**Use of Digital Tools for English Teaching in Colombia**

**El Uso de Herramientas Digitales para la Enseñanza del inglés en Colombia**

**Abstract**

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic marked a milestone in the use of technology in education, and language teaching and learning was not the exception. The primary purpose of this article is to report the findings of an online questionnaire intended to determine the use of digital tools and blogs for developing English language skills. A self-assessment questionnaire was administered to 299 English teachers in Colombia using a non-probabilistic convenience sample. Data was analyzed quantitatively using *R Software* version 4.3.1. *Likert package* 1.3.5 and *ggplot 2*, version 3.4.0 were used to generate graphs and descriptive statistics. Analysis showed a 5% level of significance or error. Results demonstrate that YouTube and English newspapers are the most frequently used resources for listening skills, online applications for speaking, games for vocabulary acquisition, and websites for reading comprehension. Voice recognition tools are the least used for speaking, Grammarly and Grammarly Checker for writing, and Newsela for reading comprehension. Results confirmed the use of technology for English teaching but revealed big challenges to take the best of it in its application to pedagogy.

**Keywords:** ICT, Language Instruction, Digital Skills.

**Resumen**

La Pandemia por COVID 19 marcó un hito en el uso de la tecnología en la educación, y la enseñanza y el aprendizaje de lenguas no fue la excepción. El objetivo de este artículo es reportar los resultados de la administración de un cuestionario que buscaba determinar el uso de herramientas digitales y de blogs para el desarrollo de las habilidades comunicativas. Este cuestionario fue aplicado a 299 profesores de inglés en Colombia usando una muestra no probabilística por conveniencia. El análisis de los datos se realizó mediante el uso del software estadístico *R* versión 4.3.1. Para la generación de gráficos y estadísticas descriptivas se usó el *paquete Likert* versión 1.3.5 y *ggplot2* versión 3.4.0. Los análisis se realizaron con un nivel de significancia del 5%. Los resultados demuestran que YouTube y periódicos en línea son los recursos más utilizados para la escucha, las aplicaciones en línea para el habla, los juegos para el vocabulario y los sitios web para la lectura. Los recursos menos usados son los relacionados con el reconocimiento de voz para el habla, el Grammarly y Grammar Checker para escritura y el Newsela para la lectura. El estudio demuestra la utilización de la tecnología en la enseñanza del inglés, pero devela grandes retos para el aprovechamiento pleno de su riqueza en la pedagogía.

**Palabras clave:** TIC, Enseñanza de lenguas, Habilidades Digitales.

**Introduction**

The characteristics, qualities, and needs of the students currently attending educational institutions place several demands on different actors that intervene in the execution of any learning process. The society of the 21st century urgently needs to provide students with 21st-century skills and content from other disciplines that each educational context has already determined. Some of the skills above are problem-solving, autonomy, critical thinking, cooperative work, and leadership. The need to work on developing those skills and the subject matter that needs to be covered has made incorporating technological tools necessary in constructing instructional approaches that promote engagement and nurture skills development.

The teaching of EFL has benefited in a significant manner from the vast array of digital tools at disposal to be used in the language classrooms for purposes such as enhancing motivation, providing extensive practice for the mastery of language components such as vocabulary and grammar as well as the development of language skills. However, in some contexts, digital tools might be implemented as an add-on rather than a core element that promotes interaction, collaboration, decision-making, self-evaluation, and meaning construction. According to Røkenes et al. (2016), as mentioned by Alakrash et al. (2021), the positive impact of the integration of those resources on students’ academic and professional lives “mainly depends on the ability of the teachers to appropriately and effectively deploy such technologies for educational purposes” (p. 21). The great responsibility given to the teachers regarding the successful application of technologies in the classrooms is evident. In our context, it has become necessary to determine what digital tools teachers currently use in their language classrooms and for what purposes. This study wants to determine which digital tools teachers employ the most and the least in their classrooms to foster language development.

The urge for teachers to include digital resources to make the process of teaching a foreign language more efficient for students provoked turmoil that might not be beneficial for the teachers, the learners and the learning process itself. There is the risk of teachers making uninformed choices that may result in students not having a sense of direction and achievement, feeling overwhelmed by the high level of responsibility given to them, and many other consequences that may hinder the language learning process. As stated by Matviyenko et al. (2022), even the well-known digital natives for whom the online scenarios do not represent any discomfort “are not always able to use their digital ability for learning a foreign language.” (2022 p. 200). Therefore, it is important to investigate what digital tools teachers are implementing in their classrooms based on what they are selected, how they are implemented, and their impact on the language learning process.

**Use of Digital Tools for English Teaching**

Different systematic reviews of the literature have demonstrated that emergency teaching during the pandemic times increased teachers’ digital competence and the use of digital tools in education worldwide (Velandia Rodríguez et al., 2022; Cachón-Zagalaz et al., 2020; Gómes Junior et al., 2022; García et al., 2022; García Ruiz et al., 2023). The current section reviews recent publications assessing the use of digital tools in English teaching. Different studies were analyzed with productions in Europe, Asia, and Latin America.

Spain is also the country with the most published studies that seek to determine the use of digital tools for ELT. Albero-Posac (2019) proposes to enrich CLIL subjects from Biology and Geology courses in a secondary school in Spain. A prior needs analysis was conducted through interviews to select the digital platform and tools. Made decisions included the use of Moodle to embed resources for close answers (Moodle glossaries, Flippity, and Educaplay), resources for open tasks (Edpuzzle and -moodle), resources for collaborative tasks (Tricider, Padlet, Canva, and Bubbl.us), and other tools like Google Forms. Mosquera Gende (2023) also studied secondary education in Spain. He used survey-based research with a snowball sampling questionnaire administered to 110 secondary education English teachers, emphasizing digital tools' attitudinal and emotional effects on students’ learning. From a list of well-known digital tools, responders selected Canva, Genially, and Kahoot as the most used to incentivize learning and Book Creator, Flippity, and Booklet as the least used. However, Flip seems to be the tool that better contributes to students’ participation and autonomy development.

Wakelet also stands out from the other tools. Moving to Ukraine, Matviyenko et al. (2022) used empirical and statistical methods to test a new approach based on the use of Google machine translators and a Multitran online dictionary to enhance language skills and translation in two groups of 45 students (experimental and control) of an aviation course in the National Aviation University of Ukraine. Results demonstrate a positive influence of the approach in terms of the effectiveness of online dictionaries and translation machines in improving students’ foreign language skills. Alakrash and  Razak  (2021) experimented with a quantitative study of a descriptive nature in a population of 150 students and 40 teachers at Arab international schools in Malaysia to find out the level of digital literacy and the differences between EFL teachers and students concerning the use of technology and digital competence. They used two questionnaires made of three dimensions. Thirty-four items were about digital technologies, and ten were related to digital literacy. Results demonstrate that students use technology the most to acquire vocabulary and the least to improve reading skills, while teachers use it the most for teaching practice and the least for reading skills. The questionnaire designed by Alakrash and  Razak  (2021) about the use of digital technologies was adapted for the aims of the current study. It was used in the exploratory stage and as a pre-test and a post-test to measure one of the main variables in the problem statement. Moving to Asia, Moorhouse and Yan (2023) used a mixed-method design to inquire about the use of digital tools by 83 English teachers in Hong Kong. Specifically, researchers wanted to know the digital tools used, their reasons, and how they were used. Data was collected using firstly a survey with quantitative and qualitative items and in-depth semi-structured interviews to get a deeper understanding. Fourteen categories of tools used by the teachers were established, and core digital tools were determined for each category. The authors determined the frequency of use of the 98 digital tools that teachers found useful. The most common digital tools were Kahoot (n=52), and Padlet (n=32). The less common were EPIC (n=13) and Google Forms (n=13).

Three research studies were conducted in Latin America, all belonging to Brazil. Souza Pinto and Menezes (2019) did a meta-analysis research report to examine theses and dissertations related to integrating language and technology and using digital tools produced by graduate programs in Northern Brazil from 2008 to 2018. Data was collected from research platforms. The research presents global results of the research works that were examined. The authors stand out for using Virtual Learning Objects, virtual Learning environments, the Orkut social network platform, and WhatsApp. Perna et al. (2021) focused more on teachers and wrote a reflection article that explores some of the digital tools they use. It reckons the importance of using technology in education and makes a historical review of models from 1.0 to 5.0. The author mentioned some benefits of using technology for educational purposes: active learning, formative assessment, retrieval practice, feedback-driven metacognition, emotional skills awareness, deeper learning, and adaptive learning. The authors also present an overview of the tools used by elementary, high school, and college students during remote emergency learning in Brazil: Pear deck presentations wizer.me, interactive worksheets, and gamification. Gomes Junior et al. (2022) intended to find the most used digital tools by 123 English students and 277 teachers in Brazil. The data was collected using an online survey that was analyzed, comparing 2018 with 2019. In 2018, 75 students and teachers responded survey. The most used digital tools by students and teachers were Duolinguo (n=52), online dictionaries (n=28) , and Google products (n=22), while the least used were Busuu (n=3), Hello Talks (n=4), and Podcast(n=4). In 2019, 173 students and teachers participated. The least used tools varied: Memrise (n=3), Podcast (n=3), and Tandem (n=2).

About the use of blogs, four significant studies were found that sought to determine the effectiveness of blogs in English language learning and teaching. These studies were conducted in Kwait, Portugal, and Spain and China. Four literature reviews also analyze the relationship between blogs and ELT and ELL.

Al-Qallaf and Al-Mutairi (2016) investigated the influence of blogs on teaching English as a foreign language to elementary school students in Kuwait through a mixed-method study. The authors used an adapted questionnaire to identify students’ attitudes and perceptions about blogs. They also used focus groups to go deeper into students’ answers to the survey.  95.7% of students said blogging is fun and exciting. Only 65.2% like to read their classmates’ posts. All students manifested that blogging helped them to improve their writing and vocabulary. Also, they improved their spelling and grammar accuracy when the teacher provided corrective feedback to the comments in the blog. Students see writing in blogs as a challenging activity, but they agree on saying that blogging improves their writing, vocabulary, and oral fluency. They also increased motivation towards learning, improved critical thinking skills, and learning independence. Fernandes (2017) also used a mixed method designed based on implementing a questionnaire in three different moments: exploratory, pilot, and final. The main objective was to explore the perceptions of primary and secondary teachers in Portugal about the strengths and weaknesses of working with weblogs in their classrooms. The results show some benefits, like blogs fostering students’ autonomy, being better used as an extension of class work, and providing learning support. Blogs also benefit the development of reading and writing skills and raise students’ motivation when creating entries and sharing them with the outside world. Among the constraints, teachers are aware of the importance of blogs, but many of them are inactive or are not used for EFL purposes. Teachers report that some Portuguese schools are not equipped with technological gadgets, infrastructure, or technological support. Teachers lack motivation, time, and adequate training for blog activity. The questionnaire used in this study was adapted to inquire about teachers' perceptions of using blogs in English teaching in the current thesis study. Meanwhile, Pascual (2019) focused his research on secondary schools in Spain. He presents a teaching proposal that develops students’ communicative and digital competencies by implementing travel blogs. The study selects travel blogs to proceed to identify linguistic and discursive features. Then, lesson plans were designed based on principles of communicative language teaching and task-based approach. Results show that the proposal brought insights to improve students’ digital genre travel blogs. Jiang et al. (2019) developed case study research by surveying 112 students from an International Trade Practice Course in China using video blogs. The results show that 63.3 % of students favor using blogs in blended learning, 36.62% are on the fence, and no one is against it. Students who dealt with the improvement in learning by using vlogs manifested that most of the vlogs (78.64%) are consistent with what is learned in class. Besides, teachers give predominance to use videos that last from three to four minutes. To see the videos in the blogs, the majority do so just out of interest (45.63%) and watch them to clarify doubts (45.63%). Finally, the authors conclude that using video blogs in teaching is beneficial since they are renewed frequently and are an excellent strategy to improve timeliness and increase interest.

The first of the literature reviews was done by Reinhardt (2019). This author examined a corpus of 87 articles published from 2009 to 2018 on using social media for second and foreign language teaching and learning. The author analyzes blogs' importance by specifying four research stands: blogs for cultural learning and exchange, blogs for literacy and identity development, blogs for learning autonomy, for audience awareness and the importance of task design. This research review shows evidence that blogs enhance cultural learning, foster reflection, and enable students’ deep learning.

Iredale et al. (2019) also explore the use of social media in pre-service teacher education (ITE) in research qualitative articles and proceedings issued from 2009 to 2016. The population comprises new primary, secondary, ELT, and lifelong learning teachers. The authors include Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and wikis under this definition of social media. In a corpus of 55 papers, 11 were devoted to blogs. Some of the found affordances established that blogs enable peer engagement and reflection, develop academic writing skills, allow sharing resources and ideas, foster community formation, and provide evidence of professional development.

Meanwhile, some limitations concern teachers’ reluctance to provide student feedback and factors that demotivate the design of academic writing blogs. Jara (2021) inspected 52 selected articles using the Prisma methodology. From this corpus, only two articles are devoted to reviewing the use of blogs. Álvarez (2012) shows that blogs develop reading and writing skills in university students in Spain. He conducted a qualitative study whose outcomes present some limitations in using blogs: Students’ participation is reduced to entering the blogs, reading the content, and posting comments. Students are not required to dig into the information or use other resources to contrast information. Materials in most blogs are made of texts and a combination of text and multimedia. Few blogs include characteristics such as video format and the use of different programs and digital media. Alvarez and Bassa (2013) developed a qualitative case study focusing on analyzing the use of blogs in an Argentinian university. The outcomes demonstrate that blogs motivate students' learning and encourage the development of writing skills through self-learning and collaborative strategies. Finally, Arslan (2023) also used the Prima methodology to qualitatively analyze 53 articles to find if blogs improve 21st-century skills and English language skills. Blogging implementation yielded the following outcomes: it benefits the acquisition of most XXI-century skills (collaborative, reflective thinking, and autonomous learning), and it seems to be more effective in developing writing skills. Results dealing with the effectiveness of blogs for English learning are divergent. Some studies report positive results, and some others do not. From this debate, the current research analysis seeks to stablish the benefits of blog use in integration of digital tools that enhance language learning and allow students and teachers to grow in their digital competence development.

**Research Methodology**

**Data Collection Process**

Data for this study were collected through a questionnaire that included an explanation of the study, a consent letter participants need to agree with, a section about demographic information, and three dimensions: Teachers' Digital Competence, the use of Digital Technologies for English Teaching, and the use of blogs for English Teaching. The questionnaire was designed in Google Forms and administered through e-mail or personal request during school visits and recess in two national English Teaching events.

This research article reports the results of the last two dimensions. The items for using digital tools for English Teaching are an adaptation of the questionnaire designed by Alakrash and Razak (2021). The original instrument comprises students’ and teachers’ use of digital technologies. The current study considered only the second part, specifically the items that have to do with the development of the five skills that are part of the objective of this research project: listening, reading, speaking, vocabulary, and writing (Appendix B). The items dealing with the use of blogs are an adaptation of Fernandes (2017). The original test is structured in five parts with 26 closed-ended questions followed by two open-ended questions. The adapted version took 7 out of the 26 closed-ended questions (Appendix A).

**Data Collection Instrument**

Questions 22 to 27 refer to the use of blogs. The items in each question presented different categories. For instance, question 22 had eight different answers, while question 23 had only two options. Questions 28 and 29 are multiple-choice types. Responders had to mark the three main reasons for creating or not creating blogs.

Items 30 to 39 assess the use of digital technologies through a Likert scale where teachers react to the proposed statements by marking 1 (totally agree), 2 (agree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 4 (disagree), and 5 (totally disagree)

**Research Design**

This quantitative study uses different statistical techniques to determine the answers to the proposed research questions. The percentage of answers for each question in the two described dimensions was calculated using Quesenberry and Hurts (1964) confidence intervals of 95%. Answers for the Likert scale question type were represented using heat diagrams and bars. Averages and standard deviations were calculated for each digital tool used to develop each skill. A question with an average of 3 indicates a neutral use of the digital tool, an average greater than three indicates that the tool is used quite a bit, and an average less than 3 indicates little use.

**Software**

The data analysis was conducted using the statistical *software R* version 4.3.1. (R Core Team,2022) The *Likert package* version 1.3.5 (Bryer and Speerschneider, 2016) and *ggplot2* version 3.4.0 (Wickham H., 2016) were utilized to generate graphs and descriptive statistics. The analyses were performed with a significance level or error rate of 5%.

**Target Population**

The target population is made of in-service English teachers in Colombia who work for the private or/public sector in all levels of instruction: Basic (1-5 elementary and 6-9 secondary grades), Media (10-11 grades), Tertiary education, technical education, and language Institutes.

The population belongs to a non-probabilistic convenience sample. Three hundred-four surveys were answered, and 299 were valid for the study. Five of the answered surveys were discarded because data was not complete, or teachers manifested not to agree with the consent terms. Demographic information of the participants regarding genre and time of teaching experience are presented in tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1.**

*Classification of participants per genre*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| N | | % |
| Male | 130 | 43,5% |
| Female | 168 | 56,2% |
| No determined | 1 | 0,3% |

**Source:** own elaboration

**Table 2.**

*Classification of participants per year of experience*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| 1-5 years | 61 | 20,4% |
| 6-10 years | 95 | 31,8% |
| 11-15 years | 57 | 19,1% |
| 16-20 years | 33 | 11,0% |
| More than 20 years | 53 | 17,7% |

**Source**: own elaboration

**Objective and Research Questions**

The main objective of this dimension of the exploratory questionnaire was to inquire about the most and least digital tools teachers use to develop language skills.

RQ 1: Which are the digital tools teachers use the most to develop each language skill (listening, reading, vocabulary, speaking, and writing)?

RQ 2: Which are the digital tools teachers use the least for developing each language skill (listening, reading, vocabulary, speaking, and writing)?

RQ 3: How did teachers first know about blogs?

RQ 4: What experience do teachers have in using and designing blogs?

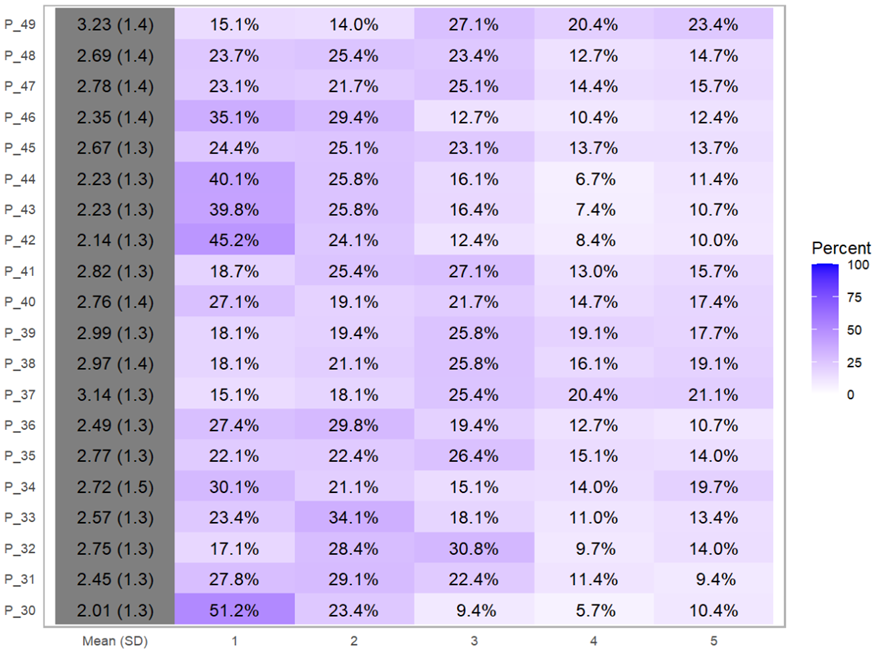
RQ 5: Why do teachers create or not create blogs?

**Results of Use of Digital Tools for English Teaching**

RQ 1: Which are the digital tools teachers use the most to develop each language skill (listening, reading, vocabulary, speaking, and writing)?

**Table 3**

*Analysis of most and least used digital tools*

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**Source:** own elaboration

According to the analysis, questions corresponding to items 36, 46, 31, 42, 44, 43, and 30 were under a mean of 2.5 or a percentage higher than 57% of answers inside the options of “Agree” and “Totally agree.” (Appendix B). It means that the most frequently used resources for English teaching are YouTube (75%) and English newspapers (57%) for listening skills, online applications (57%) for speaking skills, games such as crossword and word puzzles (69%) to practice vocabulary, the use of flashcards and online dictionaries (66%) for vocabulary acquisition, and the use of websites (65%) for reading skills.

**Table 4**

*Mean and standard deviation of scores for the use of digital tools*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Question** | **Media** | **D.E** | **Question** | **Media** | **D.E** |
| **P\_49** | **3,2** | **1,4** | **P\_45** | **2,7** | **1,3** |
| **P\_37** | **3,1** | **1,3** | **P\_33** | **2,6** | **1,3** |
| **P\_39** | **3,0** | **1,3** | **P\_32** | **2,8** | **1,3** |
| **P\_38** | **3,0** | **1,4** | **P\_36** | **2,5** | **1,3** |
| **P\_34** | **2,7** | **1,5** | **P\_46** | **2,4** | **1,4** |
| **P\_40** | **2,8** | **1,4** | **P\_31** | **2,5** | **1,3** |
| **P\_47** | **2,8** | **1,4** | **P\_42** | **2,1** | **1,3** |
| **P\_35** | **2,8** | **1,3** | **P\_43** | **2,2** | **1,3** |
| **P\_41** | **2,8** | **1,3** | **P\_44** | **2,2** | **1,3** |
| **P\_48** | **2,7** | **1,4** | **P\_30** | **2,0** | **1,3** |

**Source**: own elaboration

RQ 2: Which are the digital tools teachers use the least for the development of each language skill (listening, reading, vocabulary, speaking, and writing)

Questions 37, 38, 39, and 49 obtained a mean over 3,0 or a percentage higher than 35% inside the options of “Disagree” and “Totally Disagree” It means that the least used digital technologies are applications for voice recognition like Busuu (41%), Grammarly and Grammar Checker (37%) for writing skills, the use of chat rooms  (35%) to incentivize writing skills, and the use of applications like Newsella (44%) for reading comprehension skills. Digital tools to improve writing skills tend not to be used.

**Results of the Use of Blogs**

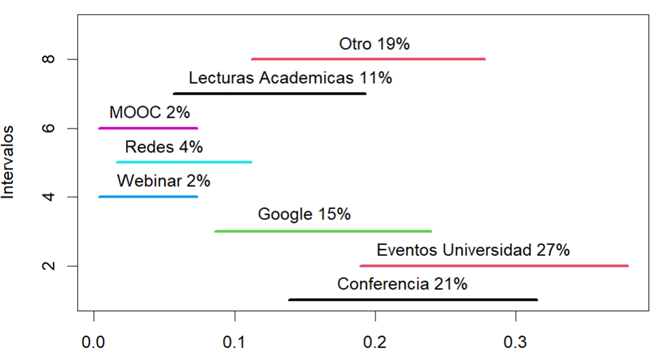
This section presents the results of the second dimension of the exploratory questionnaire, which assesses teachers’ use of blogs (items 22 to 29). The instrument is an adaptation of Fernandes’ (2017) data collection instrument.

RQ 3: How did teachers first know about blogs?

The Confidence Intervals of Quessenberry-Hurts showed a 95% confidence interval for this item. Teachers knew about using blogs for educational purposes, mainly through academic events inside and outside their educational institutions. Few (0%) knew about blogs utilizing web platforms or websites like Moocs or webinars.

**Figure 1**

*Results for how teachers knew about blogs.*



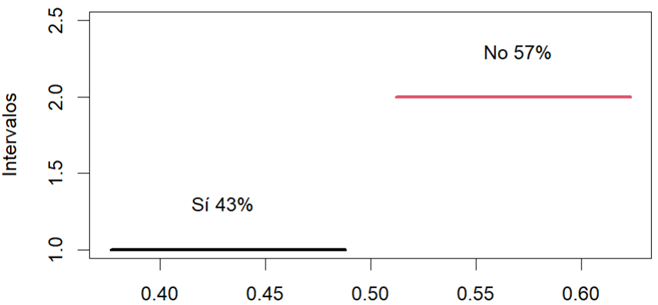
**Source:** own elaboration.

RQ 4: What experience do teachers have in using and designing blogs?

To answer these questions, the results of these four questions were considered: Have you ever used blogs in your teaching work? How often do you use blogs in class? Have you created any Edublog or blog for teaching English as a Foreign Language? How many blogs have you created for this purpose? What kind of blogs have you created?

**Figure 2**

*Have you ever used blogs in your teaching work?*



**Source**: own elaboration

The results show that there is a tendency in teachers to consider that they have not used blogs for teaching purposes. However, the difference is not very representative.

**Figure 3**

*How many blogs have you created?*

Gráfico

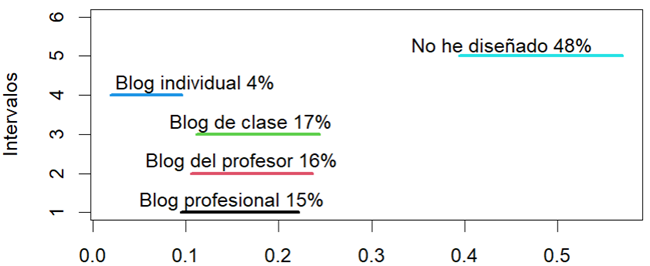
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**Source:** own elaboration

Most teachers have not created blogs (55%), although a big proportion consider that they have created at least one blog.

**Figure 4**

*What kind of blogs have you created?*

**

**Source:** own elaboration

A big proportion of teachers (48%) have not designed a blog, while another proportion considers that they have designed blogs with different purposes.

RQ 5: Why do teachers create or not create blogs?

**Table 5**

*Reason for teachers to create blogs.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Reason for teachers to create blogs (Q28)** | **Quantity** | **Percentage** |
| For learning purposes. | 161 | 17% |
| To foster students’ autonomy. | 143 | 15% |
| To have an audience. | 23 | 2% |
| To promote speaking/listening practice about proposed topics in the blog. | 52 | 5% |
| To keep a digital learning portfolio. | 74 | 8% |
| To take learning outside the classroom and develop reading and writing habits. | 126 | 13% |
| As an alternative to traditional assessment practices. | 77 | 8% |
| To share resources, lesson plans, and ideas. | 93 | 10% |
| To motivate students to learn. | 86 | 9% |
| To develop digital competencies. | 112 | 12% |
| **Total of selected items** | **947** |  |

**Source**: own elaboration

The strongest reasons for teachers to create blogs are to enhance collaborative learning (17%), followed by the rationale of promoting students’ autonomy (15%), and to take learning outside the classroom and develop reading and writing habits (13%).

**Table 6**

*Reason for teachers not to create blogs.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Reason for not creating blogs (Q 29)** | **Quantity** | **Percentage** |
| Blog design is time-consuming. | 181 | 20% |
| Teachers must attend to many responsibilities in their workday. | 155 | 17% |
| Most teachers lack the confidence to create and administer their blogs. | 117 | 13% |
| There is no technological support in the institution. | 45 | 5% |
| Teachers do not have enough training in the use of ICT. | 172 | 19% |
| Classrooms are crowded, and teachers may encounter difficulties managing the course if they allow their students to use blogs. | 74 | 8% |
| Reading and writing habits are changing; teachers are skeptical about investing time and effort in creating and managing blogs. | 41 | 4% |
| Many institutions lack a good internet connection that enables teachers to use technological tools/platforms for teaching and learning, let alone for creating blogs. | 141 | 15% |
| **Total of selected items** | 926 |  |

**Source**: own elaboration

The reasons for teachers not to create blogs are associated with time investment and lack of training in the use of technology. 20% consider this activity time-consuming, 19% think they lack technological competence, and 17% believe multiple job responsibilities do not allow them to invest time in blog design.

In conclusion, teachers get acquainted with using blogs for the first time in academic activities organized by their programs or educational institutions where they work (27%). The second highest proportion indicates that they also know about this in seminars and conferences they attend for professional development (21%). Almost half of the teachers surveyed (49%) do not use blogs in their teaching, 57% do not create them, and only 5% use them. Of that 52% percentage of teachers who said they have created blogs, 10 % have created more than two blogs, and 35% have created at least one.

Regarding the types of blogs teachers have created, 15 % are class blogs, 16% are teachers’ or students’ blogs resulting from training courses, 17% are blogs where the teacher is the administrator, and 17% are blogs where students are co-authors.

**Discussion**

The results of the different studies allow us to conclude that there is a tendency to use digital resources for English teaching and learning (Área et al., 2016). The growing offer of digital tools and websites constitutes an opportunity to enrich didactics, but it also becomes a challenge for teachers to be constantly updated with innovations (Khatoony & Nezhadmehr, 2020; Eilen et al., 2021; Lukas & Yunus, 2021). Overcoming these challenges results in advancing Teachers’ Digital Competence.

The second area of DigCompEdu (European Commission, 2017) deals with teachers’ capacities to select, create, modify, share, and protect digital resources. To grow in this specific area, it is necessary that teachers self-assess the use they do of technology in the classroom, and it is where the SAMR Model (Puentedura, 2014) makes sense. A teacher needs to be aware of how traditional classroom practices, like using a printed atlas to locate a place in the world, are substituted by using Google Earth. In this example, what changes is the tool but not the lesson objective.

As mentioned, this literature review allows us to realize the number of digital tools and resources available on the Web and the significant results in language learning. It demands that teachers keep language learning objectives in mind when selecting the appropriate resources that enable their achievement instead of going elsewhere to favor using digital resources.

In regards to the results of the use of digital tools and considering what Puentedura (2014) describes in his model as “augmentation,” teachers need to increase the management of resources to go, for instance, beyond using YouTube for practicing listening and producing videos for speaking to add other valuable gadgets like Lyrics Training that demands an active listening role and adjusts to student’s learning pace, or video editors like Vimeo that focus on offering options for creating one's videos. In the same sense, teachers transform old didactic practices when they modify the class interaction from a stative PowerPoint presentation to an interactive activity using Kahoot or Google Jam Board to survey students’ comprehension or include their participation by writing their ideas to share with the class.

Alluding to the use of blogs, it seems that there are more benefits than disadvantages to their use by teachers and students (Wang & Chiou, 2022). Despite being a multifaceted and flexible platform that permits the integration of multiple digital gadgets and a friendly interface, it seems that the obstacles to better use of blogs have to do with the low participation of students and the lack of motivation (Conde-Caballero et al., 2019). Without any doubt, growing in the use of digital tools and blogs enhances teachers’ digital competencies. Having the DigCompEdu Framework (European Commission, 2017) as a reference contributes to developing the Digital Resources and Teaching and Learning areas as teachers foster collaborative and self-regulated learning among students. The Empowering Students area also benefits since using digital tools makes the differentiation and personalization of knowledge possible.

**Conclusions**

The review of the literature reveals that there is a variety of digital tools that can be used for language learning. Google Products, Kahoot, Canva, and WhatsApp are the most used while reading and vocabulary are the most favored skills with their use.

Regarding blogs, the studied research shows more benefits than disadvantages. Among the benefits, teachers mention that blogs foster the development of XXI-century skills like collaboration, communication, and creativity. Besides, they become valuable learning support, enhance cultural learning, and incentivize reflection and knowledge sharing. Reading and writing skills development tends to be privileged when using blogs.

Some of the mentioned disadvantages have to do with the reduced participation of students when accessing blogs and the lack of teachers’ training to improve their design and effective use for language learning purposes. Videoblogs seem to be a more valuable option since they dynamize the presentation of content and allow the development of productive skills.

YouTube and English newspapers are the most frequently used resources to develop listening skills. At the same time, online applications are commonly used for speaking, games like crossword puzzles, flashcards, online dictionaries for vocabulary acquisition, and websites for reading comprehension. Conversely, voice recognition tools are the least used for speaking, Grammarly and Grammarly Checker for writing, and Newsela for reading comprehension. Writing is the less favored skill with the use of digital tools. Concerning blogs, teachers get acquainted with their use for academic aims, mainly through events inside and outside their institutions. Most teachers assume that they have not used blogs for educative purposes; a significant portion have not created or designed a blog in their lives from those teachers who have positively created at least one blog. These are class blogs, teacher’s blogs, and professional blogs.

Continuing training programs that properly lead teachers to incorporate digital tools into their didactics could be vital to getting the best of the ICT and ELT alliance. This program needs to consider the three components proposed by Koehler and Mishra in their TPACK Model (2009): technological knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge. Teachers must grow and integrate technological competence into their teaching didactics to obtain the best discipline knowledge and make learning happen. Teachers require constant support from technology and pedagogy experts to maximize the resources available on the Web and produce didactic content that fosters students’ motivation toward learning through technology.

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**Appendix A. Use of Blogs in EFL Class**

Adapted from: Fernandes, A. M. d. S. (2017).

22. *¿Cómo se enteró por primera vez de los blogs como un herramienta educativa?*

En un seminario, conferencia u otro tipo de evento de desarrollo profesional

En una actividad académica que organizó el programa o la universidad.

A través de Google u otro motor de búsqueda.

En un webinar.

A través del uso de redes sociales, tales como Facebook o Twitter.

En un MOOC (Massive Open Online Course)

A través de lecturas académicas.

En otro contexto.

*23. ¿Ha utilizado blogs alguna vez para su labor docente ?*

Si.

No.

*24. ¿Con qué frecuencia utiliza los blogs en sus clases?*

Todas las semanas en el semestre académico.

1-3 veces por semestre.

1-3 veces por año.

Nunca

*25. ¿Ha creado algún edublog o un blog para propósitos de enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera?*

Si.

No.

*26. ¿Cuántos edublogs o EFL blogs ha creado?*

Uno.

Dos.

Más de dos.

Ninguno.

*27. ¿Qué tipo de blogs ha diseñado? Seleccione la opción que mejor describa sus blogs.*

Un blog profesional o blog de tutor, con información del curso y recursos para sus estudiantes.

Un blog del profesor o blog del estudiante, creado a partir de un curso de desarrollo profesional.

Un blog de clase, en el que usted es el administrador y sus estudiantes son coautores.

Un blog de clase que incorpora los blogs individuales de sus estudiantes.

No he diseñado blogs.

*28. Seleccione, según su criterio, las 3 razones más importantes para crear blogs.*

Para propósitos de aprendizaje colaborativo.

Para incentivar la autonomía de los estudiantes.

Para tener una audiencia.

Para incentivar la práctica de speaking/listening sobre temas expuestos en el blog.

Para propósitos de llevar un portafolio digital.

Para llevar el aprendizaje fuera del aula de clase y desarrollar hábitos de lectura y de escritura.

Como una alternativa a las formas tradicionales de evaluación.

Para compartir recursos, planes de clase e ideas.

Para motivar a los estudiantes.

Para desarrollar competencias digitales.

*29. Seleccione, según su criterio, 3 razones por las cuales los profesores no crean blogs para sus clases.*

La creación de blogs implica inversión de demasiado tiempo.

Los profesores tienen que atender muchas responsabilidades de su jornada laboral.

Muchos de los profesores carecen de confianza para crear y administrar sus blogs.

No hay soporte tecnológico en la Universidad.

Los profesores no tienen el suficiente entrenamiento en el uso de las tecnologías de la información y la comunicación.

Las clases tienen muchos alumnos y lo profesores pueden tener dificultades para el manejo del curso si permiten que sus estudiantes utilicen los blogs.

Los hábitos de lectura y escritura están cambiando; los profesores son escépticos acerca de invertir tiempo y esfuerzo creando y administrando blogs.

Muchas instituciones no tienen buena conexión de internet que permita a los profesores utilizar herramientas tecnológicas/plataformas para la enseñanza y el aprendizaje, y mucho menos para la creación de blogs.

**Appendix B.**Use of digital technologies for ELT. Adapted: Alakrash, Hussien Mohamad, and Norizan Abdul Razak.

 Marque la mejor opción para cada habilidad en el uso de las tecnologías digitales para la enseñanza del inglés. Use la siguiente escala e incluya comentarios donde considere necesario.

1.     Totalmente en desacuerdo

2.     En desacuerdo

3.     Ni de acuerdo ni en desacuerdo

4.     De acuerdo

5.     Totalmente de acuerdo

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **USO  DE HERRAMIENTAS DIGITALES PARA LA ENSEÑANZA DE LA HABILIDAD DE ESCUCHA** | | | | | |
| **Ítem** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** |
| 30. Utilizo "YouTube" /Netflix" para mejorar las habilidades de escucha en mis estudiantes. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 31.Instruyo a mis estudiantes para que miren canales de noticias en inglés con el fin de mejorar sus habilidades de escucha. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 32.Utilizo audio libros para mejorar las habilidades de escucha en mis estudiantes. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 33. Utilizo podcast y audios de la radio para mejorar las habilidades de escucha en mis estudiantes. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **USO DE TECNOLOGÍAS DIGITALES PARA LA ENSEÑANZA DE LA HABILIDAD DE HABLA** | | | | | |
| 34. Uso aplicaciones, tales como Skype, Zoom o Google Meet, para practicar la habilidad de habla con mis estudiantes. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 35. Incentivo a mis estudiantes para que interactúen con hablantes nativos, a través de Internet o utilizando sitios web. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 36. Uso aplicaciones en línea para mejorar las habilidades de habla en mis estudiantes.  37. Uso aplicaciones de reconocimiento de voz, tales como Busuu, para mejorar la pronunciación de mis estudiantes. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **USO DE TECNOLOGÍA DIGITALES PARA LA ENSEÑANZA DE LA HABILIDAD DE ESCRITURA** | | | | | |
| 38. Utilizo  plataformas, tales como "Grammarly" y "Grammar Checker", para ayudar a mis estudiantes a mejorar sus habilidades de escritura. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 39. Motivo a mis estudiantes para que escriban en inglés en chat rooms, mensajes de correo electrónico o mensajes instantáneos. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 40.Utilizo herramientas de escritura colaborativa, tales como Google Docs, para compartir  con mis estudiantes sus composiciones escritas. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 41.Utilizo aplicaciones digitales, tales como Duolinguo, para mejorar las habilidades de escritura de mis estudiantes. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **USO DE TECNOLOGÍAS DIGITALES PARA LA ADQUISICIÓN DE VOCABULARIO** | | | | | |
| 42.Utilizo juegos en línea, tales como crucigramas y sopas de letras, para favorecer la adquisición de vocabulario con mis estudiantes. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 43. Utilizo tarjetas ilustradas en línea (flashcards) para ayudar a mis estudiantes a aprender nuevo vocabulario. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 44. Utilizo diccionarios en línea para ayudar a mis estudiantes a adquirir nuevo vocabulario. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 45.Utilizo libros en línea (e-books) con mis estudiantes para aprender nuevo vocabulario. |  |  |  |  |  |
| **USO DE TECNOLOGÍAS DIGITALES PARA LA ENSEÑANZA DE LA HABILIDAD DE LECTURA** | | | | | |
| 46. Utilizo sitios web para desarrollar las habilidades de lectura en mis estudiantes. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 47. Utilizo libros en línea (e-books) con mis estudiantes para mejorar sus habilidades de lectura. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 48. Pido a mis estudiantes que lean revistas y periódicos en línea para mejorar sus habilidades de lectura.  49. Uso aplicaciones en línea, tales como Newsella, para mejorar la comprensión lectora de mis estudiantes. |  |  |  |  |  |