

# WHY SHALL WE USE TECHNOLOGY in SLT ?

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## ABSTRACT

The rapid development of technology has brought the change in the concept of education, in the methods and techniques. With this technological development, foreign language teaching has been changing and improving. In this study, computer assisted language learning is compared to traditional methods and CALL's making language teaching permanent, increasing the motivation of students with increasing success have been supported with the studies that have been completed.

## Keywords

CALL, Computer Assisted Language Learning, SLT, Second Language Teaching.

## ÖZET

Teknolojinin hızla gelişmesi eğitim-öğretim anlayışlarının, yöntem ve tekniklerinin de değişmesini beraberinde getirmiştir. Yabancı dil öğretimi teknolojide yaşanan bu gelişmeler doğrultusunda değişmekte ve gelişmektedir. Bu çalışmada, Bilgisayar destekli dil öğretimi (BDDÖ) geleneksel yöntemlerle karşılaştırılmış BDDÖ'nün dil öğretiminde öğrenmeyi kalıcı hale getirdiği, öğrenci motivasyonunu yükselterek başarıyı arttırdığı yapılan araştırmalarla desteklenmiştir.

## Anahtar Kelimeler

BDDÖ, Bilgisayar Destekli Dil Öğrenimi.

## INTRODUCTION

The Second Language Teaching (SLT) is being given greater importance day by day. Foreign/second language is taught at all formal education institutions, from kindergartens to universities. While some high schools (Anatolian, Private ones etc.) teach predominantly in English; the educational language of a few universities (Boğaziçi, Bilkent, METU etc.) is determined as English. Moreover, foreign language departments at several universities, public language

schools (TÖMER), private courses and language schools teach foreign/second language. But unfortunately, such a vital issue hasn't been as successful as it was expected to be. (Demircan, 1990, 9, 285; Demirel, 1999, 5).

When we observe the foreign language education process in Turkey, we can say that there are serious problems. A student has 450 hours English lessons until his/her graduation from secondary school and 800 hours until his/her graduation from the high school. Yet, it is observed that secondary and high school graduates donot have English language knowledge at a satisfactory level. (Karal & Berigel, 2006)

## Technology Assisted Language Learning

While acquiring mother tongue, a new-born child begins the process by differentiating and hearing the objects around him/her. During a long period of time, (s)he attempts to observe his/her environment and imitate his/her family members' –especially parents'– speech and behaviours. At first, (s)he starts his/her communication with specific words and then (s)he continues his/her communication with sentences that are grammatically adapted to the mother tongue. A person acquire and use his/her mother language respectively through listening, speaking and writing. But in our country, especially at state schools, it is like writing, speaking and listening. In fact, mostly listening skill is ignored. Although MNE (Ministry of National Education) has recently been attempting to solve this problem, the absence of educational materials and language laboratories at schools couldn't prevent the presence of this problem. It is observed that, while technology is quickly changing and improving, traditional methods used frequently in the classroom environment, couldn't meet the expected criteria. Today, technology –as it always does– helps us meet these expectations. Computer assisted education

applications appear to be a suitable and practical solution to meet educational needs and requirements.

The application of technology in the classroom environment, has always been a focused issue by foreign language teachers and researchers. In order to individualise the education, several methods are created; while some of them are gained acceptance; the rest are met with a refusal. One of the systems developed as a result of these individualisation endeavors, is CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning), an individualised teaching system. CALL, an educational technology application, is one of the methods created to improve the efficiency of education programs (Odabaşı, 1994).

### **Computer Assisted Language Learning**

The method in which a student sees his/her inefficiencies and performance, gets feedbacks and manages his/her self-learning and assessing; more interest of him/her is provided via the computer programs involving graphics, sounds, animations and figures, is shortly called CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) (Baki, 2002; Senemoğlu, 2001).

According to Uşun (2000), CALL is a mixture of learning principles and computer technology method, in which -as a learning environment- computer, strengthens the teaching process and learning motivation ; and students benefit from it with their individual pace.

CALL is a comparatively new and quickly improving area, that examines the role of information and communication technology in the process of language teaching and learning. This field provides a productive environment for pioneer, innovative and high level creative thoughts and studies.

CALL is seen as a language teaching-learning approach, in which computer is used as a tool of presentation, helper, assessment and communication. (Ateş etc., 2006)

Within its edict published in 2001, CALLICO (Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium) shared the establishings below:

1. In order to create learning environments, including high level interactions that will form the activities, improving the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, CALL utilizes the advanced technology's opportunities.

2. Webs with high level speed, provide the students with the opportunities of seeing the authentic cultural sources and meeting people who use the language they learn, as a native language.

3. When integrated with an educational plan, these new technologies raise the learning opportunities in an incredible amount.

4. CALL researchers examine and assess how to integrate these new learning options with effective learning process.

5. Researchers investigate what kind of information these new learning approaches will provide us during a learning process.

According to the studies carried out up to now, the permanency level of the students that are taught within a CALL application is comparatively higher than the ones' taught with traditional methods. (Demirel, 1993; Makaracı, 2004; Gömleksiz & Sertdemir, 2005)

### **The Permanency Effect of CALL on Learning**

In foreign language courses, various materials and technologies are used according to the teaching objectives and students' profiles. Audial and visual materials that are used in education, are seen as vital in providing the permanency of learning. (Demirel, 1993: 24).

Except their effects on learning' permanency, all of these materials have lots of functions in foreign language education in terms of raising the motivation, directing and making the students active.

Heyd (1990) lists the functions of communication tools in education as:

- Informative (It gives information about stress, rhythm, foreign culture and lifestyle)
- Making students active (reading, listening, writing, speaking, doing exercise etc.)
- Directive. (A text is attempted to be understood with the help of pictures. Students are made to do exercises from a source. Students' attention is directed to specific topics thanks to various colors.)
- Increasing the willness of learning. (Lessons become more interesting.)

- Making the lessons funnier and creating an environment in which a second language is spoken.

Makaracı's study (2004) –one of the studies about CALL's effect on the permanency and success level of learning- shows that in the period of practising the grammatical structures learnt before, there is a meaningful difference (in favour of CALL) between the students taught by traditional methods and CALL.

According to Ates, Altunay and Altun's experimental study (2006), after being exposed to CALL, students' attitudes to English have undergone a change in a positive way. This finding is supported by other studies (Donaldson ve Kötter, 1999) that claim CALL attracts students' attention and motivates them to learn English.

With regard to this topic, Çevik (2001) and Odabaşı (1994), tried to find out the effect of CALL on students' success. These studies showed that CALL raised students' success and made the learning outcomes more permanent.

Alkan (1997) compared traditional and CALL procedures and found that computer raised the quality of learning process and made students more active, successful, productive and creative.

In his study with regard to the improvement of speaking skill in the application of CALL, Başkan (2007) used computer softwares and course books as a source and formed two groups, control and experimental, either of which has equal number of students . The students in the control group were taught by traditional methods, while the ones in the experimental group were taught by CALL.

Başkan's findings are as follows (2007):

- The studies of improving the speaking skill in a foreign language is more successful when CALL is applied.
- There is a meaningful difference between CALL and traditional methods in terms of students' success and learning outcomes' permanency. The students, taught by CALL, are found more successful.
- In order to increase the quality of teaching&learning process, computer

technology should be used in the lessons and language laboratories should be opened at schools.

The studies attempting to assess the efficiency level of the CALL, found that it is much more effective than the traditional methods and students learn more quickly thanks to it.

With the technological progresses, the increase and improvement of CALL applications, is becoming more important. More studies should be carried out in order to find out limitations of CALL and/or how (much) it supports the traditional foreign/second language teaching environments.

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