

University Students Attitudes towards Technology Usage for English learning: A case study of Moroccan Students

Fadwa Mafhoum

Istanbul Aydin University

Faculty of art and sciences, English language and literature department Istanbul-Turkey

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Abstract: Technology is one of the main components in improving the process of teaching and learning in colleges and institutions, especially for the study of the English language. It could allow the teacher to provide a lecture to the class that is more instructive. Since teachers can play English-language videos, music, documentaries, and even live theatre productions, technology is crucial for the field of teaching. The goal of the current research is to learn more about and analyse Moroccan students' attitudes regarding using technology to learn English. The study found that the majority of the students had a positive attitude toward using technology for learning English. The study also indicated that various forms of technology can be used to study English, but the participants used computers the most frequently. Data was collected from 212 Moroccan college students who did not major in English. The survey also discovered gender disparities in ICT attitudes, with female students being more at ease with utilizing technology for English language learning or study. It is advised that teachers provide their students access to useful websites and help them find trustworthy content to develop their language skills since technology is becoming an increasingly important tool for students learning English.

Keywords: English, Students, Morocco, Attitudes, Technology.

1. INTRODUCTION

A person's tendency to judge a symbol, item, or feature of this world favourably or unfavourably is referred to as their attitude (Katz, 1960, p. 168). Although developed via socialization, attitudes differ amongst people and groups as a result of cultural and social experiences. A person's attitude may be defined as their "personal beliefs and views" or a "learned, worldwide appraisal of an item (person, location, or problem)" (Haney et al., 2002).

The way a person behaves and thinks in social communities is greatly influenced by groups of ideas because these beliefs combine to generate attitudes or action agendas (Pajares, 1992; Perloff, 2010). An individual's engagement in a certain behaviour for anything reflects their attitude about that item. Because individuals adjust their degree and distribution of effort in line with the outcomes they anticipate from their acts, according to Bandura (1986), behaviour is better anticipated from assumptions than from the actual consequences of actions.

The purpose of this research was to examine how non-English major college students felt about using technology to learn English as a foreign language (herein EFL learning). According to some academics (Rogers, 2010; Bhattacharjee & Sanford, 2006), people's opinions regarding a certain technology may foretell how widely it will be adopted in the future. Before attempting to modify attitudes, it is crucial to assess the current state of such views ("World Bank Communication for Governance & Accountability Program"). To successfully integrate ICTs into EFL teaching and learning, it may be helpful to have a thorough understanding of college students' attitudes about technology use as well as the impact that gender and technological skill levels have on those views.

Given that French is taught starting at the lower levels of education and that English is provided as an elective subject in secondary school, it's possible that the most of Moroccan citizens lack a solid grasp of the language's foundations (Mydans, 2007). However, it has been seen over the last 10 years that most Moroccan children are leaning toward studying English.

The fact that English is the most commonly spoken language in the world may have something to do with this tendency in terms of the possible economic rewards as well as other advantages (Mydans, 2007). It is generally agreed that using modern technology to teach English entails creatively utilizing strategies, techniques, tools, and materials that have been specifically created for teaching English and that help students reach their objectives.

Research Questions

Therefore, the purpose of this research is to particularly engage Moroccan university students to respond to the following questions:

- What views do Moroccan college students have about using technology to study English?
- Does gender have a significant impact on how people feel about using technology?
- What are the various types of technology that is perceived to be beneficial to English language learning?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Evolution of Technology

Unavoidably, the way individuals connect has been altered as a result of the rising usage of worldwide media. Johann Gutenberg invented the printing press in 1454, which is regarded as the start of the technological revolution that defined our contemporary world. Everyone now acknowledges that it was a watershed event in educational history because it changed how easily accessible reading material was to students.

More crucially, before Gutenberg's invention made them broadly available to the majority of people, very few people could afford to buy such expensive books and newspapers. In her article "Effects of Technology on People," Jane R. Thiebaud said that the written word, followed by the printed word, and finally the technologized word "first mastered communication" (Gordon, 2007, p.55). She continues by saying that the revolution's most important characteristic is its drastic change (Shyamlee, 2012).

Thiebaud also mentions another important revolution: the technological one. Around the turn of the 20th century, a plethora of new broadcasting technologies appeared, heralding the end of the old and the start of the new. Radio is recognized as the earliest important broadcasting technology, before the telegraph and the telephone. It significantly contributed to the ease with which information could travel both inside and beyond national boundaries. The radio is one of the most important technology tools used in education. It is believed to be the most effective in improving the quality of classroom education (Shyamlee, 2012).

Television was created in 1925 to overcome the limits of straightforward traditional audio broadcasting. It has been a well-liked teaching resource since the 1960s. This phrase was used in distant education and describes "all modalities of learning and teaching in which those who study and those who teach are for all or most of the time in different locations" (Peregory & Boyle, 2012, p.32). In his essay "Learning to Swim Alone," Pettit makes the claim that all elements of a remote education course may provide learners aid.

According to this point of view, television is an important tool that aims to provide students more supporting material so they may spend more time studying outside of the classroom. Gibson emphasizes the need of offering students support services, regardless of how expensive they may be, to assist them go from information to learning. Despite the prospective advantages of using television in education, it seems that not many attempts have been done in this regard (ISMAN, 2012).

In the latter half of the 20th century, a new wave of electronic devices entered human life. The computer, the photocopier, the internet, the laptop, and other cutting-edge technology were all invented during this time. None of the previous traditional tools had the interactivensness that all of these modern ones have. The most recent electronic technologies provide simple user contact and communication. This quality is what caused such a radical shift in every aspect of human life.

Today, the first stage in the program is checking emails and newsfeeds. Even if this example may not accurately reflect our culture, it shows how people's daily routines are changing. Due to technology, even how we live in our homes has changed.

Even today, there are so-called "smart houses" where a computer regulates every piece of equipment in the home, including the doors, lights, and other features. By using a remote control, voice instructions, or even hand gestures, a computer may be used to operate them.

In truth, the technology revolution has impacted every aspect of life. Additionally, it has an impact on the tourist, banking, travel, healthcare, and education sectors the most. According to Jean Underwood, the technological revolution "is a profound cultural revolution changing all forms and patterns of human existence and is thus guaranteed to lead to huge changes in education" (Cutter, 2015, p. 17-19) Most schools and higher education institutions today utilise these contemporary technologies for a variety of purposes. The next subsections go into further detail on how technology may be utilized pedagogically to encourage English language learning.

2.2 Factors influencing attitude towards use of Technology

Numerous academics have pinpointed factors that affect people's views about using technology advances. Ajzen (1991) asserts that a person's attitudes toward engaging in a particular activity are impacted by their opinions of their ability to do so and by their perceptions of what other people believe they ought to do (i.e., subjective norms) (that is, perceived behavioural control). Prior studies by Davis (1989) and Ajzen (1991) showed that perceptions of utility and usability had an impact on attitudes toward adopting technology.

A technology's adoption rate is determined by a number of variables, including public awareness of the discovery, comparative advantages, and anticipated results, in accordance with Rogers' (2010) Diffusion of Innovations Theory. According to Rogers (2010), knowledge has many diverse aspects, such as awareness knowledge, how-to knowledge, and principles expertise. The prerequisite for being aware of a technological advancement is being aware of it. Because of awareness knowledge, people may be motivated to learn more about an innovation and gain the other two types of knowledge. Knowing how to use a technical advancement properly is referred to as "how-to understanding," while "principles knowledge" refers to a grasp of how it works from the ground up (Sahin, 2006).

EFL students often have a positive view of the usage of technology in the classroom. Nguyen (2014) reported that the most of undergraduates (82.6%) had favourable opinions about the usage of technology in EFL training in their study of 149 EFL college undergraduates in Vietnam. Similar findings were found in Liu's (2009) investigation of the attitudes of 140 Chinese undergraduate students who did not focus on English toward technology. Most students had favourable opinions of ICTs and were well aware of how they may help their EFL learning. Their opinions were greatly impacted by their perceptions on ICT characteristics, such as specific results, flexibility, availability, and reliability (Liu, 2009).

Despite the fact that most students have positive perceptions of the use of technology in EFL classroom, some students have unfavourable views. Several pupils in Liu's 2009 survey of EFL students in China showed hostility against the use of ICT in the classroom. Due to the limited practical use of technology in their English courses, these participants said that they were ill-prepared to utilize the available technology for reading comprehension both within and outside of the classroom. This result is consistent with other research showing that a lack of ICT proficiency in EFL lessons may result in EFL students' unfavourable opinions of the technology (Nguyen, 2014).

2.3 Importance of Technology

Technology is a tactic, procedure, or body of knowledge that is used to address issues. This definition enables us to define technology as any academic objective or training exercise used in the context of this research that makes use of technological resources. As part of a speech project, a student may utilize an audio recorder to record their words as they describe an object's features in the target language. They could then listen to it with their teacher (Nguyen, 2014).

Technology in the classroom is encouraged as a way to help students' English language skills. Technology provides a broad variety of teaching opportunities in addition to the conventional approaches. Teachers now have access to a wide variety of tools and resources. Another argument for the rise in technology was that when using computers and other new tools, students are more engaged than when reading textbooks (Cutter, 2015).

They are often less prone to become side-tracked, and the teacher may modify each session to meet the needs of each pupil. The resources in students' homes may be used to boost their education. Technology has always played a big role in the class. It is an essential element of education that may be used to help pupils learn.

When referring to the use of technology in teaching and learning, the phrase "integration" is used. Given that technology permeates our everyday lives and has the ability to enhance the learning process, it is time to reevaluate the concept of integrating it into your syllabus and your teaching techniques (Creswell, 2002).

This is a perfect example of how technology enhances the skills of instructors and gives them a variety of possibilities when instructing young students in English. Playing English-language audio or video relevant to the subject the teacher is discussing, for example, might aid the students in understanding the material more quickly and adopting a more positive attitude about it.

2.4 Difference in attitudes across Gender Groups

Contradictory findings have been found regarding attitudes toward technology among male and female students. There may be disparities in attitudes due to variances in technical ability and across genders. It has been shown that male students are less passionate in using technology than female students (Liu, 2009). In this case, it was believed that female students were more committed to their study of English than their male counterparts.

In contrast, a poll of 200 Taiwanese students revealed that male students were more receptive to adopting computer technology and computer aided language learning (CALL) apps. It was thought that since they had less anxiety about using technology in their EFL training, male students favoured CALL systems (Lai & Kuo, 2007).

2.5 Use of Technology in English Language Class

Technology is a useful tool for pupils. Throughout the learning process, technology utilization is essential for them. Teachers should demonstrate how to incorporate technology into the curriculum in order to encourage pupils to utilize it more often and so improve their language abilities (Costley, 2014). Technology could promote cross-class collaboration. One of the most crucial instruments for teaching is cooperation. Students work together to complete tasks, and they read the writing of their classmates to gain from one another's experiences (Keser, Huseyin & Ozdamli, 2011).

Computer usage in the classroom, according to Bennett et al. (2008), enhances both teaching and student learning. By using computer technology, instructors may more effectively meet the instructional requirements of their students. According to Bransford (2000), Using computer technology, educators and students may build localized, regional, and worldwide networks that connect them and provide educational opportunities. They claimed that whether technology has a positive influence depends on how teachers integrate it into their language-learning environments.

According to Susikaran (2013), significant modifications have been made to instructional methods and school environments as a result of the chalk-and-talk approach's inadequacy for imparting English proficiency. According to Raihan and Lock (2012), a well-organized classroom environment may aid students in learning effective study techniques. Lessons delivered orally are less efficient than those delivered orally using technology. Even if they haven't studied it or aren't computer whizzes, educators should discover ways to utilize technology as a useful teaching tool for their students.

Technology usage has had a huge impact on how English is delivered. It offers a variety of options for raising the quality and effectiveness of educational programs (Patel, 2013). Teachers often use a blackboard or whiteboard in conventional classroom settings to lecture, explain, and educate the students while standing in front of them. Our ways of doing things need to adapt in light of technological advancement.

Digital texts are used in the classroom to help pupils learn new words and grammatical patterns. In addition to using online resources, print books, movies, and the internet, technology may also be used to assist students improve their proficiency in their target language. For the study and comprehension of words and situations, using print, video, and the internet provides access to a variety of materials (Arifah, 2014).

Godzicki (2013) asserts that the use of technology may lead to a pleasant learning atmosphere where the student receives more consideration than the instructor. They stressed that by using computer technology, language courses may evolve into engaging environments with engaging assignments that motivates students to take ownership of their education.

The use of computer technology implies a meaningful learning experience that strengthens learners' duties, claim Hobbs and Hammerman (2010). Students are encouraged by technology to study individually and develop moral habits. The ability of learners to autonomously use technology allows them to direct their own learning.

The use of the internet boosts pupils' motivation, claims Arifah (2014). Using films in the classroom allows students to engage with the subject and deepen their comprehension. When technology is incorporated into the learning process by using a computer and the internet, learners may have a learning experience. Higher order thinking abilities are developed by pupils with the use of technology in the classroom. The correct blend of instructional strategies and multimedia is crucial for igniting students' interest in learning the English language.

2.6 Status of English Language in Morocco

Morocco is a bilingual nation, with "Arabic and Tamazight" listed as its official languages in the constitution from 2011. French, the country's second language, is widely used in industry, politics, governance, and college education. Both English and Spanish second languages are employed for a variety of purposes and professions (Ennaji, 2012). English does not "have a colonial heritage in Morocco," in contrast to French and Spanish, whose presence in the country's linguistic landscape results from foreign control in the 20th century.

As a result of the media, monetary support, and globalization-related "strong demand for a lingua franca," English use has expanded in Morocco (Zouhir, 2013, p. 275). The general educational plan of the decision-makers has greatly benefited in the growth of English in Morocco, particularly in the higher education sector where there has been an increase in interest in implementing it (Sadiqi, 1991, p. 106).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Survey instruments

Through the use of a survey with 23 questions divided into two sections, quantitative data was gathered. Age, gender, access to computers and the Internet, academic standing in the institution, and degree of computer and Internet familiarity were the five demographic questions in Part 1. The second section of the poll included 18 questions on the students' opinions about using technology to study English. The answers to the questions in Part 2 were provided on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting the most degree of disagreement and 5 denoting the greatest degree of agreement with each statement.

3.2 Respondents

Moroccan university students who did not major in English made up the study's participants. Participants, who had to be at least 18 years old, were studying English in order to complete their degree programs in full or to get to a specific level of competence. Since English majors were reported to have different motivational and anxiety levels for studying EFL than non-majors, they were purposely left out of this research. According to Ngo (2015), non-English majors exhibit greater levels of concern about studying EFL and lower levels of intrinsic motivation than English majors (Quadir, 2011).

3.3 Data analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used to examine the survey answers from the students (SPSS, version 21). To address the study topics, descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency in percentage) were used. Responses to the first study question from participants were compiled using descriptive statistics. Additionally, diagrams and tables were used to explain the outcomes.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 1. Gender of Participants

	Participants	Percentages
MALE	116	54.72%
FEMALE	96	45.28%
TOTAL	212	100%

According to the data analysed and table 1 above there were 212 participants in the survey overall, of which 116 (54.72%) were males while 96 (45.28%) were females (Table 1).

Table 2. Age of Participants

	Frequency	Percentages	Mean	Std
18-23 years	136	64.15%	20.31	1.54
24 and above	76	35.85%	25.16	1.04
TOTAL	212	100%		

The table above illustrates the age of the respondents who participated in the study, of the 212 participants that took part in the study, 136 of them were between the age of 18-23 years while 76 participants were 24 years and above (Table 2).

Table 3. Level of participants in the university

	Frequency	Percentages
Year 1	32	15.1%
Year 2	52	26.4%
Year 3	48	22.4%
Year 4	80	36.1%
TOTAL	212	100%

The table above indicates the educational level of participants/Moroccan students in the university, there levels ranged from year 1 to year 4. Of the 212 students that took part in the study, 32 of them were year 1 students, 52 were in year 2 while 48 and 80 students were in year 3 and year 4 respectively (Table 3).

4.2 Attitude of students towards use of technology for English language learning

Table 4. General attitude of Moroccan students towards use of technology

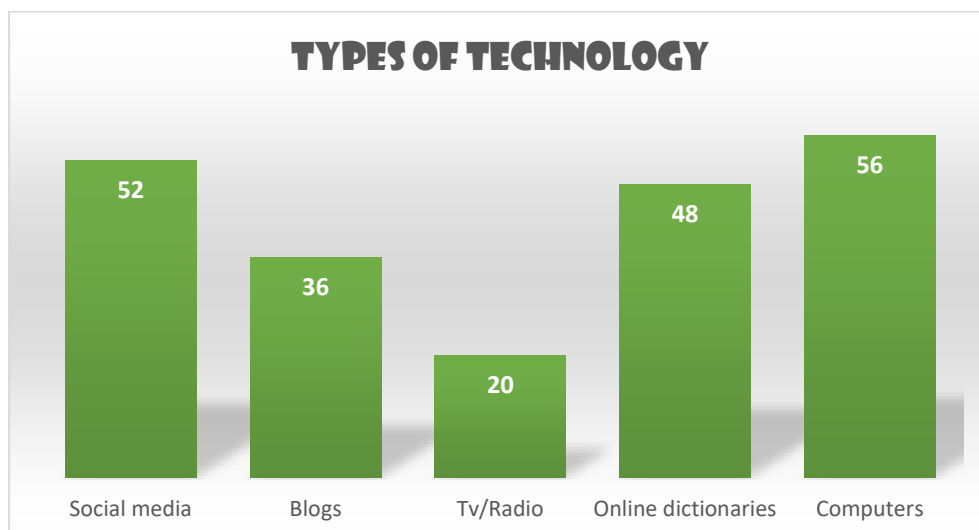
	M	SD	1-2%	3%	4-5%
Motivating me to learn English	3.7	1.21	17	13.2	69.8
Making English more accessible and friendly	3.58	1.36	19.3	18.4	62.3
Promoting self-regulating learning of English	3.51	1.5	34	5.7	60.3

M= mean, *SD*= standard deviation, *1-2%*= disagree and strongly disagree, *3%*= neutral, *4-5%*= Agree and strongly agree

The opinions of students on many technological elements of learning the English language were generally favourable, as shown in Table 4. On a 5-point scale, the mean values of items 1 through 5 vary from 3.51 to 3.7, all of which are above the midpoint. In other words, a large percentage of the students who took part in the study acknowledged that technology is helpful for learning English.

Most of the respondents (69.8%) had a positive view towards the statement that technology helps with motivation of students to learn English (Mean= 3.7, SD= 1.21). About two-thirds of the students (62.3%) indicated that the use of technology helps make English more accessible and friendly to learn, while 18.4% neither agreed or disagreed. 60.3% of the participants also had a positive view about English being able to help promote self-regulation of English learning while 34% had negative opinions towards this statement (Table 4).

4.3 Attitude towards specific types of Technology

**Figure 1. Various types of technology used for English language learning**

As shown in Figure 1 below, when indicating which type of technology respondents felt would be most helpful in learning English, students most frequently indicated computers (56), social media (52), and online dictionaries (48). Students then indicated that blogs and TV/radio could also be used for English learning (36 and 20 respectively). These findings (Figure 1) may indicate that students commonly evaluated computers as beneficial for learning the English language since they may

be utilized as a platform for accessing other types of technology. One may use a computer to, for instance, search up a term in an English guide, listen to digital content, use social networks, weblog, and view movies on Blu-ray.



Figure 2. Attitude towards use of Technology to improve English skills

Additionally, students were questioned about the specific English language abilities they thought technological integration might improve. Students said "listening and reading abilities" (receptive skills) will gain more from ICT integration than expressing skills (speaking and writing).

The proportion of students which is represented in percentages who said which ability would be improved by technology is shown in Figure 2. 32% of the students indicated that reading would be improved through the usage of technology, while 26% of the students indicated that listening would be improved through usage of technology. 23% and 19% of the students stated that the use of technology helps enhance speaking and writing skills (Figure 2).

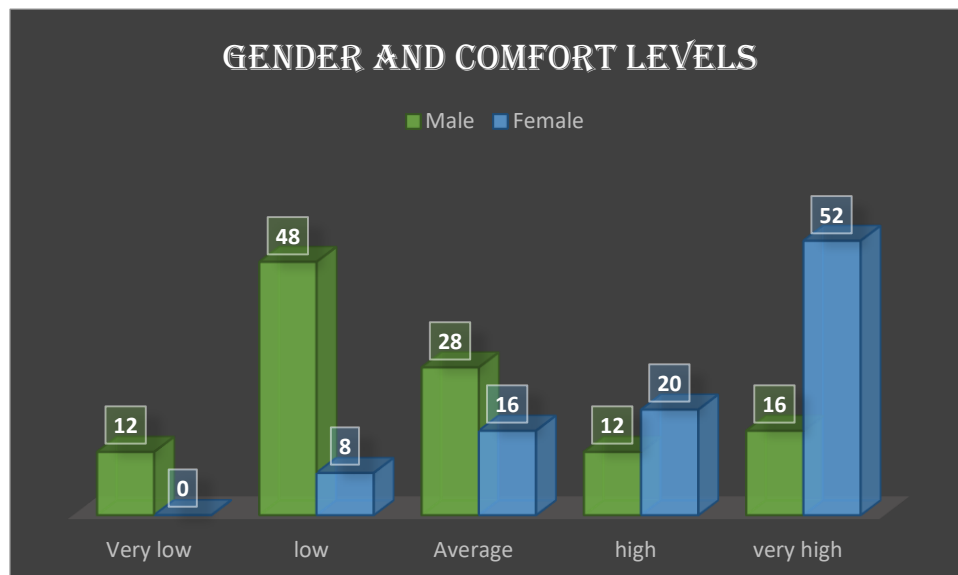


Figure 3. Gender groups and comfort levels

Differences between participants' stated degrees of comfort with technology and genders are shown in Figure 3. The result shows that females have a higher comfort levels than that of their male counterparts or colleagues, with 18 of the 24 females that participated in the study reporting high to very high comfort levels while the males had a higher number of respondents reporting very low to low comfort levels with the use of technology (Figure 3).

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 High prevalence of positive attitudes towards the use of technology

According to the study's findings, Moroccan students showed a favourable and positive attitude about using technology to learn English. The reasons why students really hold certain views are less obvious than the outcomes showing ICT attitudes. ICT attitudes were strongly impacted by views of an ICT's qualities, such as relative benefit, adaptability, accessibility, and reliability, according to a comparable research of college students in China who did not major in English but were studying the language (Liu, 2009).

According to other research, respondents were more favourable toward a technical advance if they thought it would benefit their jobs and/or had a short learning curve (Davis et al, 1989). Given that attitudes are "a learnt, global judgment of an item (person, place, or problem) that impacts cognition and behaviour," and that they are acquired via socialization, it is also possible that ICT attitudes were impacted by individual ICT encounters (Perloff, 2010, p. 43).

The social component of attitude formation could also be important since attitudes can be influenced by the views of people one trusts. This is known as source credibility, or "the degree to which information users regard an information source to be plausible, skilled, and reliable," according to Bhattacharjee and Sanford (2006, p.32).

5.2 Usage of various types of Technology for English Language Learning

The outcome of this specific research demonstrates that a variety of technological tools, like computers, blogs, online dictionaries, etc., may be utilized to learn English. However, the findings indicated that computers were the most often utilized tool; this could be because using a computer also allows access to other types of technology. Blogs, Tv, and radio are some other technologies that garnered lower scores. These techniques could be more challenging to students since they are unfamiliar. Positive attitudes about utilizing a tool are more frequent among those who have a clear understanding of how and why to utilize it (Rogers, 2010).

Additionally, people are less likely to feel enthusiastic about utilizing a product if they believe it to be difficult (Liu, 2009). The educational benefits of these technologies should not be discounted in light of this, however. The educational advantages of computers are sometimes overlooked by students who believe they do not significantly improve their learning (Barr, 2004). Blogs have been utilized in schools to improve general writing abilities, provide foreign language students more opportunity to complete learning objectives, and decrease cognitive and behavioural anxiety (Campbell, 2004; Cheng, 2004).

5.3 Difference in the use of technology and comfort level across gender

The findings demonstrated that, compared to their male colleagues, females were more at ease using technology to learn English. The results of this research corroborate those of other studies that included female students and those who were more used to utilizing technology.

It's possible that the female students in this research had a greater desire in learning English and more self-assurance in their ability to do so. As a result, it's possible that they tried a variety of learning techniques to improve their English-language proficiency. According to research by Zeynali (2012) and Diab (2000), females are more likely than men to adopt social/affective learning techniques, are more driven to learn a foreign language, and typically outperform males in language acquisition (Sunderland, 1998).

Given these results, it's possible that the study's female participants were more inclined to make advantage of the available technology for their EFL learning. This would ultimately lead to their having more favourable views regarding using technology as they get more acquainted with different forms of technology for learning English.

6. CONCLUSION

The majority of the participants in this survey had favourable opinions about utilizing technology to learn English. Students believed that ICTs were more helpful for improving their receptive English abilities than for improving their expressive English skills. Less than 10% of students were neutral and over 30% were doubtful about the advantages of technology to their English language study.

This study found that female students had more positive views regarding using technology than did male students, which both supports and defies other research results. According to this research, students' opinions regarding certain ICTs used in EFL instruction are influenced by their gender and how comfortable they are using computers and the Internet. It's significant that neither component significantly moderated the other's impact on attitudes.

This research focused on the ICT attitudes of college students who did not major in English and the influences of gender and technological comfort on those views. The research didn't look at how well pupils used any of the chosen technological tools. This has made it difficult to go into detail on how students feel about specific types or forms of technology and their experiences utilizing the tools that have been chosen. Although students' comfort levels with computers and the Internet may help to explain some of their views, they are unable to comment on their actual experiences with utilizing certain technologies. Future research may take into account examining the connection between students' perceptions regarding a certain technology and their experiences using that tool.

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