

## Pros and Cons of Technology Implementation in EFL Classroom Perceived by Digital Natives in Thailand

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### ABSTRACT

The objective of the study was to investigate digital native students' perceptions covering both advantages and disadvantages of technology implementation in their EFL classroom. The sample group consisted of 34 third year English program students enrolled in Semantics in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of academic year 2017 in Buriram Rajabhat University. They were selected purposively. An online questionnaire was used in data collection. The statistics used in data analysis were percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The qualitative data were analyzed by utilizing content analysis. The results showed that for the pros, the digital natives perceived that technology in the classroom helps boost engagement and motivation at a high level (3.97), students can concentrate more because they can learn by themselves using their own methods (3.91); they can access authentic materials to supplement their learning experience (3.91); and there are countless resources for enhancing education and making learning more fun and effective (3.85); respectively. For the cons, students perceived that technology in the classroom can be distractions at a high level (3.58); sometimes it is hard for them to receive interactive lessons (3.44); and technology in the classroom encourages plagiarism (3.41), respectively. It was suggested that teachers who would like to use technology should find the measures to prevent the drawbacks of the technology implementation in the classroom.

**Keywords:** Pros and Cons, Technology Implementation, Digital Natives

### Introduction

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is undeniable that innovations such as technology tools are crucial tools for education (Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015). Even though, technology tools can be good and bad for learners, teachers must find the ways to implement the tools effectively (Bain, 2015). Moreover, digital tools in education can be effective under certain circumstances, and that the teachers play major roles in this (Haelermans, 2017). Technology can improve education because it provides innovative ways for teachers to teach and creative ways for students to learn (Bain, 2015). Since today's students are not the same as in the past, they are learning differently from their predecessors (Prensky, 2001a). When today's students come to their classrooms, instead of taking notes, they are more likely now to take snapshots by using their mobiles; instead of having face-to-face conversations in the classroom, they post their updates and messages to Facebook; instead of going to the library to search for information in books, they use Google to search the Internet for the information (Yong, Gates, & Harrison, 2016). Prensky (2001a) had defined this kind of students as digital natives; the digital natives refer to the students in universities today whom are born in the digital age where they spend most of their daily lives using digital devices.

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Since digital natives and technology such as digital devices cannot be separated. Teachers as Prensky (2001b) called digital immigrants have to learn to communicate in the language and style of their students via technology because the teachers were not born into digital world, but at some point in their lives, become fascinated by and adopted many or most aspects of the new technology in their lives. To be able to choose the proper technology for implementing in the classroom, the teachers or digital immigrants should first know the perceptions of the digital natives from both sides (pros and cons) to be used as guidelines in choosing the technology that the teachers will bring in the classroom.

Therefore, it is important to investigate digital native students' perceptions covering both advantages and disadvantages of technology implementation in their EFL classroom in order to design the future courses where the technology tools will be used. The results of this research can be used as guidelines for teachers to implement technology in their classrooms in the future. It will help the teachers in finding measures for preventing the drawbacks of the technology implementation in the classrooms. Also, the results of this research can be used to raise awareness of the teachers when choosing technology for implementing in their classrooms.

### **Purpose of Study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate digital native students' perceptions covering both advantages and disadvantages of technology implementation in their EFL classroom.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **1. Population and Sampling**

The population and also the sample group of this research consisted of 34 third year English program students enrolled in Semantics course in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of academic year 2017 in Buriram Rajabhat University. They were selected by using the purposive sampling method. The criteria for selecting the sample group were: 1) students aged 20-22 years; 2) they majored in English; 3) they were taking Semantics, 4) and they used technology 4-8 hours per day. These 34 third year English program students or hereinafter called digital native students were asked to complete an online questionnaire.

#### **2. Instrumentation**

The research tool employed in this study for collecting data was an online questionnaire. The online questionnaire was written in English. The online questionnaire consisted of two parts: 1) their perceptions on pros and cons of technology implementation in EFL classroom, and 2) additional opinions and suggestions about their perceptions on pros and cons of technology implementation in EFL classroom. The first part was constructed by using 5 point Likert scale. And the last part was constructed by using an open-ended form. It should be noted that the research tool constructed by the researcher was examined by three experts for approving the content validity and Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) of the tool was between 0.67 and 1.00.

#### **3. Data Collection**

The online questionnaire was distributed and completed by 34 participants via Google Forms. The link of this online questionnaire was opened for the responds for one week (9-13 April 2018). Before opening the link for receiving the responds from the sample group, the researcher met the participants for informing and explaining about the research study objective and details of the study.

#### 4. Data Analysis

The statistics used in data analysis were percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The qualitative data were analyzed by utilizing content analysis. The details are as follows: the online questionnaire consisted of two parts. The data collected from the online questionnaire in the first part was the data derived from the participants about their perceptions on pros and cons of technology implementation in EFL classroom were analyzed by using mean, and standard deviation. As for the data obtained from the second part of the online questionnaire about additional opinions and suggestions were analyzed by utilizing content analysis.

#### Results

The following results were presented in line with the research objective:

##### 1. Pros of technology implementation in EFL classroom perceived by digital natives

The result representing the pros or advantages of technology implementation in EFL classroom perceived by digital natives or questionnaire respondents was shown in Table 1.

**Table 1** Pros of technology implementation in EFL classroom perceived by digital natives

No.	Pros of Technology Implementation	$\bar{X}$	S.D
1	For me, there are countless resources for enhancing education and making learning more fun and effective	3.85	0.78
2	For me, technology in the classroom helps boost engagement and motivation	3.97	0.75
3	With technology in the classroom, I have instant access to fresh information that can supplement their learning experience	3.70	0.80
4	With technology in the classroom, lessons are more dynamic for me	3.82	0.71
5	It is easier for me to receive feedback from the teacher and for the teacher to monitor me	3.76	0.73
6	I can concentrate more because I can learn by myself using my own methods	3.91	0.76
7	I can access authentic materials to supplement their learning experience	3.91	0.70

Table 1 revealed that for the pros, the digital natives perceived that technology in the classroom helps boost engagement and motivation at a high level (3.97), followed by they can concentrate more because they can learn by themselves using their own methods (3.91), they can access authentic materials to supplement their learning experience (3.91), and there are countless resources for enhancing education and making learning more fun and effective (3.85), respectively.

##### 2. Cons of technology implementation in EFL classroom perceived by digital natives

The result representing the cons or disadvantages of technology implementation in EFL classroom perceived by digital natives or questionnaire respondents was shown in Table 2.

**Table 2** Cons of technology implementation in EFL classroom perceived by digital natives

No.	Cons of Technology Implementation	$\bar{X}$	S.D
1	For me, technology in the classroom can be distractions	3.58	0.82
2	I do not have equal access to technological resources	3.38	0.70
3	For me, technology in the classroom encourage laziness and can foster cheating	3.32	0.88
4	Sometimes, it is hard for me to receive interactive lessons	3.44	0.93
5	I and the teacher have technological difficulties to use the technology (tools/apps)	3.35	0.89
6	Technology can disconnect me from social interactions	3.35	1.02
7	For me, technology in the classroom encourages plagiarism	3.41	0.75

Table 2 showed that for the cons, they perceived that technology in the classroom can be distractions at a high level (3.58); sometimes, it is hard for the students to receive interactive lessons (3.44); and technology in the classroom encourages plagiarism (3.41), respectively

### 3. Their additional opinions and suggestions

The additional opinions and suggestions obtained from the questionnaire were summarized below.

It was suggested that teachers who would like to use technology should find the measures to prevent the drawbacks of the technology implementation in the classroom.

## Discussion

The following points based on the research results were discussed:

1. For the pros, the digital natives perceived that technology in the classroom helps boost engagement and motivation at a high level (3.97); students can concentrate more because they can learn by themselves using their own methods (3.91); they can access authentic materials to supplement their learning experience (3.91); and there are countless resources for enhancing education and making learning more fun and effective (3.85), respectively. Since the digital natives have spent their entire lives surrounded by and using digital tools such as computers and cell phones, they feel more engaged and motivated when they get to use digital tools in the classroom. This is conforming to the study of Mundy, Kupczynski, and Kee (2012) that when the teachers have been trained to use technology in the classroom, their lessons were more engaging as a result the successful learning experiences were provided to the students. Therefore, many researchers suggested that teachers should learn to implement the new technologies to provide opportunities to the digital natives especially for interactivity and engagement to hold their interest and enhance their learning both inside and outside classroom (Oliver & Goerke, 2007; Prensky, 2001a). This is also in line with Onsrì (2015) that learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century placed the emphasis on self-directed learning. So, the students will be able to learn both inside and outside the classroom. In addition, the digital natives also concerned about the authentic materials for supplementing their learning experience and resources for enhancing their education and for making learning more fun and effective. This means that the digital natives still prioritized the importance of authentic materials and resources that were brought into the classroom. Hence, choosing the materials and resources for the digital natives should be done properly by the teachers (Tuntirojanawong, 2017).

2. For the cons, digital natives perceived that technology in the classroom can be distractions at a high level (3.58); sometimes it is hard for them to receive interactive lessons (3.44); and technology in the classroom encourages plagiarism (3.41), respectively. When students can use many digital tools in the classroom, it will be difficult for the teachers to check if they are using the same tool that they were asked to use or not. If not, distractions can be certainly found. To avoid this problem, the teachers must find the measures to prevent the drawbacks of the technology implementation in the classroom; so, the digital natives can use the technology wisely and safely. This is in line with Wongyai (2017) that families and teachers are the closest people to the digital natives; the people can supervise, give suggestions, and be the consultants for the digital natives in technology implementation; therefore, families and teachers are the main people who give support and knowledge to the digital natives to use technology wisely and safely. As for the problem regarding plagiarism when using technology which is a part of e-cheating, Bain (2015) suggested that things teachers can do in this case were to educate students about e-cheating, to prevent the incidents by setting rules and punishment, and to report academic dishonesty to people involved.

## Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate digital native students' perceptions covering both pros and cons of technology implementation in their EFL classroom. For the pros, the digital natives perceived that technology in the classroom helps boost engagement and motivation at a high level (3.97); students can concentrate more because they can learn by themselves using their own methods (3.91); they can access authentic materials to supplement their learning experience (3.91); and there are countless resources for enhancing education and making learning more fun and effective (3.85), respectively. For the cons, students perceived that technology in the classroom can be distractions at a high level (3.58); sometimes it is hard for them to receive interactive lessons (3.44); and technology in the classroom encourages plagiarism (3.41), respectively. It was suggested that the measures for preventing the drawbacks of the technology implementation in the classroom should be established and utilized by the teachers who would like to implement technology in their classrooms.

## Suggestions

### 1. Suggestions to apply in the field

1.1 The results of this research can be used as guidelines for teachers to implement technology in their classrooms in the future.

1.2 The results of this research should be used in finding measures for preventing the drawbacks of the technology implementation in the classrooms.

1.3 The results of this research can be used to raise awareness of the teachers when choosing technology for implementing in their classrooms.

1.4 The results of this research can be employed by the teachers when designing courses where technology tools will be utilized.

### 2. Suggestions to apply in the future research

2.1 Further studies on pros and cons of technology implementation in EFL classroom perceived by digital natives should be conducted with different groups of participants to compare their perceptions towards technology implementation in their classrooms.

2.2 Further studies on pros and cons of technology implementation in EFL classroom perceived by digital natives should be conducted with a larger sample size to obtain more information, to better determine the average values, and to avoid errors from testing the small sample size.

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