages has changed due to rapid development of information technology. One of such considerable changes is online learning. Online learning has become so popular that it is commonly used in English language teaching as well as in other areas of education. Therefore, to keep up with the current changes in the field of education language teachers are also looking for some ways to increase the quality of their teaching via new and modern information technologies. In many developed countries of the world online learning is regarded to have more advantages over traditional (face-to-face) classes for its availability, flexibility and convenience, so it has contributed to the decrease in face-to face classes (Galtsova, Mezentsev and Shvadlenko, 2006). Moreover, online language learning is supposed to increase students' language learning effectiveness. However, some educators, language teachers and researchers are likely to be doubtful about the effectiveness of it. In general, the fact that how effectively language is learnt online mainly depends on different factors and challenges including students' interests and needs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the learners of the 21st century who are accustomed to digital tools are often considered to be digitally proficient. Without denying the fact that they are digital natives leading technologically enabled lives, we also tend to be negative when we ask ourselves whether they would be able to use technology the right away to create something new. And, that is exactly where education steps in. Digital literacy could simply be defined as the ability to use a range of technological tools for varied purposes.

Recommendation

As today's generation is already familiar with technology, there should be the starting point for the teachers and educators to enhance the students' learning.

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