DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS - THE UNIVERSITY OF DANANG: FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

CHUYỂN ĐỔI SỐ TRONG GIẢNG DẠY NGOẠI NGỮ Ở TRƯỜNG ĐẠI HỌC KINH TẾ - ĐẠI HỌC ĐÀ NẴNG: NHỮNG CƠ HỘI VÀ THÁCH THỨC TRONG TƯƠNG LAI

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, University of Economics - The University of Da Nang (DUE) has been undergoing a rapid and significant digital transformation in teaching in general and foreign language teaching in specific. The application of digital platforms and the adoption of blended learning models have contributed to improving the quality of foreign language education at the university. Theoretical frameworks, such as constructivist learning, technology acceptance models, sociocultural theory, and self-regulated learning, offer valuable perspectives on how digital tools can develop foreign language acquisition, which further supports the effectiveness of the transformation process. This digital transformation brings significant opportunities to the language teaching at the university such as increased accessibility, personalised learning, and innovative teaching methods. However, it also presents potential challenges, including the need for continuous technological infrastructure upgrades, faculty and student adaptability, and concerns regarding cybersecurity. This paper explores the future opportunities of the digital transforming process, predicts the challenges that may arise in the digitalisation of foreign language teaching and proposes solutions to optimise the potential long-term success of this transformation at the university.

Keywords: Blended learning; Digital transformation; Online foreign language teaching; Educational technology.

TÓM TẮT

Trong những năm gần đây, Trường Đại học Kinh tế, Đại học Đà Nẵng đã và đang trải qua một quá trình chuyển đổi số nhanh chóng và mạnh mẽ trong việc giảng dạy nói chung và giảng dạy ngoại ngữ nói riêng. Việc áp dụng các nền tảng kỹ thuật số và khuyến khích mô hình học tập kết hợp (blended learning) đã góp phần nâng cao chất lượng giảng dạy và học tập ngoại ngữ tại trường. Các khung lý thuyết, chẳng hạn như học tập kiến tạo, mô hình chấp nhận công nghệ, lý thuyết xã hội - văn hóa và học tập tự điều chỉnh, cung cấp những quan điểm sâu sắc về cách các công cụ số có thể phát triển việc tiếp thu ngoại ngữ, qua đó củng cố thêm hiệu quả của quá trình chuyển đổi số. Công cuộc chuyển đổi số này mở ra những cơ hội cho việc giảng dạy ngoại ngữ ở trường, chẳng hạn như khả năng tiếp cận việc học được tăng cường, việc học tập được cá nhân hóa và việc áp dụng các phương pháp giảng dạy đổi mới. Tuy nhiên, trong tương lai, quá trình này có thể đối mặt với nhiều thách thức tiềm tàng như nhu cầu nâng cấp cơ sở hạ tầng công nghệ thường xuyên, mức độ thích ứng của giảng viên và sinh viên, cũng như các rủi ro về an ninh thông tin. Bài báo này khám phá những cơ hội trong tương lai của quá trình chuyển đổi số trong giảng dạy, dự đoán những thách thức có thể xảy ra và đề xuất một số giải pháp nhằm tối ưu hóa quá trình chuyển đổi số trong giảng dạy ngoại ngữ tại trường.

Từ khóa: Mô hình học tập kết hợp; Chuyển đổi số; Giảng dạy ngoại ngữ trực tuyến; Công nghệ giảng dạy.

1. Introduction

In the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, higher education institutions worldwide are undertaking significant transformations. Digital technology is reshaping teaching and learning, leading to more flexible, accessible, and interactive education. The University of Economics -

The University of Da Nang (DUE) has always been at the forefront of this transformation by putting effort in integrating digital tools and promoting blended learning models to enhance teaching quality, particularly in foreign language education.

The transition to digital teaching has been accelerated by external factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which necessitated a rapid shift to online learning. The outbreak of COVID-19 caused a global crisis that disrupted multiple sectors, including health, economics, and education. Educational institutions worldwide were forced to close their physical campuses and transition to online instruction. While technology had already been used in foreign language teaching for years (Baralt and Gomez, 2017; Harmer, 2007; Lam and Lawrence, 2002; Meskill and Anthony, 2010; Tomlinson, 2009), it was the first time in history that all lecturers and instructors had to rely exclusively on Internet-based platforms for their lesson delivery (Gherheș et al., 2021). The sudden shift from traditional face-to-face teaching to online learning posed significant challenges for students, educators, and administrators (Serhan, 2020). Many were unprepared for such an abrupt transformation, and Vietnamese teachers and students were no exception (Maheshwari, 2021).

It is crucial to differentiate between online courses that are deliberately designed for digital instruction, incorporating live, interactive, and instructor-led sessions, and the rapid emergency shift to online learning during the pandemic (Francescucci and Foster, 2013; Hodges et al., 2020; Mežek and Kaufhold, 2023). The latter often lacked the

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structured planning and pedagogical design of traditional online programs. As a result, it created a synchronous educational delivery format that did not fully benefit from best practices in online learning. Consequently, the quality of language teaching was affected (Hodges et al., 2020; Mežek and Kaufhold, 2023). Recognising these limitations, institutions worldwide have begun reassessing their digital strategies to ensure a more structured and effective approach to online language education. In line with this movement, DUE has taken deliberate steps to embed technology into its long-term educational strategies. The implementation of blended learning with the combined use of digital platforms, virtual classrooms, and e-learning resources has created new opportunities for both educators and students to improve learning experiences and accessibility.

Although there have been positive developments in online learning in general, the rapid transformation to digital foreign language teaching also presents challenges that must be anticipated and addressed. Issues related to technological infrastructure, faculty adaptation, student engagement and cybersecurity risks require strategic planning to ensure sustainable and effective digital education. This paper aims to explore future opportunities of the digital transformation to foreign language teaching at DUE, predict potential challenges in the university's digital transformation process and propose some solutions to mitigate them in order to support the long-term success of blended learning initiatives.

2. Theoretical backgrounds

The digital transformation in foreign language education is grounded in several educational and technological theories. First, constructivist learning theories emphasise

interactive, student-centred learning environments, which align with blended and online language learning approaches (Li and Wang, 2024; Zajda, 2021). In this context, learners obtain and form their understanding by actively participating in digital and interactive tasks.

Second, some technological models such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989) and the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh et al., 2003) can be employed to explore the perceptions and acceptance of instructors and students on digital learning platforms. According to these theories, the benefits and user-friendliness of the platforms and the impact of social influence are key factors that affect lecturers and students' readiness to apply digital tools to foreign language teaching and learning (Al-Rahmi et al., 2015; Alyoussef, 2022, Lakhal et al., 2013).

Third, the effectiveness of technology and virtual learning environment in supporting foreign language acquisition and improving teaching pedagogy can be demonstrated through computer-assisted language learning (CALL) or massive open online courses (MOOCs). To be more specific, CALL emphasises that the use of digital tools can support target language skill development through actively interactive practice (Berry, 2019) and instant feedback (Matiso and Makena, 2022), both of which are crucial for language learning. Meanwhile, various functions of MOOCs such as audio-visual materials, interactive simulations and games can draw students' attention to the learning contents and motivate them to perform language tasks (Gené et al., 2014). In addition, online learning platforms can replicate traditional classroom environment by providing various tools and functions

including electronic whiteboards, visual assistances, recording features, public and private chat, and breakout rooms for small group discussions. Thanks to these features, students have more opportunities to engage in foreign language learning, which then supports the development of students' communication skills in the target language (Lin, 2014; Meskill and Anthony, 2010; Mežek and Kaufhold, 2023).

In addition to the theories above, the importance of social interaction and collaborative learning in foreign language acquisition can also be explained via Vygotsky's sociocultural theories (Vygotsky, 2012). When virtual learning environment are designed effectively, they can encourage communicative interactions and cultural exchanges amongst students, from which students' language proficiency will be developed (Coverdale-Jones, 2000; Kato et al., 2016; Meskill and Anthony, 2010; Miceli et al., 2010; Sun, 2011). Similarly, the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (Garrison, 2017) is another theory that draws attention to vital roles of a learning society where learners can acquire knowledge and develop their language skills through social interactions with peers and lecturers. Students can gain meaningful learning experiences by asking their classmates for help with tackling their challenges in foreign language learning (Junus et al., 2022; Yu and Li, 2022). This framework is particularly relevant and useful in evaluating the quality of foreign language teaching on online platforms (Alvi, 2022).

Finally, theories of self-regulated learning and metacognition become more and more important in online learning contexts. According to these theories, learners should have the ability to self-plan, manage, and assess their own learning processes to achieve satisfactory results in

online learning (Andrade, 2012; Kauffman, 2004). Since a higher level of learning autonomy is essential in online learning, where learners are not under strict supervisions from instructors, self-regulation becomes one of the primary contributors in students' academic success (Azevedo, 2008; Daumiller and Dresel, 2018).

In short, the theoretical perspectives discussed in this section provide a thorough understanding into both the potential benefits and limitations of the digital transformation in foreign language teaching at DUE. They are considered the foundation for the examination and evaluation of future opportunities and addressing challenges in the university's digital education transformation.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research design and analytical approach

A conceptual and theoretical approach is employed to provide an analysis focusing on the digital transformation in foreign language teaching at DUE. The study is designed as an exploratory, qualitative analysis, using existing literature related to educational and technological theories to examine potential digital transformation process in foreign language teaching which are ongoing at DUE. The aim of the study is to establish a groundwork for future empirical research by identifying potential key opportunities, challenges and corresponding solutions for the process of foreign language teaching with digital support at the university.

3.2. Construction of theoretical framework

The theoretical framework was developed by synthesising a range of theories, including constructivist learning theory, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989), the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) (Venkatesh et al.,

2003), computer-assisted language learning (CALL) or massive open online courses (MOOCs), the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (Garrison, 2017), and theories of self-regulated learning (Andrade, 2012; Kauffman, 2004). These frameworks were selected based on their relevance to digital pedagogy, foreign language acquisition, learner autonomy in online or blended language learning environments. In addition, the chosen theoretical models have been widely cited in the literature related to both teaching and learning processes in technology-supported environments. The combination of these theoretical perspectives helps structure the analysis and guide the identification of opportunities, challenges and solutions associated with the university's shift to blended learning adoption.

3.3. Research scope and limitations

The scope of this study is limited to analysing conceptual and institutional developments rather than reporting empirical findings. No primary data collection other than the number of students enrolled in English language classes at DUE in the recent 2024-2025 academic year were conducted in this study. The paper does not attempt to provide measurable outcomes or statistical analysis but instead offer a conceptual foundation for future empirical investigation and institutional evaluation.

It is crucial to acknowledge several limitations of the study. A major limitation of the study is the absence of empirical data, which makes the ability to evaluate actual user experience, attitudes or learning outcomes unable. There are no findings based on stakeholder feedback, institutional reports or performance data in the current research. Furthermore, the study context is limited to the case of foreign language teaching at DUE during the digital transformation. It does not

attempt to compare cross institutions. Therefore, the findings are not intended to be broadly generalised but may offer transferable insights for institutions with similar contexts. The author acknowledges these limitations and frames the paper as a preliminary exploration designed to inform and guide future empirical research. Future studies are strongly encouraged to build on this framework using empirical methods such as interviews, classroom observations, or surveys with university students and instructors. More detailed suggestions for future research can be found in section five and seven of this article.

4. Future opportunities for digitalising foreign language teaching at DUE

The digital transformation in foreign language education has created numerous opportunities in foreign language teaching, including improvements in teaching methodologies, increases in student participation in learning activities, and easier accessibility to learning materials. Supported by constructivist, sociocultural, and technology adoption theories, these opportunities offer new ways to improve learning outcomes, foster collaboration in language learning, and support learner autonomy. At DUE, the application of digital technology in foreign language education provides new opportunities for teachers to develop their instructions, engage students, and improve learning outcomes. While fully AI-driven solutions may not be the primary focus, instructors can effectively use digital tools to support interactive and student-centred learning.

4.1. Expanding blended and online teaching methods

Based on constructivist learning theories (Li and Wang, 2024; Zajda, 2021), digital tools support blended learning approaches in which face-to-face instruction is combined with online activities to reinforce language skill development.

Online platforms such as StudyArts or Elearning, developed by DUE, or others such as Moodle, Google Classroom, and Microsoft Teams allow instructors to share course materials, assign interactive exercises, and facilitate discussions. Additionally, video conferencing tools (Zoom, Teams or Google Meet) with breakout room functions provide opportunities for students to interact with each other in small-group discussions and role-playing activities, supporting communicative competence development (Meskill and Anthony, 2010). Also, e-portfolios and online writing platforms enable students to submit essays, receive feedback from peers and instructors, as well as track progress over time. All these features are well-aligned with self-regulated learning theories (Andrade, 2012).

By using these tools in daily lesson plans, instructors of English at DUE can create more flexible and engaging learning experiences that meet different student needs. Although usage statistics and user feedback data on DUE's platform are not currently presented in this paper, future empirical studies are necessary to evaluate the impact of the platform implementation on students' learning outcomes.

4.2. Enhancing engagement and personalisation in large classes

Blended learning presents several opportunities for managing large foreign language classes at DUE. A typical challenge in higher education institutions in Vietnam is managing large-size classes. Generally, a language class with more than 30 students is classified as a large-size class (Akintunde and Adeyiga, 2022; Qaderi and Bahir, 2024) while the ideal number of students in a

language class is recommended to be from 20 to 25 (Sulistyowati, 2012). According to Vo (2024), English language classes in many non-English major universities in Vietnam commonly exceed 40 students per class, and in some cases, the number may even double. These large-size classes, combined with limited instructional time (typically 45-60 periods across 3-4 credit modules) is a significant challenge for maintaining student engagement, providing personalised feedback, and enhancing effective communication practice in the target language (Aoumeur, 2017; Chu et al., 2023; Vo, 2024; Vuong, 2024).

Institutional data from DUE further supports these observations. Over the last two terms in the 2024-2025 academic year, the majority of English language classes at DUE (over 70%) enrolled from 30 to 50 students per class. This figure suggests that the challenges related to large class sizes may also be relevant and potentially impactful at DUE. However, for a better understanding of the scope and persistence of this issue, future research should conduct a data analysis on class size trends across several academic years.

By combining online and face-to-face instruction, blended learning allows teachers to supplement in-class activities with digital resources and support more personalised learning experiences. For example, pre-recorded lectures, interactive exercises, and discussion forums can help students engage with course materials at their own pace. Furthermore, since there are some activities students can do online, classroom time is freed up for communicative practice and in-depth discussions.

Additionally, digital platforms support automated grading and feedback on some kinds of assignments, which helps reduce the burden on instructors while ensuring timely responses for students. Features like online quizzes, peer review systems, and AI-driven assessment tools can help monitor student progress more effectively. Moreover, as discussed in the theoretical backgrounds section, autonomy and self-regulation are two of the key factors contributing to student success in online learning (Andrade, 2012; Kauffman, 2004). Blended learning encourages students to self-study as they can revisit digital content, participate in virtual discussions, and complete exercises outside of class hours.

In short, blended learning model can be beneficial for instructors in managing the challenges of large-size classes. With the support of a variety of online tools as discussed, teachers are better equipped to maintain student engagement and support diverse learning needs.

4.3. Encouraging cooperative learning and social learning environments

As discussed in the theoretical backgrounds, learning together in a learning society is crucial for language skill development, according to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 2012) and the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (Garrison, 2017). Online learning can bring various opportunities for collaborative learning, because its virtual platforms can support peer-to-peer interactions, cross-cultural communication, and authentic language practice. Discussion forums and shared documents, like Google Docs, Padlet, or Edmodo allow students to practise writing in the target language together. Through these online platforms, students can share their writing, exchange feedback and refine their ideas and writing styles. This can help ensure that language learning is a dynamic and interactive process.

Multimedia resources such as YouTube, TED Talks and Podcasts give students opportunities to access and experience authentic language input, helping them improve their listening and pronunciation skills. Moreover, these authentic learning resources also develop students' understanding of the culture associated with the target language via diverse perspectives and cultural insights from first-language speakers.

Additionally, platforms for gamifications such as Kahoot, Quizizz and Blooket provide instructors tools to design interesting vocabulary and grammar activities for language retention examination. Students can also improve their knowledge of language components and retention through immediate feedback and friendly competition in these gamified learning activities.

With the combination of collaborative tasks and authentic language materials, instructors can increase student learning motivation and encourage their active participation in foreign language learning, which truly follows student-centred teaching approach. The adoption of these online tools at DUE would benefit from future data collection on how frequently and effectively these digital platforms and tools are used in actual teaching practices. In addition, the pedagogical impact assessments should be conducted to examine the effectiveness of blended learning models in enhancing student foreign language learning outcomes.

4.4. Improving assessment and feedback through digital tools

Through digital technology development, there are new ways to assess student progress and provide feedback on time, making language learning both measurable and responsive. At DUE, instructors can develop their assessment strategies by utilising online tools and platforms to design quizzes, polls, and assignments that allow them to test students' understanding of language components and skills. Since instructors can track students' progress over time, they can actively adjust the lesson contents and teaching methodology to suit students' language levels and abilities.

In terms of assessment, some tools like Google Docs comments and suggestions or Turnitin Feedback Studio can support instructors in giving detailed and constructive feedback on student writing assignments. Through these comments, students can review and revise their work more effectively. Additionally, instructors can encourage students to submit audio and video recordings for speaking practice to assess students' pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy asynchronously. This practice is considered to be helpful in helping instructors to provide more individual evaluation without the time limit in a physical classroom.

Although this study does not include usage or effectiveness metrics of these digital tools at DUE, their potential has been highlighted in theoretical and practitioner literature. Future research should explore how these technologies are applied and perceived by instructors and students.

In short, the methods discussed above not only enhance precision in grading students' assignments but also provide students with more opportunities to improve their language skills through constructive feedback in a more personalised and supportive learning environment.

5. Theorised challenges in digital foreign language teaching - A conceptual analysis

While the integration of digital tools into higher education can bring numerous benefits, several challenges, which may hinder effective implementation of the process, have

been theorised through established educational and technological frameworks. These challenges may be stemmed from technological limitations, faculty and student readiness and pedagogical concerns, and cybersecurity risks. The insights discussed in this section are intended to inform institutional planning and guide future empirical research, especially in contexts such as DUE. Therefore, no institutional data are presented in the following subsections. Instead, each challenge is inferred from the theoretical framework discussed in the earlier sections, and suggestion for future investigation are provided accordingly.

5.1. Technological infrastructure and accessibility

According to digital learning theories and studies in CALL, reliable technological infrastructure has positive influences on the effective integration of technology in foreign language teaching. While many institutions, including DUE, have been developing online learning platforms to implement the digital transformations, challenges may still arise.

One important concern is the potential unequal access to technology. Based on self-regulated learning theory (Andrade, 2012; Kauffman, 2004), it can be inferred that students lacking personal laptops, tablets, or stable Internet connections are likely to face difficulties in participating in autonomous online learning environments. Although universities like DUE may offer free Internet access, electrical devices for online learning and self-study space, students cannot be expected to stay on campus at all times to make use of these resources. It should be noted that this predicted challenge is identified through theoretical reasoning, not through empirical data such as institutional technology access surveys, device ownership statistics, or Internet connectivity reports.

Future research should investigate these areas to validate these theoretical assumptions and explore clearer understandings of the socioeconomic factors affecting students' technology access.

Moreover, while digital platforms provide valuable support for foreign language teaching, occasional technical issues such as system crashes, audio delays, or login failures may still occur, causing minor disruptions. However, with proper IT support and regular system maintenance, these challenges can be minimised, ensuring a smoother and more reliable digital learning experience for both instructors and students.

5.2. Faculty readiness and digital teaching competence

The effectiveness of digital language education depends on faculty members' ability to integrate technology into their teaching methods. TAM and UTAUT models (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003) suggest that instructors' digital adoption decisions are influenced by their perception of a platform's usefulness, ease of use, and social influence. In specific, instructors who view technology as useful and easy to use are likely to integrate it into their teaching. On the other hand, others may lack these perceptions due to various internal and external factors such as limited exposure, training, or peer support. Furthermore, teachers in many contexts may be at varying levels of digital literacy, which could impact their confidence in using online platforms, interactive tools and assessment. As a result, some may prefer traditional classroom methods and feel reluctant to transition to blended or fully online teaching approaches.

In addition, frameworks like CALL and MOOCs assume that instructors are prepared to manage online learning environments and utilise technological tools to support language

development and student participation. However, without proper training in these areas, instructors may struggle to support constructivist, student-centred learning effectively. While DUE has taken steps to offer workshops on digital technology skill development, these sessions may not always address the practical, subject-specific strategies needed for foreign language teaching with digital tools. This points to the importance of providing more targeted training relevant to foreign language teaching in online learning environments.

Since there are no available empirical data to evaluate faculty digital skills assessment and training programme effectiveness in this study, future studies should investigate faculty digital literacy levels, perceptions of institutional support, and the effectiveness of training models in improving integration of digital tools into the foreign language teaching process.

5.3. Student engagement and digital learning skills

Although digital platforms offer flexibility and interactivity, students may not be prepared for autonomous learning. Based on theories of self-regulated (Andrade, 2012; Kauffman, 2004), it can be inferred that learners need to develop skills such as goal setting, time management, and self-evaluate their own progress to succeed in online and blended language courses. Additionally, Vygotsky's sociocultural theories (Vygotsky, 2012) and the Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework (Garrison, 2017) emphasise that peer interaction and teaching presence play a crucial role in sustaining learner study motivation and develop students' language proficiency through meaningful learning experiences.

Drawing from these theories, some theoretical challenges of the digital

transformation in foreign language teaching ay DUE have been identified. Firstly, without face-to-face interaction or direct supervision, some students may lose focus on study. They may participate less in discussions, or struggle with self-discipline in online courses. They may not spend time at home watching the video lectures and prepare for in-class discussions in advance. Moreover, when there is no proper guidance, students may find it difficult to set realistic goals, staying motivated, or use digital resources efficiently. In large-size classes, the challenge is even greater, as instructors have limited time to provide individualised support for each student's learning needs.

In addition, the shift to online learning environments increases the risk of students multitasking, browsing social media, or distracting from lessons, all of which may reduce their learning effectiveness. Although it is a minor issue, it is still worth noting that.

It should be noted that these challenges are inferred from theoretical perspectives and not supported by empirical data at this stage, which is a limitation of the current study. Future research should examine patterns of student participation in online and blended language courses, particularly in relation to their ability to self-regulate and their daily online learning habits. Investigations on data such as login frequency, task completion rates, and time spent on learning platforms could offer meaningful findings in the different ways students stay engaged or disengage in online learning environments.

5.4. Challenges in cybersecurity in blended foreign language teaching

As blended learning becomes more and more crucial at higher education settings like DUE, the concern of ensuring cybersecurity is considered significantly important. With the increasing use of online platforms for

teaching, assessment, and communication, both students and faculties need to be aware of potential cybersecurity threats such as personal data leaks, online scams, and unauthorised access to learning materials.

The key challenge of this aspect is the protection of faculty and student data since their personal information, academic records, and assessment data are stored on virtual learning platforms. Without strong security measures, sensitive data may be at risk of leaks or unauthorised use. Additionally, weak account passwords or unsecured login systems may lead to hacking attempts or identity fraud.

Furthermore, device security and network safety require consideration. Students and instructors often access online learning platforms from their personal devices or public networks, which may not have adequate security protections. This increases the risk of them unknowingly using harmful software or apps that secretly collect personal information, or of someone trying to break into the system. All of these threats could disrupt the learning activities and affect the whole university's online system.

In sum, while the digital transformation at DUE brings promising opportunities to foreign language teaching at the university, there are still challenges to overcome, which are technological limitations, large class sizes, instructor and student readiness in using digital tools, student engagement, and cybersecurity concerns. By addressing these problems through improving infrastructure, providing targeted faculty training, promoting efficient student engagement, and strengthening online security, a smoother and more effective digital integration process can be ensured for better foreign language teaching and learning at DUE.

6. Suggested solutions for potential long-term success of digital transformation in language teaching at DUE

To ensure the long-term success of digital foreign language teaching at DUE, strategic measures are suggested to address the challenges discussed in the previous section. Key strategic areas, specific actions, projected timelines, responsible stakeholders, and necessary resource considerations are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Proposed implementation plan for sustainable digital transformation in foreign language teaching

Focus area	Proposed actions	Timeline and milestones	Resources needed	Responsible stakeholders
1. Blended learning integration	Integrate blended approaches using DUE's StudyArts or Elearning platforms for English language modules	- Short term (1-2 terms): Pilot blended modules - Medium term (3-4 terms): Full rollout	- Online platforms for blended learning - Content creation time - IT support	- English for Specific Purposes Division - Platform designers - IT department
2. Large-size class management	Use online tools (e.g., pre-recorded lectures, quizzes) to	- Short term: Use tools in high-enrolment classes	- Learning platforms - AI-based feedback tools	- English for Specific Purposes Division

	personalise learning in large-size classes	- Long term: Adjust curriculum structures based on feedback		- Curriculum planners
3. Faculty training and support	Provide specific digital language teaching-related workshops and peer-led training	- Short term: Training needs analysis - Medium term: Run workshops and peer mentoring	- Training budget - Trainer availability - Digital literacy assessment tools - Staff time	- English for Specific Purposes Division - Other relevant departments at DUE
4. Student engagement and learning autonomy	Promote self-regulated learning strategies through interactive tools (forums, portfolios, gamified apps)	Ongoing: - Adjust lesson plans - Assess student engagement each term	- Digital content and tools for autonomous learning - Tools/platforms for gamification - Training materials on student engagement assessment	- English for Specific Purposes Division - Relevant academic advisors
5. Cybersecurity Awareness	- Implement basic online safety training for students and staff - Upgrade platform security	- Short term: Conduct workshops to raise awareness about online safety - Medium term: Security protocol updates	- Workshop materials - Training hours - IT security personnel - Updated login systems - Software licenses - Policy development	- IT department - All departments at DUE
6. Digital infrastructure development	- Improve Internet access and platform stability - Ensure ongoing IT maintenance and upgrades	Ongoing	- IT Department - University leadership	- Budget for hardware upgrades - IT department - Infrastructure department
7. Digital access and inclusion	- Provide more self-study spaces - Improve Wi-fi access on campus	Ongoing	- Library services - Infrastructure improvement	- Financial aid funds for infrastructure improvement - Infrastructure department

7. Suggestions for future empirical research

Although empirical data are not included in this paper, the proposed framework offers a starting point for further investigation. Future research could include:

- Surveys and interviews with students and instructors to explore their experiences with platforms for blended learning.
- Quantitative studies comparing language learning outcomes before and after blended learning implementation.
- Observational research examining how blended or online classes are conducted in practice.
- Evaluation studies using TAM, UTAUT, or the CoI framework to assess effectiveness of blended learning models and user engagement to the learning .

These next steps would help validate the theoretical assumptions of the current study and offer deeper insights into how digital transformation affects foreign language teaching in practice.

8. Conclusion

The rapid shift to digital foreign language teaching at the DUE appears to have both opportunities and challenges. Theoretical frameworks, including constructivist learning, technology acceptance models, sociocultural theory, and self-regulated learning, provide valuable insights into how digital tools can enhance language acquisition. By integrating blended and online teaching methods, improving engagement in large classes, fostering learning collaboration, and enhancing assessment strategies, instructors can create more student-centred and interactive learning environments. However, the successful implementation of digital foreign language teaching requires addressing key potential challenges such as technological accessibility, faculty readiness and digital teaching competence, student engagement and cybersecurity threats. The solutions suggested in this article are hoped to contribute to the building on digital transformation efforts at DUE, ensuring an inclusive, engaging, and effective learning environment that benefits both students and instructors in foreign language education at DUE.

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