

INTRODUCTION OF ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOKS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: WHAT TEACHERS NEED

Ataboyev Isroiljon Mirza o'g'li

Tashkent State Transport University

Assistant of the Department of foreign languages

isroilataboyev2@gmail.com

Annotation:

Despite the numerous benefits, teachers are often reluctant to accept and use these technologies in the classroom. In environments where the use of e-textbooks is mandatory, such reluctance often manifests itself in the perfunctory use of the software and job dissatisfaction. The aim of this study is to determine the needs of teachers when introducing e-textbooks. An interpretive case study was conducted at a secondary school in South Africa.

Keywords: e-textbook, technology, factors, perceptions, fears.

The problem identified was that teachers are often reluctant to use e-textbooks in their classrooms as another method of presenting learning material to their learners. Today, e-textbooks are available for use by learners and teachers in the classroom. However, it seems that low-tech teachers are reluctant to use technology (e-textbooks in this case) in the classroom (Wang, Hung, Hsieh, Tsai, and Lin, 2012). Sometimes teachers feel they have not been consulted when making decisions about the use of technology in the classroom. For example, Weilbach and Mattheert reported that teachers felt that the decision to use e-textbooks was not their own. Teachers may not be willing to use these e-textbooks as they are familiar with using traditional textbooks. Other reasons for this resistance are the lack of adequate infrastructure such as hardware and software (Buabeng-Andoh, 2012), lack of required training to use e-textbooks, limited time for e-textbook evaluation and production of good learning materials, and the unavailability of funds from schools to purchase e-textbooks (Johnson & Buck, 2014). Additionally, many schools in Uzbekistan are now incorporating tablet PCs into their classrooms, which will impact both learners and teachers. However, teachers are reluctant to adapt their current teaching methods and are reluctant to embrace technology (Weilbach & Matthee, 2015). Eicker-Nel and Matthee (2014) investigated the introduction of



tablet-based e-textbooks in a school. It shows that learners found the tablets and e-textbooks beneficial because they have lighter backpacks, have everything in one place, and have no excuses for forgotten printed textbooks. However, they stressed the importance of adequate infrastructure and the need to acquire new teaching skills. Lin, Liu, and Kinshuk (2015) examined teachers' needs when using e-textbooks in the classroom. They proposed a set of requirements affecting the textbook itself (more in detail in Section 2.4 below). The studies mentioned above show that in addition to the functionalities of the textbook itself, other aspects must be taken into account. This study aimed to complement the Lin, Liu, and Kinshuk (2015) study with a qualitative in-depth investigation by identifying the needs of teachers regarding the use of tablet-based e-textbooks in the classroom. Researchers used Venkatesh, Morris, Davis & Davis's (2003) UTAUT model to conduct the interviews with a focus on the constructs of expectation of achievement, the expectation of exertion, social influence, and finally supportive conditions. The constructs for facilitating framework conditions provide information about the additional needs of teachers. The research question is, therefore: what are the needs of teachers regarding the implementation of e-textbooks in the classroom? This study focused on a specific e-textbook platform on tablet PCs in a specific private school in South Africa. This paper contributes to mobile learning by providing an understanding of what teachers need when using e-textbooks in the classroom. The identified needs can be used as guidelines by school leaders, teachers, and service providers when the school(s) adopt e-textbooks as a teaching tool used by both learners and teachers on a daily basis.

2. LITERATURE According to De Luna (2015), there is a shift in the publishing industry worldwide due to the impact of e-textbook technologies on education. Gu, Wu, and Xu (2015) wrote that devices such as tablets, smartphones, e-book readers, and iPads are rapidly dominating education systems worldwide. Book publishers have recognized the emergence of these devices and are now offering textbooks in digital form, known as e-books or textbooks (Rockinson-Szapkiw, Courduff, Carter, and Bennett, 2013). Similar to printed textbooks, e-textbooks contain materials that are used in the classroom. This section discusses previous research focused on defining e-textbooks, identifying their advantages and disadvantages in educational settings, technology acceptance in schools, and the needs assessments that can help teachers implement e-textbooks in the classroom. E-textbooks and their advantages and disadvantages define e-textbooks as any published material such as a book or magazine that can be read



using a digital device such as a mobile phone or tablet and is not in paper form. E-textbooks allow learners to interactively access printed textbooks. Many scholars wrote that although e-books offer these features and capabilities, they may not be used because users do not know how to navigate and use them. The advantages of electronic books include easier delivery and cheaper purchase. Backup and storage are easier with e-textbooks. Another advantage of e-books is that they are cheaper than printed textbooks. Some studies show that students and teachers still prefer printed textbooks to e-books. As a disadvantage, it has been highlighted that while there are a number of devices that can be used to read e-textbooks, some pose limitations for users. Other suggested limitations and disadvantages are that some devices do not have enough storage space to store the number of e-textbooks the user wants or needs and some classrooms do not have enough power outlets. They also emphasize that training for teachers before and when using e-textbooks in the classroom is crucial. Even if the teachers are trained, some may need further training; meanwhile, they cannot use e-textbooks for teaching. Teacher acceptance of technology and e-textbooks in education There are factors that influence teachers' acceptance and rejection of the use of technology in classrooms, and these factors include teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and feelings. Scientists identified factors they believe are preventing teachers from incorporating technology into their classrooms. These factors are teachers' attitudes towards technology, their gender and age, technical support factors, accessibility, and computer skills. According to Alfahad (2012), these factors are divided into two categories, namely internal factors, and external factors. Alfahad (2012) and Aflalo (2014) wrote that some of the internal factors influencing the acceptance and use of technology include teachers' perceptions, fears, and beliefs. In short, these factors are the way teachers assess themselves when it comes to introducing something new into their teaching process and the confidence they have after completing the training (learning to use the technology introduced in the teaching school). When the teacher feels they have gained sufficient knowledge of the technology and are comfortable with its use, they will incorporate it into their classroom toolkits. However, it is better to present the changes to educators in small chunks so that they feel confident or encouraged to engage with the technology and learn and implement the whole thing.



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