DRAWBACKS OF USING TECHNOLOGY TO LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

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In the advent of technological revolution and constant evolution in our modern society that gadgets and high tech devices are easily available to all; by all means both from the very young age to the oldies alike. Almost majority of them are hooked up in using mobile phones or laptops and tablets which give them access to almost everything in the World Wide Web. This might seem amusing to some but research has shown that this habit has already created a negative impact to the general masses. More specifically to the very young once.

In can be commonly observed that children who are not even reaching two years of age have been constantly engaged in watching and playing smart phones and other mobile gadgets. They learn how to operate these devices even before they learn how to read and write much worse speak. Since the youth today now thrives at the digital age, it is quite difficult to part them from the internet and mobile gadgets. This, now becomes a threat to the development both in the physical and mental aspects of children.

Recent news from a local television program showed cases of children who developed epileptic seizures due to playing of smart phones or even watching television for long hours in a day (UNTV News 2017). This raises a red flag not just to parents but to teachers as well. Not only does excessive gadget use cause health problems but it also affects other aspects as well. According to Time Magazine 2017 children who are overly exposed to gadgets display a huge tendency for speech development delay.
Being a language teacher, one might ask what a small gadget can do to create such a massive problem to children. What could be the main culprit for this incidence? The answer, TIME itself.

It is a known fact that children acquire the language that people use around them. Unconsciously, children pick up vocabularies and language features used by older people while in conversation. By this process, the child develops the language capacity and use it in his/her own conversation. This opportunity is deprived if the child is constantly engaged using smart phones and gadgets.

By using gadgets more than the maximum amount of time, the child is constantly focusing on the visuals and on the very soft sounds the gadgets are producing. Since the presentation is a one way street, meaning only the child hears the sound from the smart phone and there is no chance for him/her to react or talk back, the development of language capacity is hampered. The child is robbed of the vital opportunity of using the language in an interactive way in which he/she will be able to learn how to use, adjust and integrate valuable features of the language. If this keeps on going, then the implications is that the child will definitely display a delayed language skills development.

What can be done to augment this? Well, one best way is to set limitations on the usage of technology. It is improper to use smart phones, computer or even the television as nannies and baby sitters for small children. Instead, offer a more meaningful avenue for adults and children to talk and create conversations where the child can learn how to react and see how others make a feed back towards such reactions.

Technology is a part of our society and it is here to stay, we may be able to harness its potential to do good but bear in mind that it also entails damages if handled improperly.
References:

