

Information and Communication Technology in English Language Teaching: Some Opportunities and Challenges – A Review Paper

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Abstract: *The growth of the internet, e-commerce and information and communication technology have created tremendous opportunities and challenges for both the societies, learning and teaching communities. Information and communication technology (ICT) is also having a profound effect on learning and teaching in classrooms. ICT is one of the most powerful enablers which facilitates learning and teaching. The landscape of our schools and colleges today is enormously different from that which we were familiar with during our school and college days. If you visit any school or college you will see students accessing the internet from PCs along the corridors, in the classrooms and in the library. Art lessons are conducted with digital software rather than the brush and the paint. ICT has opened up a new avenue to the world of education. It provides new tools for teachers and students and opens up the whole world of knowledge. It also allows teaching and learning to take place beyond the traditional boundaries and the resources of the schools and colleges. The educational institutes and the learning centers today have greatly affected according to the new methods and technologies in the classroom situations. The major change is of the use of ICT in the teaching and learning process. There is a need of certain strategy to calculate an actual quality of the learners who are using this technology for their learning process. Language is the mirror of human life which delineates the life of human. Language speaks man's personality. It is the cosmic medium like imparting the common information society. English and ICT have become essential tools for a number of non-datum and emotions of everyday life. English language has become a global language because of its numerous functions and preferences over several other languages over the globe. English has become the window to the world. English is not only the mother tongue of Britain but also to so many countries like Canada, USA, New Zealand etc. It is also used as second language in many countries like Nigeria, Ghana etc. The present paper focuses on the review of the use of technology in English language and literature teaching and learning process and e-learning tools. The technology enhanced language learning will obviously help the teachers and the students in teaching and learning process with the desired objectives. It also includes the use of technology such as internet, computer assisted language learning, digital language laboratory. The language teachers can make use of these tools very effectively to facilitate teaching and learning process*

Keywords: ICT; digital software; e-learning; e-commerce; Paradigm, stimulus, explicit

I. INTRODUCTION

ICT, internet and digital media have been publicly known in a new era in many aspects of our lives and education is no exception to this. Computer, internet, blogs, twitter, web-based learning, e-mail, etc. are being used so extensively in day-to-day learning especially in teaching English world-wide. With the access of the technologies, both the learning and teaching are facilitated. Learning English through technologies can make students to learn literature too. E-learning is a broader term than online learning. The uniqueness of e-learning is that, it provides the learner the opportunity to learn anywhere and anytime. The fact is that more than half of the population India today is below than twenty five years of age and the number of internet users is growing very rapidly. We have experienced rapid advances in information and communication technology in the last decade. Such advances have created unprecedented changes in the way we live, learn, educate, work and play. Because of its interactive and dynamic nature ICT has the stamina to

meet the needs of the individual student by providing opportunities to direct their learning and to pursue information. With the usage of ICT students can learn any subject especially English with ease. In the context of the global exchange the role of ICT has become inevitable in the 21st century. The use of ICT has become essential in every day classroom teaching and learning. Its use gives a chance to teachers as well as students to increase the quality of education and meet the requirements set by the coeval knowledge society. ICT has become essential tool for educational change and reform. Methodology of English has started a new way of using ICT in teaching. ICT provides more opportunities for communication between peer learners. With the use of ICT there is a two-way exchange of knowledge between home and school/ college. The teacher abides key to the successful use of ICT for learning. The integration of ICT in language teaching and learning has become an interesting topic to many researchers and education practitioners.

THE ROLE OF ICT IN TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS

The use of ICT in the teaching of English language and literature can make it interesting for teachers and students and revolutionize the way the subject is taught. It can surely make the students alive in the digital classrooms. It can also help the students to grab the opportunity to visualize, discuss, interact and learn. The role of teacher is of immense importance in teaching English language and literature. Above all the use of ICT can definitely help to use different modes of teaching for every genre of literature. English literature can be making live with the use of audio-visual aids, playing of movies on staged plays etc. Scenes from movies can be shown and interpreted. In every step of our lives the significance of technology is seen and enjoyed in the present era. English is the only language of attraction for many people around the world. Today in the age of globalization, the interest in e-commerce, scientific resources are available in English language only. Today there is an immense change observed in the process of teaching and learning process world-wide. The new technologies like web based PCs, mobile phones, satellites, computers and internet are helping the teachers and the students to gather and disseminate information which is normally not possible through any other means. The several Universities, colleges, schools, educational institutes and even corporate training centers are increasingly utilizing the disturbed networks and multimedia to supplement or enhance the classroom instructions and to provide open learning. The technology has basically altered how we live and work as well as how we learn. The major initiatives and policy for introducing ICTs in higher education must be the serious concern today. At present Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi, uses radios, televisions, computers and internet technologies to promote higher education. IIT Kanpur has developed Brihaspati, an open source e-learning platform. IIT Bombay has started the programme of CDEED (Centre for Distance Engineering Education Programme) as emulated classroom interaction through the use of real time interactive satellite technology and One Laptop per Child (OLPC) programme in Maharashtra. The advance techniques of teaching and learning are really a great boon for the teaching and learning community. These new concepts have definitely shaped by the new perspectives nourished by the globalization and privatization in the field of higher education. The students can normally grasp the knowledge and skills of the advanced technologies at ease. In the present context ICTs have created a global village in which we can communicate with each other across the world. In our modern technological society literacy in ICT is unique and fundamental to our life.

The Internet

The internet offers the best way to learn language other than immersion in an English speaking milieu. The student's relationship with websites is more noticeable than with print based text. Internet users may return to sites frequently or use internet for interaction to share their information and ideas. Digital technology is rapidly used by pupils and teachers not only in the classroom but also in the personal life. The internet saves our time and energy. We can learn English lessons through internet without the need of travelling and without the need of leaving home or bedroom. With internet students can learn English anywhere at any time and whenever they want. The internet offers instant feedback to the learners which enhance the learning experience of the students. An E-Book is an electronic version of a traditional print book that can be read by using a personal or by using an eBook reader like iPods and kindle. EBooks also used to improve the teaching and learning skills in the classroom. In eBooks teachers and students can add images, info graphics, posters, video, and text, audio and so on. Learners can share eBooks with their friends. EBooks strengthen students' note making skills, the knowledge of English grammar and application skills. Baskin and Harris

(1995:372) explain, “The first literature heard, not read.” Audio books are not discovery of this century or even of the last one considering authentic books as equivalent to its content and not to its format (Baskin and Harris 1995:372). Audio books are applicable for English language learners and young people who are craving for learning English with stories. Audio books develop the four language systems; phonological, semantic, syntactic and pragmatic. Audio books are recordings on CD or digital file of a book which are read aloud. “The use of audio books with struggling, reluctant or second language learners is powerful since they act as a scaffold that allows students to read above their actual reading level” (Beers 1998:33, Chen Slue-Hsien 2004). Play way is the new arrival regarding audio books. Play way does not need a separate players and it is preloaded and ready to use.

Advantages of ICT in English language teaching

The use of ICT has positive effects on foreign language teaching learning.

1. We can get the required information within a fraction of second.
2. Learners become more innovative with the help of e-learning.
3. ICT provides the information to the students which will be useful for them to compete with this competitive world.
4. English lessons that incorporate multimedia applications can exert powerful motivation and provide bored students with exciting new ways to learn.
5. ICT can make students and teachers to work with current and authentic sources.
6. ICT ameliorates the learner’s interaction, verbalization involvement in group collaborative learning.
7. Students can learn independently.
8. With ICT pictorial description is available.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Students get short span of attention because of the ICT in language learning.
2. Online learning cannot offer human interaction.
3. Intense requirement for self-discipline and self-direction.
4. Communication is taking place between learners.
5. The teacher is only a mediator. ICT’s are intrinsic tools in many educational institutions.

The use of ICT increases the scope of teaching. It provides quality learning materials and creating autonomy of learning. Along with academic excellence students must have English communicative skills for their prosperous future. Curriculums must be made easy by including technological aids. Learners can share their work which can promote cultural diversity, have positive motivational effects and raise self- esteem.

II. CONCLUSION

ICT’s are intrinsic tools in many educational institutions. The use of ICT increases the scope of teaching. It provides quality learning materials and creating autonomy of learning. Along with academic excellence students must have English communicative skills for their prosperous future. Curriculums must be made easy by including technological aids. Learners can share their work which can promote cultural diversity, have positive motivational effects and raise self- esteem. The fact is that the totality of the teaching and learning cannot be perceived without the lecture method which consists of moral lessons and the value based teaching. It is not only an impressive method of teaching but also a way to shape the minds of our learners towards the morality, modesty and the character in true sense. Language and literature does not only occur in the classrooms and should not stop after the learners leave the classrooms. So, technological devices should be always used by the teachers and the students. The tools of ICTs are of the most popular and useful ways in language and literature teaching. To sum up, ICT is form of advanced science and technology which must be optimized function, especially in the implementation of learning. ICT provides opportunities for students in the era of global competition needs to obtain adequate supplies. Through innovative ICT-based learning can provide vast opportunities for the students to hone and promote competence on an international scale. Therefore, whichever tool you will use as a teacher should be useful and more suitable which will enhance teaching and learning process. Though ICT has many advantages and provides opportunities in the era of the global competition, it has many disadvantages too. It

might lose the intimacy between the teacher and the learners. Eventually, the use of ICT in teaching and learning process of English language and literature definitely increase the competence of English.

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