The Perceptions of High School English Home Language Learners on Fostering 21st Century Skills Through the Use of Technology in the Classroom

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Abstract : The changes brought to society by the technological development in the Fourth Industrial Revolution are also reaching the sphere of education and the education system needs to respond. Students need skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking in order to be successful in the 21st Century, which could be developed through the meaningful use of technology. This study is theorized by the 21st Century Framework for Learning and examines the student perceptions of grade 10 and 11 English Home language learners on how the technology used in their English classroom contributes to the development of 21st Century skills. The researcher adopted a constructivist paradigm and presented findings based on a general qualitative method. The study found that students perceived the use of technology in the classroom positively contributed to their development of communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking. Students also perceived technology as contributing to their access to information, a positive classroom atmosphere, heightened engagement in learning and developing skills necessary for their future. In addition, this study highlighted certain pedagogical strategies and digital tools that support the development of 21st Century skills. The findings suggest that the meaningful integration of technology fosters the development of 21st Century skills in grade 10 and 11 learners.
Keywords : educational technology, 21st century skills, fourth industrial revolution, affordances of technology
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