Vitality of Technological Aid in Mastering English

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Abstract

English language as we all know is the most important language as it is a common language through which people from different parts of the world can communicate with each other. Hence it is very important for the people to learn English language. So, why not use internet and other technologies to learn English Language, after all, we human beings are living in the digital age, where Technology plays a very vital role in our day to day lives, where almost every person in the world has his or her own smartphones, where everyone can access the Internet by smartphones, or computers, for various countless purposes. This paper attempts to shed light on how exactly people can learn English Language through Internet and the other technologies that are available today. Not only that, this paper also shows how many, teachers and Students on an average take the assistance of the Internet to learn English Language and the benefits of using technology by learners as well as teachers across the globe.

Keywords: English Language, Internet, Technology

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Introduction

English Language as we all know is the most important language especially in a modern society. We can say that it has become a common language through which, people from across the world can communicate with each other. Needless to say that it plays a very vital role in almost every field we can think of in this world, like Business, Technology and many others. So it becomes very essential for us to learn English Language, especially in the 21st century.

Fortunately, in the age of technology, where almost everyone has got smart phones, learning English language is very easy. Technologies has given us a way through which we can learn English Language. So if we have technologies like smart phones, tabs, and if we can access the internet, we can learn English Language through installing a few apps and accessing a few websites.

The websites through which we can learn English language.

As mentioned earlier, through internet and the technologies available in the modern market, we can easily learn English language. Through the following websites or apps, we can learn English Language. The websites or apps are:

1) Babbel: Babbel is an English language learning website that has over 20 million users. It enables the users to learn new languages interactively through exercises. The Babbel ecosystem is accessible from a computer as well as on most of the mobile platforms.

2) Duolingo: Duolingo is another website that has approximately 300 million registered users throughout the world. It is pretty similar to Babbel and it also has the same disadvantages as Babbel.

3) Google Word Coach: Google Word Coach is an online platform (game) which is introduced recently by Google to increase the English language vocabulary of the Google users in a fun and engaging way. It pops up whenever you look up dictionary definitions, or when "Google Word Coach" is typed in the search bar. Here is a statement from a Google spokesperson on this feature:

"Google Word Coach is a game designed to help expand English Language vocabulary in a fun and engaging way. It appears under our dictionary and translate boxes or when someone searches for "Google Word Coach". It launched this month in non-English speaking countries and also in India. It may come to other countries and languages in the future."

Video Conference

Video Conference (VC) is another very effective method of learning English Language. According to the journal "Innovations in learning technologies for English language teaching" by Gary Motteram, Page- 25, By this method, learners can get exposure to native English speakers and can also learn English from specialist English Teacher. Not only that, it also allows the learners to collaborate with each other and hence, improve their English Language Communication skills.

There are many ways through which video conference can be done, some of them are skype, ooVoo, iChat, and Flash meeting. In case if learners are looking for low cost alternative to obtain video conference, then Adobe Connect is a very good solution to that problem. Not only it is cheap, but also it provides more protection for the students. Also it is free from advertising.

Information and Communication Technology

Information and Communication Technology (also known as ICT) is basically an extension of Information Technology (also known as IT). It is a very broad field which includes unification of audiovisual electronic devices and telephone lines with computer devices through a wire or a wireless connection like WiFi. It can be defined as Electronic technologies that are used to create, store, display, edit and exchange information.

Needless to say that, it is playing a big role in teaching English to the English Learners as well as English Teachers. A research paper ("An Exploratory Study of ICT use in English Language Learning among EFL University Students" by Dang Hoang Tri and Nhung Hong Thi Nguyen, page- 35) clearly states that, a big advantage and a big contribution made by ICT is raising an interest, it gives them motivation to learn English Language. That paper also says that it gives the learners a large amount of good materials so that learning English language becomes more interesting.
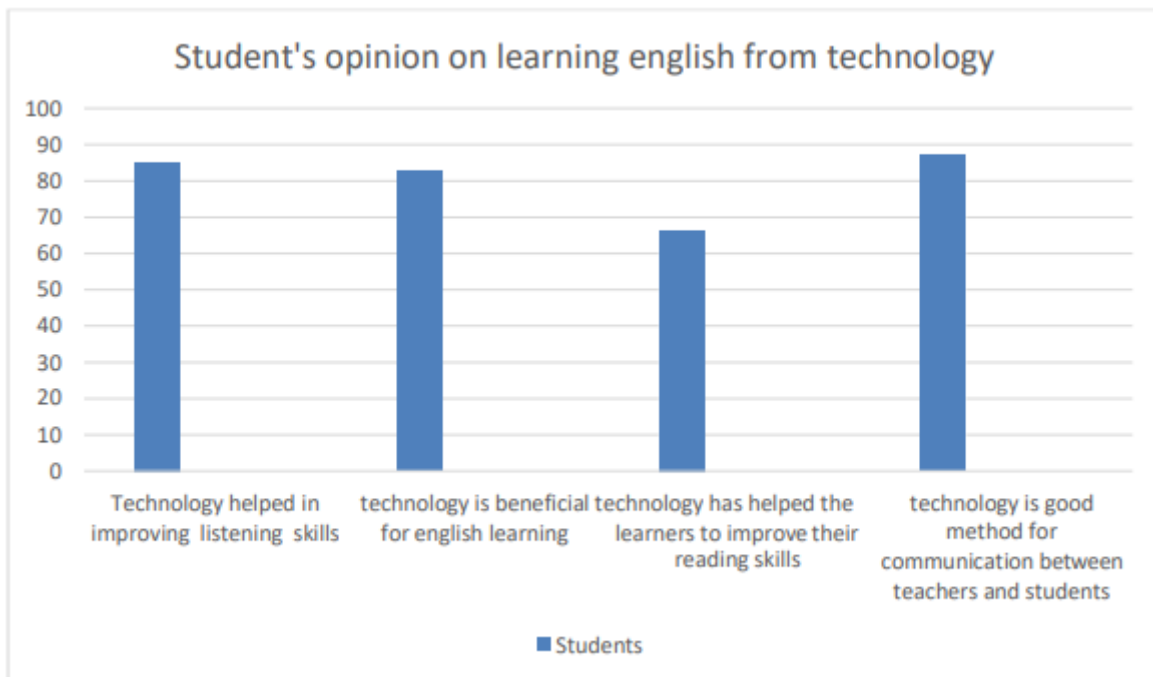
Student's opinion on using technology to learn English Language

In the 21st century, students have been using technology for various purposes on a regular basis. So it is quite natural that the idea of using technology for learning English Language is being appreciated and is highly accepted by the students. There are many research papers which gives the evidence that the students are ready to learn English Language from technology.

1) According to the studies shown by the research paper ("An Exploratory Study of ICT use in English Language Learning among EFL University Students" by Dang Hoang Tri and Nhung Hong Thi Nguyen, page- 40 and page-41), a vast majority of 82.6% of the students strongly agree that the usage of technology for English Language would be very much beneficial for them. As far as reading ability is concerned, 66.4% of the students agreed that ICT helped them to improve their reading ability. It is also to be noted that 85.2% of the students agreed with the fact that technology particularly ICT has helped them enhance their listening skills and 87.2% of the students believe that ICT is a very effective method for communication between teachers and students. This paper also mentions that it is because of technology that students had more fun in learning English Language and the students would like the English teachers to use technology to teach them English language.
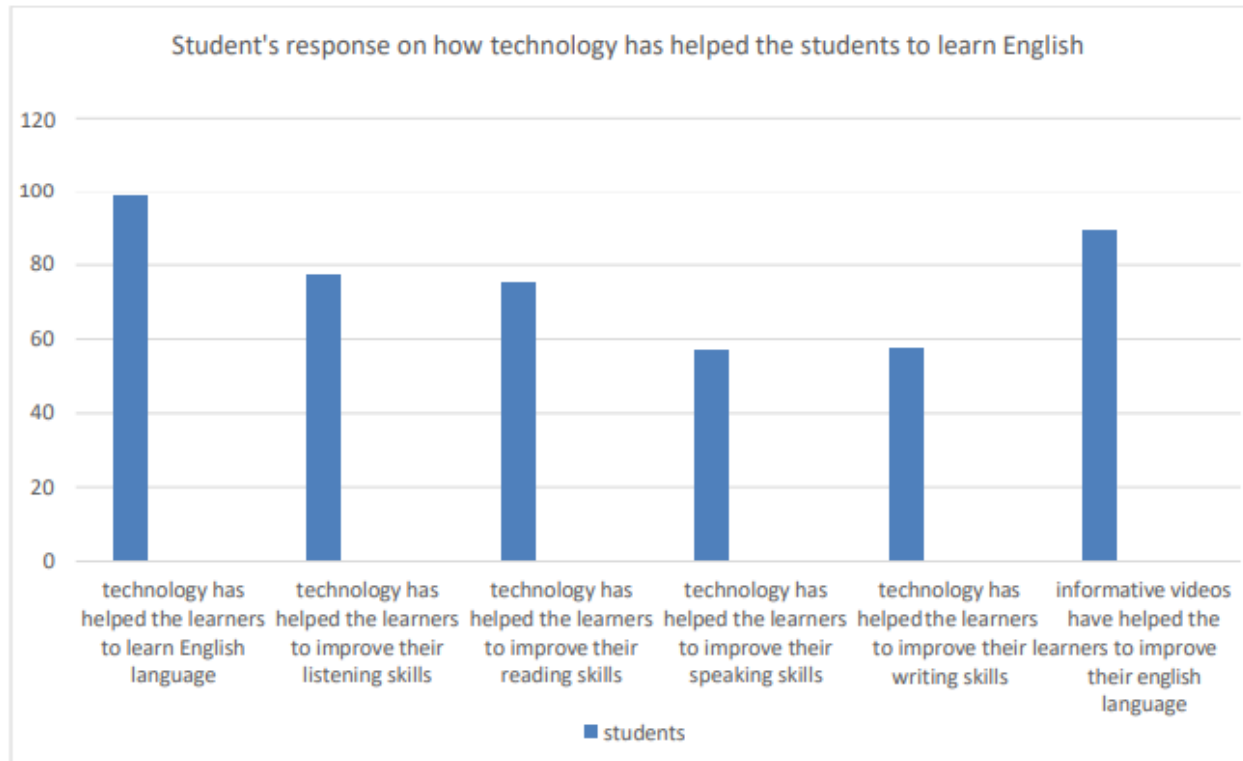
Student's opinion on learning english from technology

2) The research paper "Learning English with Modern Technology Student Survey Results" by P. Fahy and M Sturm, page-12, also says that 98.6% of the students agreed to the fact that Technology including internet, online materials and ICT has helped them learn English language. To be more precise, 89.7% of the students agreed that watching English informative videos, animations has helped them a lot in learning English Language, 77.7% of the students agreed that technology has helped them to enhance their listening skills, 75.3% of the students agreed that it is because of technology that their reading skills have been increased. As far as writing skills are concerned, 57.6% students believe that technology has helped them to improve their writing skills and 57% of the students agreed to the fact that technology has helped the learners to a great extent to improve their English Language speaking skills.
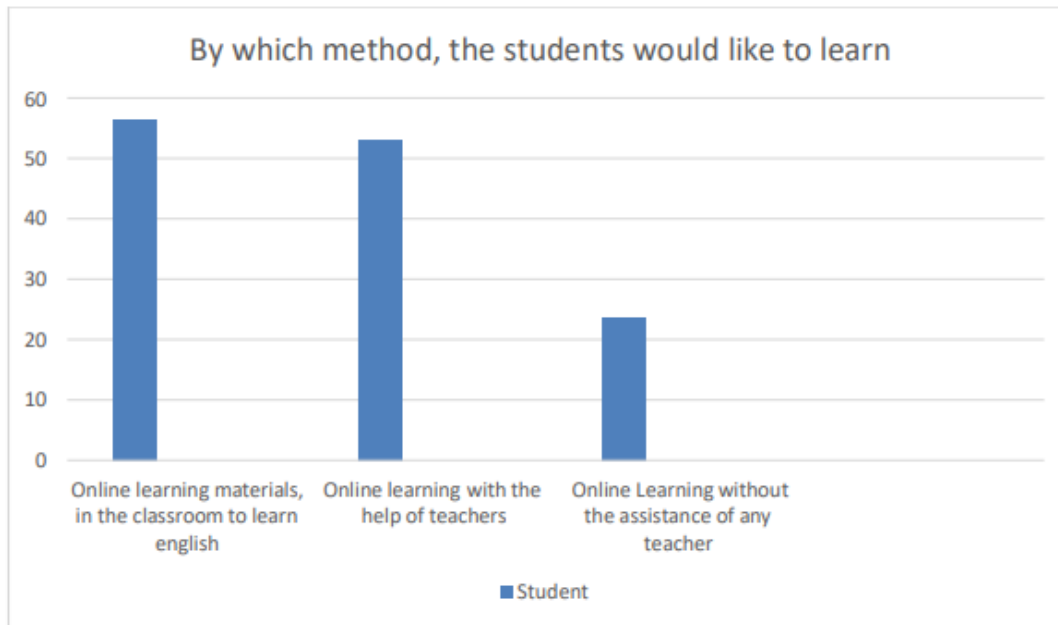
In the paper, it is also to be noted that, when the students were asked that by which method, the students would like to learn, 56.5% of the students liked the idea of using online learning materials, in the classroom to learn English language, 53.1% of the students agreed with the idea of online learning with the help of the teacher and 23.7% of the students liked the idea of online learning without the help of any teacher.

By which method, the students would like to learn

A bar chart showing three methods. The vertical axis ranges from 0 to 60. "Online learning materials, in the classroom to learn english" is approximately 56. "Online learning with the help of teachers" is approximately 53. "Online Learning without the assistance of any teacher" is approximately 24.

■ Student

3) The results shown by the research paper "Student's Perception towards Technology in Learning English as a Foreign Language: A case Study of Higher Secondary Students of Pabna, Bangladesh" by Sayed Rafequl Hasan Milon and Md. Hafiz Iqbal page – 50 also agrees with the results of the previous two research papers. According to the paper, 61.66% of the students says that technology provides enjoyment to the students while learning English Language, 43.33% of the students think that by learning English Language by technology, they gain confidence and motivation to learn English Language. 58.33% of the students agree to the fact that technology has helped them to enhance their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. 59.16% of the students have the opinion that technology makes learning much easier and one can learn English Language at any time and any place. 58.33% of the students believe that technology can help them improve their academic performance. Also, 63.33% of the students believe that the technology could play a big role in increasing active involvement of the students.

In the previous three research papers, we can clearly see that students find learning English Language by technology to be fun and they get motivation to learn English Language from it. It is also to be noted that learning English Language with the help of Technology has helped the students to enhance their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Students also agree to the fact that technology particularly ICT is good method for communication between teachers and students. Hence, from the previous three research papers, we can conclude that students are ready to accept the idea of learning English Language by technology.

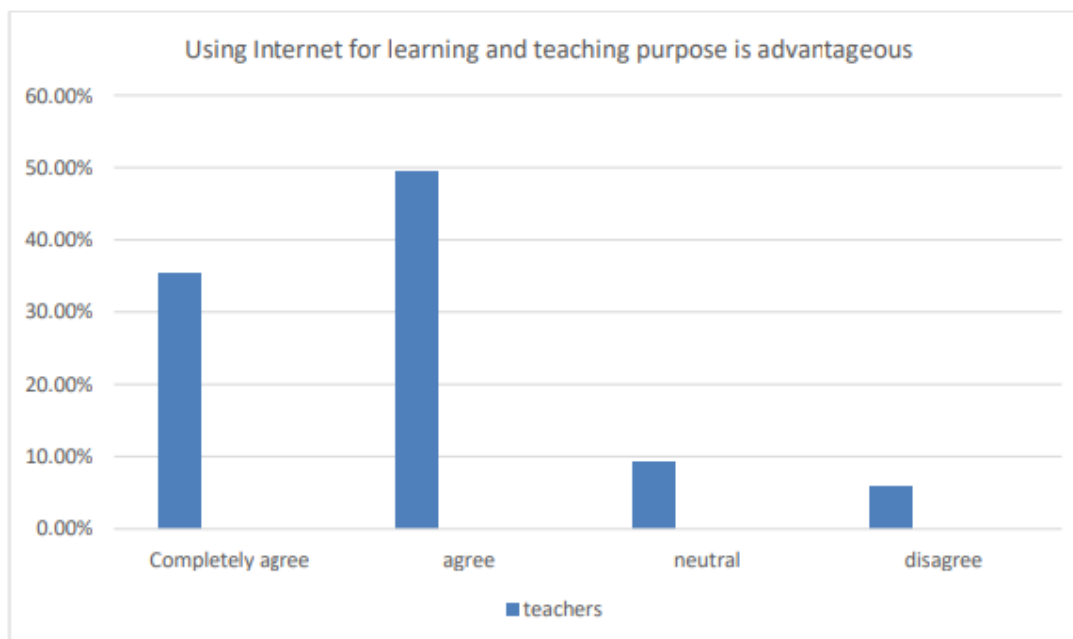**Teacher's opinion on teaching English Language by Technology**

As we have seen earlier, Students are ready to embrace the idea of learning English Language with the assistance of the technology. Now, the next question that arises is that, what does teacher think about using technology to learn English Language. There are few research papers which tells us that, like the students, teachers also agree to the fact that technology particularly ICT and internet are very useful for the purpose of teaching English Language.

1) The research paper named as "Teacher's Attitude towards the use of ICT in English Language Teaching: A survey." by Simhachalam Thamarana, page – 706 and page - 707 clearly states that 49.41% of the teachers agree to the fact that using internet for teaching and learning purpose is very advantageous, 35.29% of the teachers strongly agree to this fact. But it is also to be noted that only 9.41% of the teachers decided to remain neutral and also a minority of 5.88% of the teachers have the opinion that the use of internet for teaching and learning purpose would not be beneficial for them, in fact those teachers
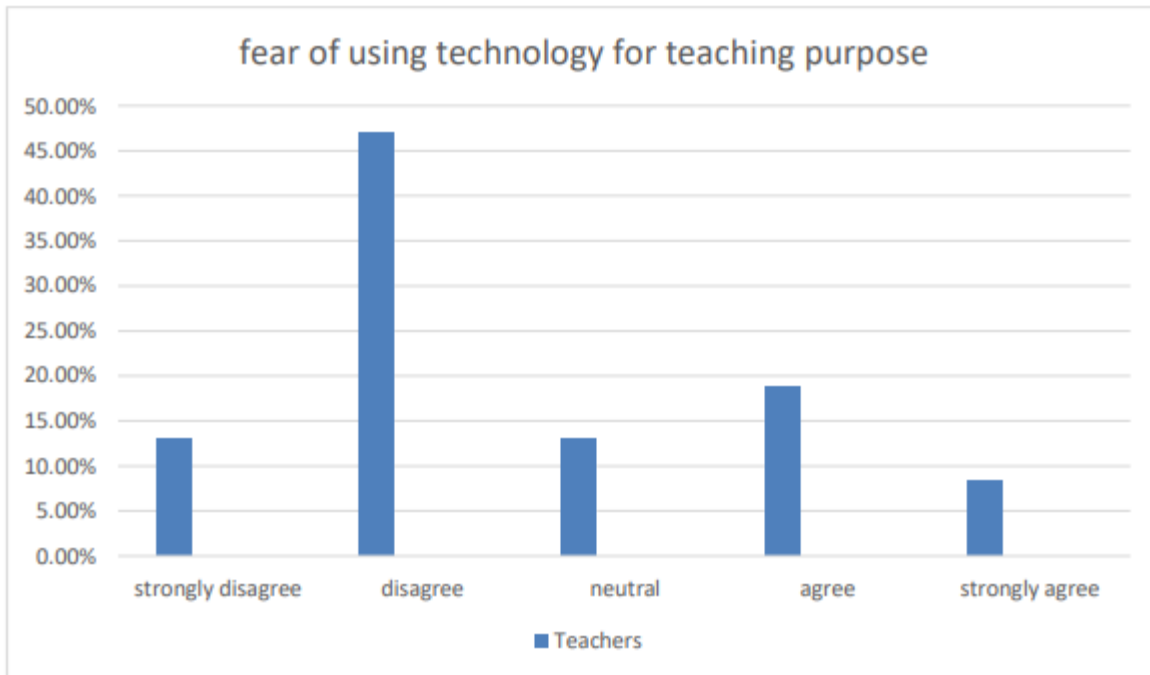
have the opinion that using internet for learning and teaching purpose would be

disadvantageous for them.

In the research paper, it is mentioned that when the teachers were asked if the teachers

had any fear regarding the use of technology for teaching purpose, then, it was found that a

majority of 47.06% of the teachers disagree to this fact and 12.94% of the teachers strongly

disagree to this fact. It is also to be noted that 12.94% of the teachers decided to remain neutral,

18.82% of the teachers agreed to this fact and 8.24% of the teachers completely agreed to the

fact that they have the fear of using technology for teaching purpose.
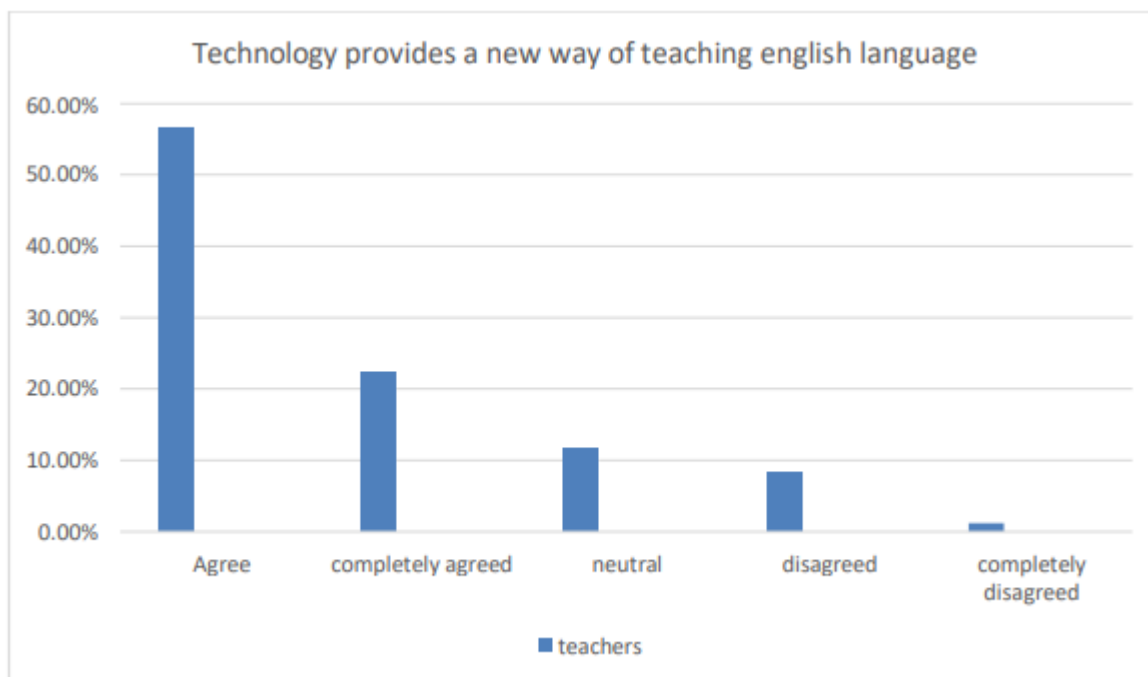
fear of using technology for teaching purpose

As far as teacher's opinion on Technology particularly ICT providing new method of teaching English Language is concerned, we get a very positive response from teachers, a vast majority of 56.47% of the teachers agree to the fact that technology particularly ICT provides a new way of teaching English Language, 22.35% of the teachers strongly agreed to this fact. But, it is also to be noted that 11.76% of the teachers decided to remain neutral, 8.24% of the teachers disagreed to this fact and a minority of 1.18% of the teachers strongly disagreed to the fact that technology provides a new way of teaching English Language.

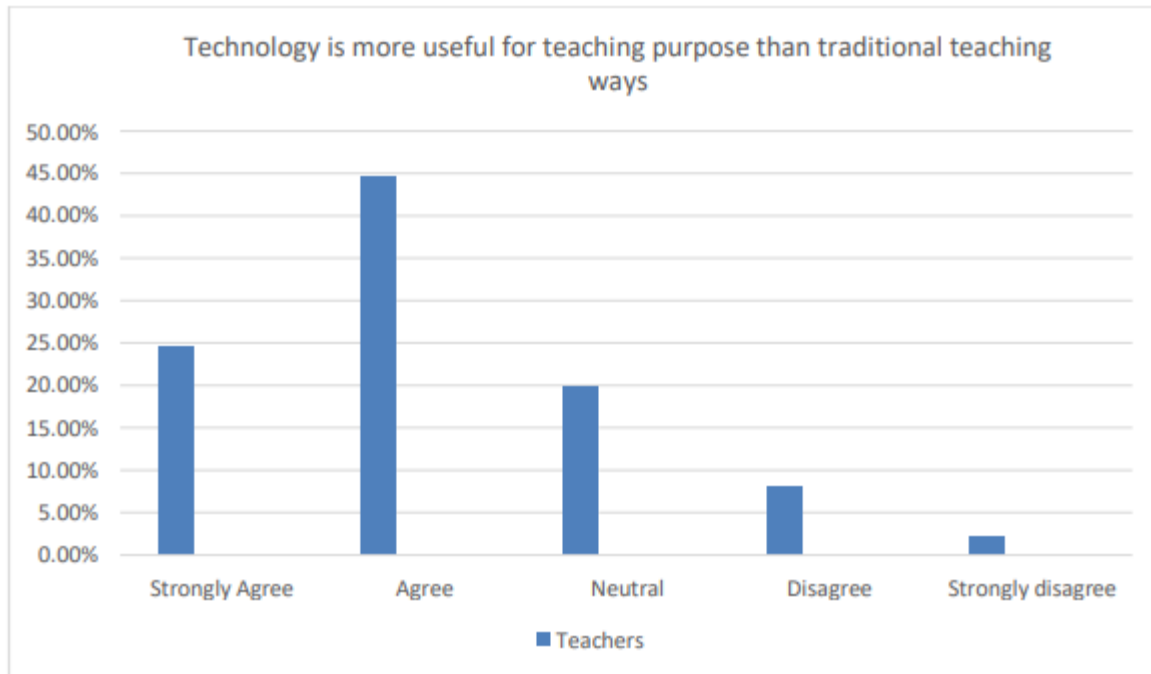VITALITY OF TECHNOLOGICAL AID IN MASTERING ENGLISH   13

In the research paper, it is also mentioned that the teachers were also asked whether the traditional way of teaching is better or the use of technology for teaching purpose. According to the paper, a majority of 44.71% of the teachers agreed to this point and 24.71% of the teachers strongly agreed to the point. 20.00% of the teachers decided to remain neutral, 8.24% of the teachers disagreed to the point and a minority of 2.35% of the teachers strongly disagreed to the fact that technology is more useful for teaching purpose, in fact, those teachers find the traditional way of teaching to be better. The probable reason for resorting to the traditional teaching ways by those teachers maybe because of the lack of exposure of technology and its knowledge to them. But from the above research paper, we can conclude that teachers are ready to accept the new idea of using technology to learn English Language.

Technology is more useful for teaching purpose than traditional teaching ways

Conclusion

From the above discussions, we can say that teachers as well as Students believe that teaching English Language by the use of Technology is a very good idea. As mentioned earlier, by using Technology to learn English Language, students have enhanced their speaking, reading, writing and listening skills. Also teachers feel that compared to the traditional way of teaching English Language, teaching English Language with the assistance of Technology is better and beneficial for the students. In the paper "Student's Perception towards Technology in Learning English as a Foreign Language: A case Study of Higher Secondary Students of Pabna, Bangladesh" by Sayed Rafequl Hasan Milon and Md. Hafiz Iqbal, page-51, It is clearly mentioned that 21st century is the time, when the teachers should change the approach of teaching English Language by traditional methods and use the power of modern technology to help the students to learn English Language.

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