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Technology and Artificial Intelligence as Resources for EFL College Students' Motivation

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ABSTRACT

Constant innovation in the use of technology and artificial intelligence (AI) in foreign language learning environments encourages learners to make their learning more lasting and creative. Encouraging learners to make progress in their foreign language learning by using software, apps, artificial intelligence, modern tools and equipment enlightens and motivates the learners in a positive manner (Pusey, K., & Nanni, A., 2022; Woo, D. J., Susanto, H., & Guo, K., 2023). The purpose of this qualitative descriptive survey research study is to give an account of the use of technology and artificial intelligence as resources for EFL college students' motivation. The population comprises third-semester students of the bachelor's degree program in Applied Linguistics to the Teaching and Translation of English. At this stage in the research, the use of technology and artificial intelligence as resources for EFL college students' motivation will be defined as the importance of technological classrooms and students´ motivation through technological classes (Khasawneh, M. A. S., 2023; Zhukevych, I., & Spiricheva, O., 2024; Suh, S. 2025). The research questions focused on the impact of classroom technology and AI on EFL college students' motivation to learn English and how EFL college students can use technology and AI to be motivated to continue learning English. Data were collected through a web link to a 10-question survey administered to two hundred third-semester EFL college students and analysed descriptively. Convenience sampling was used because of the students' proximity to the researchers and their availability.

KEYWORDS

Technology, artificial intelligence, motivation, English instruction.

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1. Introduction

Communication usually begins with something we want to say or know. Communication involves more than just language; it involves language and pragmatics; that is, syntax, semantics, coherence and nonverbal communication, social relations, interests, etc. The audience may be known or unknown. Sometimes we are forced to write or to speak as part of an examination. Furthermore, communication involves two parties: a speaker and a listener or a writer and a reader (Walker & White, 2013).

Nowadays, to communicate effectively, teachers need to engage with AI to awaken students' interest in learning; this use of technology is known as educational technology. It is used for instructional purposes, and it is considered a process and a tool to be used in language teaching (Roblyer & Doering, 2013). The use of technology and AI makes a difference to its users. People who are comfortable using technological devices are called 'digital natives' and older people who are not at ease with technology and AI are called 'digital immigrants' (Walker & White, 2013). The brains of 'digital natives' have changed in the way they work; these learners require more attention and short-term rewards. Consequently, teachers need to change their teaching styles to improve their teaching delivery.

Yang and Chen (2006) consider that providing students with opportunities to experience teaching through technology might lead to a positive learning experience. Moqbel and Padmarani Rao (2013) stated that technology is an important element in the learning process and the basic element in this process is the computer. Integrating computers into language classrooms encourages and motivates students in the teaching-learning process.

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1.1 Theoretical Framework

1.2 Educational Technology

Educational technology encompasses media used for instructional purposes and emerged from the communication revolution. It refers to "the study and ethical principle of facilitating learning and improving performance by creating, using, and manipulating appropriate technological processes and resources" (Roblyer & Doering, 2013, p. 5).

This era combines multimodal texts with words, sounds, images, and movement. It places different demands on the receivers and producers of these texts. Most universities worldwide promote the use of technology and AI in language learning classrooms. Teachers are required to combine technical and pedagogical skills to produce effective learning (Walker & White, 2013).

Students learn in a natural environment through observation and experimentation. Balderas and Vela (2024) note that the successful acquisition of a foreign language involves different perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs. Furthermore, everything is seen by learners as the natural way to do things. As mentioned above, young people who have a natural affinity with technology and AI are called 'digital natives', and adults who are part of older generations are called "digital immigrants". The influence of technology and AI has changed the way young people's brains work. They require more visual encouragement, more use of games and of short-term rewards (Walker & White, 2013).

Albert Bandura (1994) developed a social cognitive theory. The theory holds that learning is an activity through which an activity is processed. The role of motivation is central in Bandura's theory. He noticed that some students were innately capable of learning, but they did not do so because they lacked self-efficacy (Roblyer & Doering, 2013). Bandura (1994) defined self-efficacy as "people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave" (Bandura, para. 1).

Julian Rotter (as cited in Nevid, 2013) explained that behavior involves knowing the individual's reinforcement history, expectancies, and subjective values. Expectancies are the personal predictions of the behavior. A subjective value is a value the individual gives to the desired behavior. This means that a student with a high positive expectancy and high subjective value has a greater likelihood of studying for an exam than a student who does not connect studying with grades or does not care about grades. Another of Rotter's contributions is the locus of control. He stated that people obtain expectancies about "their ability to obtain reinforcement in their lives" (p. 497). He classifies locus of control into internal and external. People who have an internal locus of control are usually more satisfied with their lives; consequently, they perform better in school. People who have an external locus of control believe that external forces, such as luck or fate, control them.

1.3 Technology and Motivation in EFL Classes

Mohammed Amine, Benachaiba and Guemide (2012) state that regarding the

"development of technology and the boom of digital revolution, foreign-language teachers should think about effective new ways to create better foreign-language teaching or learning milieus that are supported by multimedia technologies. It is widely agreed that language instruction that integrates technology and AI has had a tremendous impact on the language learning process. Moreover, learners are expected to be more motivated in a web-based computer-assisted language-learning (CALL) program and to improve their competencies" (p. 63).

According to Paulsen (2001), the effective use of online materials may provide positive spin-offs for learners much the same as if they were immersed in the language and culture while studying abroad. As a result, its use has two relevant positive effects: authenticity and motivation. She proposes that the question is not whether to take advantage of these electronic technologies in foreign language instruction, but how to harness them and guide students in their use.

1.4 Enhancing Motivation through Technology

Harmer (2007) notes that it is accepted in most fields of learning that motivation is essential to success. At its most basic level, motivation is some kind of internal drive, which pushes someone to do things to achieve something. Balderas and Vela (2024) mention that for some people the purpose of learning a foreign language might be focused only on basic communicative purposes, but others might be focused on becoming competent; either goal should be considered and respected. Moqbel and Padmarani Rao (2013) stated that

"technology along with its various tools, has become an essential element in the process of teaching and learning languages. The most effective technology tool is computer. It is essential for the use of most other technologies. With the help of multimedia and Internet, integrating computer in teaching and learning languages has become more effective and useful. They can also create motivating and enjoyable learning environment in which EFL learners are engaged" (p. 1). Safdar, Abdullah, Gulap, Saquib, and Zakia (2013) mention that

"the rapid growth and development in science and AI has not revolutionized any field of the world as quickly as education. The introduction of technological tools like computer, multimedia and Internet in the teaching learning process not only brought great changes and improvement in education process but also made it interesting, alive and attractive. On one hand, it facilitates instructional strategies and on the other hand, it encourages and motivates students in the teaching-learning process. Multimedia

teaching and computer-based system including video, audio and digital storage media, facilitates educators with the device to make learning alive" (p. 67).

Chapelle (2003) states that technology adds new and interesting dimensions to the tasks developed through the Internet and therefore changes critical dimensions of the task situation. Musker (2000) stated that the use of computers in classrooms has resulted in improvements in students' motivation, self-esteem and presentation of their work. Technology and AI can help students get involved, motivated and engaged in the language learning process. Zengin (2007) explains the importance of technological classrooms because students are more motivated and interested in multi-media and technological lessons.

1.5 The Role of Technology and AI in EFL Classes

Hussein (2010) states that technology and AI are basic components of education and have become established in foreign language (FL) classrooms. It is necessary to understand that an EFL environment needs to be balanced with the use of multimedia in the classroom because the use of technology and AI motivates students to learn. There are many classes that use traditional methods, but the awareness of the innovation of technology and AI is increasing constantly. The intersection of technology and AI in foreign language learning enlightens and encourages the learners in a positive way. The integration of technology and AI facilitates effective instruction. The constant use of technology and AI involves both students and teachers. Nevertheless, despite all the technology and AI tools, teachers' constant concern is effective teaching that promotes meaningful learning.

Yang and Chen (2006) affirm that if students are provided with the opportunity to experience new teaching through technology, learners experience the pleasure of learning, and they also increase their learning possibilities. Students who are passive towards learning English through the Internet require pedagogical orientation on the use of these tools. The Internet gives students the possibility to access relevant language resources, to communicate with native speakers, and to practice the four skills through real-world situations. Computer-mediated language learning facilitates communication, reduces anxiety, encourages oral discussion, develops the writing/thinking connection, nurtures social or cooperative learning, promotes egalitarian class structures, enhances students' motivation, facilitates cross-cultural awareness, and improves writing skills. Because of all these positive effects, more ESL/EFL teachers are embracing multimedia technology.

The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) encourages the use of the "five Cs" (Yang and Chen, 2006).

Communication	It is the center of the study.
Culture	It is interdependent with the target language; once the culture is understood, it is easier to understand the language.
Connections	It is the possibility of establishing links to other disciplines, such as content-area reading, writing and functional reading.
Comparison	It is the development of insight concerning the language and culture, and comparison of the target language with learners' own language.
Communities	It refers to multilingual communities around the world (conferencing, e-mail, whiteboard, streaming 'plug-in' technologies, etc.)

The use of technology and AI helps students respond more easily than in face-to-face interaction, according to Hertel, 2003; Knight, 1994; LeLoup, 1997; and Warschauer, 1995 (as cited in Yang and Chen, 2006). They observed that there is more participation, discussion, and feedback. Participants increase confidence when there is an electronic classroom discussion. Another study was performed by Ramzan and Saito (1998), who introduced the y-talk (a multi-user chat program) through which students interact in real time but they have the opportunity to look up words in the dictionary, if necessary, since they are interacting through the web. Most of the students reported that they felt they were in a non-threatening environment; they participated actively in the class, and they also increased their motivation. The use of technology and AI helped the students to have fun, to learn the language in context, and to break some barriers between the two cultures. Another study was done by Lee (2002), who observed that synchronous electronic interaction facilitates teaching and enhances learning. Computer-mediated communication gives students enough time to process input and monitor their output at their own speed.

1.6 Implementation of technology and AI tools to enhance motivation

There are several factors that influence students' motivation to participate and be motivated in an EFL class. Technology and AI have been accepted as resources for motivating students to learn second or third languages more effectively. Especially these days, one cannot think about educational tools without considering the internet, tablets and smartphones to meet the requirements of students who want to learn rapidly and keep up with society's demands, particularly in language learning.

The impact of technology and AI on today's education can be seen in the tools used for teaching and in the strategies utilized by facilitators of language at all educational levels, including higher education. Students are encouraged to learn when they realize that classroom technology and AI facilitate their learning. In general, there are more advantages to using technology and AI for

education (Internet City, 2010). At the beginning, using them for educational purposes first evoked debate and dilemmas to break paradigms down, but now discussing technology and AI is common in many classrooms.

After some years of evolution, technology and AI became so popular and necessary. This study demonstrated some of their clearer advantages in the field of education. Some of the advantages of the Internet for education are: online learning, use of encyclopedias, easy contact, school or university projects, and full access to news. With one of these factors, we find how the need for using the Internet within education cannot be rejected. Every student should be provided with access to the Internet for much deeper comprehension and understanding of a subject (Internet City, 2010). Nevertheless, the abundance of information can be considered both an advantage and a disadvantage of the Internet because students can also make use of unwanted information and sites.

Similarly, studies on the use of tablets in an educational environment show they can yield a number of benefits for students in terms of improving motivation, publishing, sharing and searching for information, collaboration, creating a more individual approach to learning, flexibility in terms of space and time, and something that is particularly important for educational purposes: creativity. Teachers, on the other hand, can also benefit from technology: classroom management and organization, changing the role of the teacher, student evaluation, visual quality of teaching material, finding a unique teaching approach, etc. (Econocom, 2013).

Learning opportunities are expanding as the number of smartphone owners grows. This device keeps students connected, helping them with their academic work. The term "mobile learning" encompasses a broad range of learning activities involving smartphones (Ecyclebest, 2015). By using the smartphone, learning occurs in a variety of places, such as buses, cars, zoos, parks, living rooms, etc. As a matter of fact, there are many ways to use the smartphone. The use of these devices makes learning more personalized and bridges the gaps between teacher and student. Some of the pros mentioned are portability, engagement, and effective use of time mainly for rapid and immediate communication.

1.7 Research Problem Statement

Ellis states that "foreign language teaching techniques have been modified through years. When someone is acquiring a foreign language, it is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon and it is not surprising that it has come to mean different things to people" (p. 15). A strong aspect that influences students' positive motivation might be learning through technology and AI (Stepp-Greany, 2002).

There are two factors that affect students' motivation to engage in the study of EFL. One is that the English program at public schools in Mexico is at a basic level; consequently, students' English skills do not meet the required proficiency to master the language and perform well in an EFL class. Another issue that affects students' motivation is the lack of exposure to EFL, which is also needed for students to meet school language expectations. Technologies have become more sophisticated, and the growing range of their uses inside and outside of the classroom increases the potential for enhanced motivation. Increased motivation has often been given as the justification for the introduction and use of technology in language learning (Usioda, 2013). Constant innovation in the use of technology and AI in foreign language learning environments encourages learners to make their learning more lasting and creative. Encouraging learners to make progress in their foreign language learning by using modern tools and equipment enlightens and motivates learners in a positive manner (Hussein, 2010).

The descriptive survey research study problem is to give an account of the use of technology and artificial intelligence as resources for EFL college students' motivation, which is also the aim of this paper. The aim is to explore how classroom technology and AI impact students' motivation and how they can use technology and AI to be motivated to learn English in the third semester of the bachelor's degree program in Applied Linguistics to the Teaching and Translation of English at a public university located in the northeast of Mexico.

1.8 Purpose Statement of the Topic

The purpose of this descriptive survey research study is to give an account of the use of technology and artificial intelligence as resources for EFL college students' motivation. The population comprises third-semester students of a bachelor's degree program in Applied Linguistics to the Teaching and Translation of English. At this stage in the research, the use of technology and artificial intelligence as resources for EFL college students' motivation will be defined as the importance of technological classrooms and students' motivation through technological classes (Zengin, 2007). In 2000, Musker stated that the use of a computer in classrooms has resulted in improvements in students' motivation, self-esteem and presentation of their work. Technology and AI can help students be involved, motivated and engaged in the language learning process.

1.9 Research Questions

1. How do classroom technology and AI impact EFL college students' motivation to learn English?
2. How can EFL college students use technology and AI to be motivated to learn English?

1.10 Delimitations

The study focuses on EFL college students; consequently, the data might not apply to other undergraduate students. Only third-semester students from the bachelor's degree program in Applied Linguistics to the Teaching and Translation of English from a

northeastern university in Mexico were surveyed, and no attempt was made to survey other students of the B.A. Convenience sampling was used because of the students' proximity to the researchers and their ready availability.

1.11 Significance

The significance of the descriptive survey research study refers to its importance in terms of its contributions to the third-semester students of the bachelor's degree program in Applied Linguistics to the Teaching and Translation of English in a northeastern university in Mexico. These students are willing to learn English as a foreign language through motivation with classroom technology. The implementation of new classroom technological techniques will increase students' motivation, keeping them engaged in learning the target language inside and outside the classroom.

1.12 Research Methods

a) Participants

The population (n) consisted of third-semester students pursuing a B. A. in Applied Linguistics to the Teaching and Translation of English in a northeastern university in Mexico (N). The groups had 35 to 40 students and were predominantly female; the students were approximately nineteen to twenty-five years old.

Convenience sampling was used in this descriptive survey research study because of the participants' accessibility to the researchers. This sampling is also called an accidental sample because "elements must be drawn into the sample simply because they just happen to be situated, spatially or administratively, near to where the researcher is conducting the data collection" (Ross 2005, p.7). The population was homogeneous, and because of the nature of the sample, the researchers cannot check the result against another sample. Salkind (2010) mentions that many researchers collect data from college students because they are readily available and willing to participate in research.

b) Research Design

According to Creswell (2012), in "quantitative research, a problem is identified based on trends or on the need to explain why something occurs; it is answered by a study where the researcher establishes the individuals' responses tendency and how it varies among people" (p. 13). Castañeda and Vela (2025) note that observations and questioning are foundations of research methods that need to be performed continuously.

Regarding descriptive research design, Seliger and Shohamy (2001) state that it "involves collection techniques used to specify, delineate, or describe naturally occurring phenomena without experimental manipulation" (p. 124). Descriptive research has similar characteristics; therefore, it deals with naturally occurring phenomena; it uses data that can be collected firsthand or it takes data from previous studies, student records and so on. Descriptive research was used to establish the previous phenomenon by explicitly describing it; there is no artificial manipulation, and the research might begin with a question.

On the other hand, Kothari (2004) affirms that descriptive research studies are concerned with "describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or of a group, whereas diagnostic research studies determine the frequency with which something occurs or its association with something else". Most of the social research comes under descriptive research. In descriptive as well as in diagnostic studies, the researcher must clearly define what they want to measure and the appropriate methods for measuring it. It must also include a clear definition of the 'population' they want to study. The procedure to be used must be carefully planned. The research design should be reliable and provide enough evidence of not being biased. The design in such studies must be rigid and not flexible and must focus attention on the following: (a) formulating the objective of the study (what the study is about and why it is being conducted) (b) Designing the methods of data collection (what techniques of gathering data will be adopted) (c) Selecting the sample (how much material will be needed) (d) Collecting the data (where can the required data be found and to what period the data should relate) (e) Processing and analyzing the data. (f) Reporting the findings (p. 37).

The purpose of this descriptive survey research study was to describe the phenomenon of the use of technology and artificial intelligence as resources for EFL college students' motivation, which occurred in a natural environment. The data were collected firsthand within a predefined scope of investigation. The research was conducted through a web link to a survey questionnaire, and the phenomenon was described without any manipulation. We used a descriptive survey research design. According to Creswell (2012), this is a procedure in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample or to the entire population of people to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population (p. 376).

c) Instrument

Creswell (2012) states that survey researchers collect quantitative, numbered data using questionnaires or interviews and analyze it to describe responses to test research questions or hypotheses, interpreting their meaning by relating results of statistical tests back to other research studies (p. 376). For the purpose of the descriptive survey research study and to answer its questions, the researchers adapted a questionnaire from Dr. Binnur GENÇİLTER (2009) of the Akdeniz University in Turkey. The adapted questionnaire has ten items, meets the aim of this descriptive survey research study and uses a five-point Likert scale. The first five items respond to research question one, and the last five items respond to research question two.

Statements	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
1. The use of technology and AI in our language classrooms increases my motivation					
2. Computer-based teaching activities make the lessons more enjoyable.					
3. Computer-based lessons are more enjoyable and effective than traditional lessons.					
4. I can understand language better when my teacher uses technology and AI in the class.					
5. Technology and AI can be motivational and necessary to learn EFL.					
6. Different technological devices or apps should be used in the class to increase my motivation for learning English.					
7. If my teacher uses an app, software, or technological resources lessons can be more enjoyable					
8. Authentic materials downloaded from the internet make me active in the learning process.					

Statements	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Neither agree nor disagree	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
9. Films, presentations, audios, and e-learning can be helpful to develop my language skills.					
10. If we have a chance of teleconferencing via distance education with other universities, it can be enjoyable for me.					

d) Data Collection Strategy

The researchers collected data using the previously described group-administered questionnaire via SurveyMonkey. The instrument consisted of ten items intended to capture participants' responses.

1.13 Findings

Trochim (2006) stated that descriptive statistics explain the basic features of the data in a study. They provide simple summaries about the sample and the measures. Together with simple graphics analysis, they form the basis of virtually every quantitative analysis of data. For data analysis in this descriptive survey research study, a frequency distribution strategy was used to present participants' responses to each questionnaire item as percentages. A total of 200 students answered the survey, and these were the outcomes of the survey:

For questionnaire item 1, the responses were as follows: 15.00% of the students strongly agreed, 62.50% agreed, 10.00% neither agreed nor disagreed, 10.00 % disagreed, and 2.50% strongly disagreed.

For questionnaire item 2, the responses were as follows: 15.00% of the students strongly agreed, 50.00% agreed, 22.50% neither agreed nor disagreed, 7.50 % disagreed, and 5.00% strongly disagreed.

For questionnaire item 3, the responses were as follows: 10.00% of the students strongly agreed, 25.00% agreed, 27.50% neither agreed nor disagreed, 32.50% disagreed, and 5.00% strongly disagreed.

For questionnaire item 4, the responses were as follows: 12.50% of the students strongly agreed, 35.00% agreed, 42.50% neither agreed nor disagreed, 7.50 % disagreed, and 2.50% strongly disagreed.

For questionnaire item 5, the responses were as follows: 25.00% of the students strongly agreed, 55.00% agreed, 17.50% neither agreed nor disagreed, 2.50 % disagreed, and 0.00% strongly disagreed.

For questionnaire item 6, the responses were as follows: 30.00% of the students strongly agreed, 55.00% agreed, 10.00% neither agreed nor disagreed, 2.50 % disagreed, and 2.50% strongly disagreed.

For questionnaire item 7, the responses were as follows: 30.00% of the students strongly agreed, 55.00% agreed, 12.50% neither agreed nor disagreed, 0.00 % disagreed, and 2.50% strongly disagreed.

For questionnaire item 8, the responses were as follows: 22.50% of the students strongly agreed, 52.50% agreed, 20.00% neither agreed nor disagreed, 2.50 % disagreed, and 2.50% strongly disagreed.

For questionnaire item 9, the responses were as follows: 55.00% of the students strongly agreed, 35.00% agreed, 5.00% neither agreed nor disagreed, 5.00 % disagreed, and 0.0% strongly disagreed.

For questionnaire item 10, the responses were as follows: 45.00% of the students strongly agreed, 37.50% agreed, 7.50% neither agreed nor disagreed, 7.50 % disagreed, and 2.50% strongly disagreed.

2. Conclusion

The outcomes of this research study demonstrate that there is a positive influence on students' motivation while learning English as a foreign language with the use of technology and artificial intelligence as resources. The results reveal that participants consider technological instruction as an engaging, motivating, and valuable component of the learning process. The highest levels of agreement were observed regarding the use of technology and AI as motivational tools for EFL learning, the integration of different technological devices and applications to increase motivation, and the use of applications, software, and technological resources to make lessons more enjoyable. These findings suggest that incorporating digital tools can contribute to students' interest, engagement, and willingness to participate in learning activities.

The majority of participants agreed that films, presentations, audio materials, and e-learning resources help develop their language skills. The participants also reported that authentic materials downloaded from the internet encourage them to become more active in the learning process, suggesting that technology can provide meaningful opportunities for communication, interaction, and exposure to different learning environments. Thus, the educational benefits of AI may not be the same among all learners; this finding suggests that the use of technology and AI as effective means of EFL learning depends not only on their availability but also on how teachers integrate it into instructional practices and connect it to students' language-learning needs.

The results also reveal that students do not necessarily consider technology-based lessons more effective than traditional instruction. This contrast suggests that although technology can increase motivation and enjoyment, students may not automatically associate its use with improved learning effectiveness. Therefore, digital resources should complement, rather than replace, pedagogical practices, meaningful teacher-student interaction, and structured language instruction.

In conclusion, the survey results support the view that technology and AI can serve as important resources for learners' motivation in EFL education, particularly when they promote active participation, provide access to authentic materials, and offer varied and engaging learning experiences. Nevertheless, teachers play a fundamental role in selecting appropriate tools, designing purposeful activities, and ensuring that technology contributes to meaningful language learning.

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