

Web-Chat Date: April 19, 2012

Topic: Using Commonly Available Innovative Technologies in EFL Context

Abstract:

Not only the teachers but also the administrative boards of many educational institutions are keen on the idea of adopting technology for teaching purposes. Recent requirements from Ministries/Departments of Education particularly mandate the integration of innovative technologies for educational pedagogical practices especially in the language learning environment. The process of implementing new technologies and managing changes, however, is far from being a straightforward operation. The successful implementation of new technologies requires considerable effort especially by the administrative people involved. In this web-chat, we would like to discuss issues, concerns, strategies, implementation, and evaluation methods for the implementation of commonly available modern technologies in the EFL context.



Transcript:

Damon Anderson: Please feel free to submit any pre-questions or comments regarding the topic.

Damon Anderson: Hi Mai and Lazycat. Welcome to the webchat. We will start at the top of the hour. In the meantime browse the two links and feel free to submit any pre-questions or comments.

Damon Anderson: Everyone, we'll start in about 5 minutes.

Mai: Hello Damon. Thank you

Damon Anderson: Everyone, welcome to our webchat today. We are a small group of about 10 people so far, so everyone feel free to add a comment or thought or question. Let's begin.

lazycat: I would like to know that are there any best engines or weblinks for teaching and assessing speaking skill?

lazycat: sometimes assessing speaking skill is very subjective

Damon Anderson: Lazycat, I believe that there are some site with rubrics that will address your issue. Kathy Schrak has some for example.

Chollada ICT Thailand: Hello Khun Damon

Damon Anderson: Hi Aj. Chollada.

Damon Anderson: I think that when we consider the use of technology, we need to see how it can help us do new things or add more dimension to our teaching rather than just trying to use it to do the same old things we are used to doing. What do you all think about this?

Rocky Peltzman: Hi Everyone.

Damon Anderson: In our last chat, for example, we talked about the flipped classroom where teachers use technology to deliver knowledge to students at home then practice the use with them in the classroom.

lazycat: hi all

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Bill Templer from Eastern Europe

Zhouying: If your students don't want learn English, what will you do?

lazycat: that's right

Phil Owen: It seems doing new things is possible now. VOice recognition, for example. More is coming almost every day.

Zhouying: Sorry, I made a mistake. want to learn

lazycat: we should try it

thuypham: Hi everybody

Phanisara: Some "traditional" teachers fear to just "jump in" and even "learn together" with the students. We are "language" teachers not totally "technology" teachers. We can work with others on building the proficiency level of our students.

Damon Anderson: Zhouying, can you clarify your question, please?

Phil Owen: There is a "learning curve" when beginning to use technology. And it can be very time consuming to set up.

Damon Anderson: Phil, that is so true. Setting things up the first time around can take a lot of time. But, that is true with designing new activities of any kind. We should not use that as an excuse.

Phanisara: "Wanting" something---"desiring to learn" is the personal/individual function. Teachers who love at least some aspects of learning and teaching English will be able to transfer the "will" to learn to his or her students.

Chollada ICT Thailand: I think Technology will help us to lead the students need to study more English.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Twitter is becoming an important medium for EFL teachers interconnecting and students one kind of ICT

Lan Huong: Sorry. What do you mean by "learning curve"?

Mai: So is it important to provide training for teachers of English in terms of ICT integration in classroom practices?

Phanisara: I agree Phil. And that "learning curve" period will need to be communicated effectively with the school communities involved.

Rocky Peltzman: And the institution must have IT staff on hand for when things go wrong. It's very frustrating when things are working well and then not.

Chollada ICT Thailand: I often ask the students to help me about computer technology ,because they have the great skill in playing in computer we learn together and they learn some words in English from me

Zhouying: I mean I have some students who don't like studying English. Some of them think it useless.

lazycat: we should make use of it and introduce it to ss

Phanisara: I agree with Aj. Chollada. Technology will build the need as well as interest and desire for the students to love approaches of gaining their English proficiency authentically.

lazycat: show them the advantages of using the technology in learning E.

Phil Owen: A "learning curve" is the time it takes to learn to do something new -- like set up a website. After you know how, it can be easy, but for a while it takes time.

Rocky Peltzman: Zhouying, are your students adults? College students?

lazycat: i agree with Phil

Phanisara: It's worth the time Phil.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Many students are 'digital natives' they know more about Internet than their teachers that should be exploited in various ways

Damon Anderson: Zhouying, sometimes using technology for students to engage with students from other countries and cultures will motivate your students to learn English so they can communicate. If all your students do is communicate with you and themselves, they will not see the use of English.

Chollada ICT Thailand: Some of them can't play their game because they tried to translate the meaning of the command sentences so they came to see me and ask how could they do , so sometimes we play game together and I told them not to change the language to Thai even in using FACEBOOK

lazycat: website or forum for teaching and learning English is good

Zhouying: I'm a teacher.

Phanisara: I agree Prof. Bill.

Phil Owen: Yes, it is worth the time! and I do use a website.

Damon Anderson: Teachers can use things like Ning and Google Docs to design courses and materials and share documents with students and parents, and for professional communities.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): In many countries, middle-class and even working class kids/teens have their “e-life,” /Internet/ “g-life,” /computer games/ “m-life,” /music, pop/, “p-life,” /cell phones + SMS/, their “c-life” /comics/, “f-life” /films/ Important to try to understand some of these aspects of how your students are into technology, and then work from that

Mai: For a more systematic learning management system, teachers can refer to Moodle, I guess

Tresha: I'm a primary school teacher. I asked Ss to visit a website to do five interactive quiz questions. About 5 Ss in each class are not able to access to computers or Internet at home.

lazycat: the benefits of using google docs?

Damon Anderson: Thanks, Mai. I forgot to add Moodle.

Phanisara: You're a great teacher Aj. Chollada. I like your techniques. Not translating into Thai is a good approach. The students can learn the language more naturally. Acquisition becomes less complex I believe.

thuypham: I know the good use of internet, but I'm now teaching at a big university in Vietnam and we still do not have the internet in all the classroom. I'm using a USB to login, but the line is so slow

Damon Anderson: If you know the website you want to use, you can capture it, put it on a CD, then use it in the class as if you are online.

lazycat: sure, we should elicit the target language in English not the native one

Damon Anderson: Lazycat, through technology you can reach world Englishes, and not just the English of the textbooks.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Important is to have an LCD projector in most classrooms. In many many countries, that still is not available Including plenty of schools in Thailand, and universities

Mai: I think Technological issues like the availability and accessibility to hardware and software in developing countries or rural areas are still the limitations of ICT integration into classrooms

Phanisara: I like Tresha's activities. This will allow the students who have computers at home to help other less advantaged students during class time as well.

Chollada ICT Thailand: Yes, Nina .. and it lead them to learn English while they don't know that is the way they studied already ..and the US embassy introduce some of the website that we can download to teach English more

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): It is possible to download many youtube materials and then use in class, but a projector is essential.

Chialing Chang: Starfall is a famous website for teaching phonics and reading.

lazycat: the problem at school is that we use ppt slides for teaching but ss just copying and reading them

Lan Huong: I agree with you Mai.

Zhouying: Thank you, Damon Anderson. You mean with whom my students will communicate?

lazycat: tks for that, Chialing

Chollada ICT Thailand: The example of the website is

<http://www.englishcorner.vacau.com/grammar/grammar.html>

Rocky Peltzman: To use Youtube as an all-class listening is very dependent on high-quality speakers. We found in Laos to start them off with speakers, but then have them listen with earphones to continue doing the worksheet

Chialing Chang: Yep, I also use ppt to demonstrate the points of grammar.

Damon Anderson: The problem with PowerPoint is that people don't use it properly. The slides should have the key points, but the presenter adds so much more to the presentation. Too many slides have things in them that aren't helpful or are distracting. Try having just a picture in the ppt slide to illustrate the point you are making.

Phanisara: lazycat---then teacher needs to adjust the PPT slides. To make it becomes NOT CONTENT and activities guidance---so that students will focus more on activities, interactions with each other---not the content to "memorize."

Chollada ICT Thailand: I agree with Chialing "The ppt is so good to present some grammar "

Chialing Chang: Students love Youtube. I used to show how to work on Readers' Theater by Youtube.

Mai: @Lazycat: in your case, I guess the teacher should create more activities so that the students are motivated to use the language in class and they become more active. If not, the use of ppt slides is just a replacement of using blackboard and chalk

Phanisara: I like Khun Rocky idea. Technology should only be a "starting point." The extent and duration of using it should be based pragmatically on the audience and learning situations.

Tresha: I also use PPT to show the grammar points. But I found Ss like to see some interactive websites.

Chollada ICT Thailand: Yes, I like Rocky 's idea about Youtube . We can listen to the pronunciation of English and learn to copy the sentences. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4lj3n5TaWE>

lazycat: yeah, i agree

lazycat: thanks Mai

Chialing Chang: We can also create interactive games with ppt. But it's arduous for teachers.

Damon Anderson: Unfortunately, YouTube cannot be used everywhere, in China for example.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Chialing is right. Readers Theater youtubes if possible as a platform for getting students to do Readers Theater which is much needed in my view in Thailand.

thuypham: I use ppt to teach ELT methodologies, it's good for visual learners, but they are likely to take notes a little, just look at the slides, so it's easy to forget the theories

Damon Anderson: Teachers and students can create short podcasts (voice or video) for great lessons.

lazycat: are there engines for creating games for ss

Rocky Peltzman: Does China have an alternate portal of videos that they have approved?

thuypham: facebook is good, but sometimes it's blocked

Lan Huong: Why don't you print the handouts for your Ss, Thuy?

Mai: Yeah, YouTube is not always accessible in some universities in Viet Nam too

Phanisara: Chialing---I would avoid arduous tasks :) The use of technology in the classrooms is so that we can find easier pedagogical solutions for teachers class preparations; and build greater benefits/maximizing students learning. So I would search for other suitable way of making less work for teachers and create ways that students can practice more.

Chialing Chang: Chollada, good link. It's probably an innovative and interesting quiz for kids. I can't wait to use it!!^^

Damon Anderson: Because there is so much out there to learn, I feel that if teachers form professional communities or circles, as each member finds something or develops something they can share it with the community and everyone's knowledge and skill will grow exponentially.

Lan Huong: Me, too. Thanks Chollada

Chollada ICT Thailand: Yes, Thai children love it very much .There are a lot of grammar teachings that we can show the students in the classroom in Thailand and I always use it :

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tslxQGu2t9Q&feature=endscreen>

Chialing Chang: Phanisara: I make ppt slides for my students every week. I used to spend almost 2 hours per lesson, but now I only have to spend 30 minutes max. Practice makes perfect.^^

Mai: Thanks Chollada

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): I've repeatedly stressed using VOA Special English www.voaspecialenglish.com for extensive reading and much more Is anyone doing that here?

Damon Anderson: If you haven't already done so, check out the two links in the link box. Lots of treasures in these site.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): The New York Times has recently started TIMES IN PLAIN ENGLISH that is also an easier newspaper at B1 level low-intermediate

Phanisara: For those who could not access online materials synchronously, one might consider prerecording materials first on CDs for classroom use. Some interesting materials, for example, can be found for English class activities at <http://americanenglish.state.gov> Including also 6 audio books and a NEW POSTER SERIES for our Sing out Loud Children's Songs CD.

Phil Owen: Bill T, extensive reading? not listening?

Chollada ICT Thailand: Thanks a lot Bill

vanida: As I am a university student of Laos and also LMI TA, I found that that a big problem that we can't access innovative technology for teaching is Faculty of letter don't have many projector to slide or teach the lesson through

Mai: at first, to prepare a lesson plan with ICT integration is very time-consuming. I don't know about the situations in other places, but in my institution, there is a lack of incentives or support for teachers who use ICT; and this leads to the problem that not many of them use ICT in teaching

Chollada ICT Thailand: <http://americanenglish.state.gov> It's the best one ,Nina.

lazycat: Hi Phanisara, it should be extensive task for speaking, i think

Asst. Prof. Dr. Phuangphet Tonawanik: Hi Bill and Every one. Actually my MEd. supervisee is trying to use VOA in her reading class and it improves the students reading fluency. Definitely listening skill too.

vanida: at university i found that teacher have to make a reservation to use projector, which i found that there's around 2 or 3 projectors for whole English faculty, and the internet is very very slow

Phanisara: Vanida, great point. That's why we need human being teachers not just mechanical computers to teach our students. Teachers do need to be creative in what technology they have to use and expand the activities for students practice. Not all activities share on the internet are for everyone. We have to discern what is best for our audience.

lazycat: and task-based for assignment, Phanisara do u agree?

Phanisara: lazycat, extensive tasks can be applied for reading activities as well. All skills based....possible.....with all exposures.....possible.

Rocky Peltzman: Bill, I just searched for NY Times in Plain English link--nothing turned up.

lazycat: i agree somewhat

Phanisara: lazycat....task-based could be assigned for outside practice; but make certain the proper guidance with the teachers regarding the directions for the activities in class.

Chialing Chang: There's a smartboard in my classroom. Sometimes I use the software in my classes.

lazycat: yeah, then ss can present their ideas after that

Damon Anderson: Vanida, If you only have the teacher's computer, you can do a set up where students work in groups and go to stations to do things. One of the stations is the computer for extra input.

Tin Dang: I guess providing guidance for task-based projects in class is not enough

Tin Dang: it is better to make a closer connection between classroom activities and out-of-class activities

Phanisara: I agree it is the best one Aj. Chollada :) Certainly is!

lazycat: what's more, Tin Dang

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Hi Rocky, here: www.thetimesinplainenglish.com

Asst. Prof. Dr. Phuangphet Tonawanik: i would think task-based assignment is to promote communication. It can be used in class or outside classroom.

Tin Dang: For example, students are expected to do some sections of the projects in class and some others out of class

Chollada ICT Thailand: Teachers will build the new world to the students, maybe teachers should record some video and find out the equipment that possible to use in class. 8 Years ago, My school only have 2 computers and we took turn to the teachers to use it for the students and now we have more high technology in every classroom by the donation from the parents.

Phanisara: I agree Tin Dang. The connectivity and the recycling of the content materials need to be solid.

Zhouying: It takes long time for students to learn English well. How can we shorten the time by technology?

Mai: Good question, Zhouying

Damon Anderson: Actually, technology can help in a couple of ways. First, for young learners, it holds their attention more and improves motivation, which will certainly increase the speed of learning. Also, it can give them more practice both in and out of the classroom, which will also help improve the speed of learning. Just a couple of ideas.

Phanisara: Zhouying, I believe that is the "blessing" of technology. Using it wisely, it maximizes our class time and interactive learning engagement with our language students.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Phuangphet Tonawanik: Task-based can be even simple post-teaching activities e.g. fill in gap knowledge. students have to be able to communicate to achieve the meaningful communication

Tin Dang: Well, I guess technology can offer more opportunities for students to learn English, Zhouying.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): EXTENSIVE READING is one key. Students need to do extensive reading, free voluntary reading outside of class, and there is plenty of appropriate material even online here one site: www.learn-english-network.org

lazycat: Zhouying, it takes time to learn English well for sure. but the important is to draw their interests and introduce some weblinks or engines for their self study

vanida: thank you for a suggestion, Damon but even the teachers here need to have ICT training course

Damon Anderson: Vanida, I believe that ICT training should be a part of our pre-service and inservice training. Many teachers need to keep updated with the new technologies. Those who can use computers well, don't necessarily know how to use social networking, for example.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): I'm sorry everything I type is doubled but I can't seem to stop that. Extensive reading of VOA Special English is one area that should be promoted.

Chialing Chang: Student can self-study anytime by technology. For example, students can learn extracurricular English material by on line radio programs.

Zhouying: Thanks for you all.

Tresha: So true. Vanida.

Damon Anderson: Bill, it is only doubled on your screen so you see what you sent and what was sent to everyone.

Chialing Chang: In Taiwan. <http://www.studioclassroom.com/default.php> is very popular.

Tin Dang: informal/out-of-class learning is becoming more important today, thanks to the availability of technology. So as teachers, if we can help our students to take advantage of these facilities, they would be able to make better progress, I hope.

Mai: I agree with Tin Dang

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Free voluntary web browsing is what many students do Krashen has a whole article on how that can be utilized for getting students to build their English reading outside the classroom. You can find Krashen's article online: Free Voluntary Web-Surfing. International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching 3(1): 1-9.

vanida: I think the first start for Laos case, teacher should give assignment and ask students to send email

Damon Anderson: I think that teachers and students should be taught the difference between surfing the net and searching for something specific.

Tin Dang: We may all agree that providing students with resources and asking them to study would be important for their learning achievement. However, it is not easy for students to self-study effectively

lazycat: Bill , tks for the information

Chollada ICT Thailand: That's good Tin Dang

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Damon, Krashen recommends 'narrow reading' approaches for student surfing according to their interests

Phanisara: I agree Tin Dang. Practice with the available technology is the key.

vanida: I think so

Tin Dang: My previous research shows that students' level of engagement in the virtual class (out-of-class activity) depends on the assessment requirements although they all agree that the virtual classroom is useful

Damon Anderson: Andy, are you doing similar research to what Tin Dang just mentioned?

Phanisara: Start where we can reach our students best. I agree Vanida. However we can involve themselves with their own learning activities, the better the outcome.

lazycat: vanida, surfing the net is a skill needs to be trained, also. ;-)

Zhouying: How many students are there in your class, vanida? If the numbers are over sixty, how can you deal with the students' email?

Mai: Agree with Damon. In my class, I usually provide my students with specific guidelines for what they are expected to accomplish with the support of computers and the Internet

Phanisara: Great research findings! Tin Dang

Chialing Chang: I often use publisher's e-book. It provides many animations for materials to draw students' attention.

lazycat: Chollada, good idea, computer donation from parents

Asst. Prof. Dr. Phuangphet Tonawanik: Online corpora can be used to help students write better, from many evidences the produced texts have better quality and lessen teachers' burden

Mai: In case the students are not used to studying by themselves, the teacher should provide them background knowledge and guidance. Otherwise, they will get lost

Damon Anderson: All, We only have about five minutes left. Any ideas for a topic for our next webchat?

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Extensive Reading outside class can have certain modes of assessment. See this Extensive Reading Guide, downloadable: <http://bit.ly/HOo2Ce>

Thanousone: Hey everyone I am reading and getting some ideas from you

lazycat: Mai, yeah, the first guidane should be introduce, then they can do it themselves

Rocky Peltzman: Class size does count. Even if a teacher simply introduces giving assignments by email, and requires receipt of the assignment by email, that adds a lot of time to

Tin Dang: Well, nurturing students' independent learning capacity is a long story, especially for those who are used to teacher-dominated pedagogy, Mai.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Phuangphet Tonawanik: Sorry. Khun Mai

Rocky Peltzman: the teacher's day.

lazycat: time goes so fast!

Chialing Chang: My students like using Facebook. I often post information on my FB and my students can learn English in an enjoyable way!

Phanisara: Thank you Dr. Phuangphet. I agree there are so much out there with professional qualities. Why doing something unnecessary when we can use the much needed time interacting with our students.

Lan Huong: yes

Asst. Prof. Dr. Phuangphet Tonawanik: Exactly. Khun Mau. that's why teachers have to scaffold the students' learning

vanida: that's a good question Zhouying. So, what do you think should teacher do?

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): I find a good topic is 'teaching unplugged', as promoted by Luke Meddings and Scott Thornbury teaching 'materials-light' often without a textbook, conversation-driven here one video: <http://bit.ly/JgsEBN> Maybe that's a good topic

Chollada ICT Thailand: Yes

Rocky Peltzman: Hopefully governments that push for this type of use of technology will recognize the need for compensation.]

Chialing Chang: Englishraven looks good. Can anyone recommend some more sites?

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Scaffolding and the whole notion of 'constructivism' in TEFL also a good topic Vygotskyian approaches

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): teaching unplugged is in some ways the exact opposite of ICT-dependent teaching

Phanisara: Chialing, Thai students also like using FB. Aj. Chollada at the Islamic College of Thailand also try to let the students practice their English communication through their favorite social media.

Zhouying: Technology also has bad effects on the students. Something like students' distraction of the beautiful pictures of PPT.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): BBC Learning English is a very good site for intermediate level for various skills here one video: BBC learning English here one example of video: <http://bbc.in/14iJ5t>

Mai: Does anyone know any studies conducted about the relationship between using ICT in teaching English and constructivism or social constructivism?

Zhouying: Thanks for you all, I learn a lot from you.

Mai: Please help

Damon Anderson: Thank you everyone for your contributions to the chat today. It was a good chat. Khun Nina will post the transcript on our website, but I will leave this up for awhile still. Thank you all.

Chollada ICT Thailand: Yes, NOW it is their breathe now FACEBOOK so I let the students to send their homework via the FB and this one if for ASEAN Project Work
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8W9D6IRXB4&feature=related>

Tin Dang: @Mai, I can't get what you mean.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Mai there is a new book by Sharon Reyes Diary of a Bilngual School that explores constructivism and is a good starting point

Phil Owen: So long everyone. Good chat.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Mai, also a book I like: Reyes, S.A., & Vallone, T.L. (2008). Constructivist strategies for teaching English language learners. Thousand Oaks/CA: Corwin

Rocky Peltzman: Goodbye!

Asst. Prof. Dr. Phuangphet Tonawanik: I have to go to class now thank you everybody. Till next time.

Lan Huong: Mai, it's a very interesting theme for study. Do you intend to conduct this study?

Mai: @ Tin Dang: I am finding some studies examining the relationships of teachers' using ICT and their beliefs about constructivist principles

Mai: Thanks a lot, Bill

Chollada ICT Thailand: Yes it the good chat and I learn a lot from all of you

Tin Dang: Thank you all. Analysing this kind of transcript should give us more insights on the way people chat then.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): Mai take a look here: <http://bit.ly/HogZ8i>

Damon Anderson: Thank you everyone. The chat is now closed.

Bill Templer (Shumen, Bulgaria): diversitylearningk12 in the U.S. is a great site for teachers Krashen central there, Sharon Reyes and others.

Mai: @ Lan Huong: Yeah, it is one part of my proposed study

Mai: Many thanks to Bill.

Lan Huong: Bye everyone and thank you very much for this chat.

Mai: Thank you every one for an interesting hour.

Chollada ICT Thailand: Bye Bye

Damon Anderson: Now the chat is closed. Thank you all.
