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The Role of ICT in Teaching and Learning Process

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Abstract: - In the present circumstances, teachers can not only depend upon the 'chalk and talk' method of teaching in classrooms but have to assimilate with the generations raised on a multimedia diet. In order to stimulate the lively experience among techno savvy generations, we as English language and literature teachers have to look out for new and exciting ways to make teaching learning more interesting and joyous. By utilizing modern aids of teaching based on technology, teachers can make their teaching more comprehensive. ICT has brought a dramatic shift in education from teacher centered to learner centered. The present paper aims to seek various e-learning study tool materials that can be put to effective use in the field of education to establish a positive correlation between the communicative aspects of a language and provision of an acquisition-rich environment. Communicative Language Learning (CLL) materials and Computer Assisted Communicative Language Learning (CACLL) materials are highly innovative tools in providing the learners with a conducive language learning environment. CLL and CALL materials encourage learners to communicate fluently. Computer Assisted Communicative Language Learning (CACLL) materials make use of the target language as natural as possible. The paper focuses on how the use of ICT in teaching of English language motivates teaching learning process and keeps learners engaged. The paper tries to highlight the role of modern methods and technologies in the process of teaching and learning. The use of ICT in teaching learning process can make a second language learning more joyous and can facilitate critical thinking, problem solving ability and improvement of other skills like listening, reading and writing. Thus, the paper reviews how technology and multimedia tools could be used to enhance communicative competence in English besides ELT.



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Education all over the world in this modern era has moved from being teacher-centered to learner-centered with the growth of information and communication technologies in all fields of life. The emergence of new technologies in recent years has increased the number of options available for the integration of various media in the delivery of educational programs. In the world of internet, domain of English language has expanded beyond limit. It is said that knowledge of English is a passport for better career and a way to communicate with the entire world. Chirivella Radhika precisely observes “The knowledge of English will enable us to establish intellectual, cultural, economic, commercial and political relations with the rest of the world and its knowledge is essential for higher legal, technical and scientific education and research in almost all branches of learning.”(5-6).¹

Latest technology is by and large the cause behind the changing perceptions of people towards various walks of life. It paves the way for social and linguistic change in the world. As Graddol opines that,

Technology lies at the heart of the globalization process; affecting education work and culture. The use of English language has increased rapidly after 1960. At present the role and status of English is that it is the language of social context, political, sociocultural, business, education, industries, media, library, communication across borders, and key subject in curriculum and language of imparting education. (Graddol 16).²

¹ Chirivella, Radhika. “Teaching English Language: Problems and Remedies”, *Indian Streams Research Journal*, vol. I, Issue.IV, May 2011, pp.5-6.

² Graddol, David. *The future of English? A guide to forecasting the popularity of the English language in the 21st century*. London: British Council, 1997. Print.



Thus, modern technology should be incorporated by teachers in their everyday teaching as it upgrades the process of teaching and learning more exclusively. Since there has been TV, radio, films, as teaching materials for a long time to replace the traditional form of teaching but those seem inadequate in the new era of smart technology. The new technology is available with several options to make teaching-learning more productive. The present generation is techno-savvy. They grow up in the presence of multimedia. They want the same to be in their classrooms. Therefore, teachers have to adopt modern technology besides the tools like blackboard and chalk in classrooms. Usage of multimedia in classrooms can put a greater effect on the students understanding.

As we know, English is most widely used written and spoken language in the world. It is used as a native/second/foreign language in the globe. English language is mandatory part in school and learners curriculum almost everywhere in the world. N. Krishnaswamy and Laitha Krishna Swamy rightly say:

Out of the 1.5 billion who now English, about 337 million Use it as their first language (L1) about 350 million use it as a second language (L2)... in addition, there are about 100-1000 million people who are actively learning and trying to use English with reasonable competence. (Krishnaswamy and Krishnaswami 1).³

Teachers' are reluctant to use new methods, aids, and techniques of teaching English which resultant into declining the standards of teaching English language. Teachers should use multimedia technology like projectors (LCD), Interactive Whiteboard (IW), application to teaching containing audio, visual, animation effects. Multimedia plays huge role in promoting active initiation of students in the process of language acquisition. In the present scenario, internet has reached at every

³ Krishnaswamy, N, and Lalitha Krishnaswamy. *Teaching English: Approaches, Methods and Techniques*. Macmillan India Ltd, 2003. Print.



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corner of the world which caused the growth of English language too. The internet is now used as a source of study materials as well as means of communication through web, email, chat, video conferencing etc. Internet is the valuable tool of modern teaching methods. Teachers can demonstrate their discourses' through their laptops/computers directly connected to their students laptops/computers through Wi-Fi connection. Now whiteboards could be directly connected to computers/laptops which could provide the touch control of the computer application. Teachers can also demonstrate their learners the use of web dictionaries. They can also use digital games, blogs, and microphones for teaching curriculum in their classrooms. Students can use moving images rather than merely written words through video projects, webcams, phone cameras, flip cams, editing tools, digital recorders, You Tube etc. In short, both students and teachers can upgrade their knowledge by surfing on the net.

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) assists learners to acquire the basic communication skills appropriately in a given language. It involves the range of activities containing LSRW with several useful resources of information for initiating innovative learning strategies. Such sort of learning helps learners immensely to participate in the target language culture. The students could learn effectively if CALL is integrated in teaching learning process. It helps to draw the attention of students and they get enough practice to learn vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, composition and other linguistic terms. To be brief, CALL makes most reliable teaching tools to learn the study skills in English. The English teachers should be trained to use Computer Assisted Language learning (CAAL) programmes. As Rajeshwar says that "CALL programmes make use of software specially developed for the purpose of second language acquisition and instruction and make the teaching and learning of English an infinitely enjoyable experience" (Rajeshwar 9).⁴

⁴ Rajeshwar, M. "Information Technology Revolution: Opportunities and Challenges to the Teachers of English", In G. Damodar, P. Shailaja and M. Rajeswar, (eds.), *It Revolution, Globalization and the Teaching of English*, New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors. , 2001.



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ICT contains various tools such as data base, spread sheet, word processing, browser applications, computers, digital cameras, MP3 players. Teachers can write their questions on to the screen of compact computers with a pen and send them directly to their students' computers and can get feedback from them. In a nutshell, pen less and paperless classrooms are being emerged extensively as a substitute to the traditional classrooms. The convention mode of teaching is replaced by ICT. It is one of the valuable learning tools to improve learners' proficiency level in English.

There are number of online courses designed for teaching skills of English language. Teachers may utilize those resources in collaborative method of learning. This may lead to interactive classes and creation of knowledgeable learning communities with student centered approach. Eventually, the use of ICT in teaching learning process can make second language learning more joyous and can facilitate critical thinking, problem solving ability and improvement of other skills like listening, reading and writing. ICT helps to enhance the resource materials for both teachers and students and also offers them tremendous opportunities for their professional development. The use of ICT will have a greater effect on the students. It would develop the learning environment of the language classrooms. The teachers can introduce e-learning methods in their classrooms. They must not solely rely on traditional classrooms practices but act as facilitators by using authentic materials in the form of ICT.

ICT in teaching and learning is inevitable. Using various news reports, short films, advertisements, blogs, written articles, television clippings, TV programmes, video talk, BBC's games, videos, radio achieves, voice recordings offer deeper understanding of perspectives and lifestyles to students. This provides informative knowledge to the students and helps them to acquire language and grammar skills in a non threatening way. Through multimedia and technology, teachers could reform their teaching methods and aids. Technology can expose students to real situations since it provides variety of materials, time, place, flexibility and pace to learners to go at their own level. It enhances classroom accessibility outside the classroom. It benefits the students in their learning.



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The use of movies in classroom teaching can make positive influence on learners' performance since it involves motion and physical action. The learners get to know about the role of body language and facial expressions in communicating different ideas and emotions. This medium helps to improve vocabulary, idioms, collocations and grammar in use. As Mark Lowe's says that;

Films help learners experience real language in context, serve as an optimum source for learners to acquire useful vocabulary, provide learners with an insight into new cultures and learners to understand and recognize different accents, help learners improve their own pronunciation, as well as other language areas via the regular exposure to the moving image. (Lowe 16-17).⁵

The computer with its Internet facility and chat room allows synchronous as well as asynchronous discussion groups so that students can interact with one another. The use of this medium can help the institution to make progress towards student-centered pedagogy. The Internet helps learners to keep abreast of changing trends and to keep track of ever expanding knowledge in every field. Internet provides an opportunity to learners to gain access to material related to their course work. It helps learners to develop their perceptions by going through available sources of reading and writing material on the net. The Internet can help to improve the quality of the present open and distance learning system in India and still retain its cost effectiveness. Although individual Internet access is not feasible in India, shared Internet access from the study centers is possible.

A computer broadly operates in two entities, software and hardware. Software controls the computer working. It controls the way the computer works and is supplied along with hardware. Computer is unfailing, accurate and precise. It can repeat an activity any number of times

⁵ Lowe. M. "Films in English Language Teaching", *IH Journal*, Issue 23, Autumn 2007, pp. 16-19. 2007.



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accurately, it can offer more frequent feedback than a teacher, and can supplement regular classes to a certain extent. It can also accommodate and offers interactive learning. It helps teachers in the academic presentation; the exercises are modifiable unlike a text book lesson. It frees the teachers from some constraints imposed by heavy teaching schedules. It plays a major role in language teaching process. Many principles of language pedagogy such as flexibility, individualized, accuracy in detail and rapidity of response are fundamental advantages of teaching with computers. Computer awareness is an essential part of the child's educational experience, and nothing but good can come from extending the role of computers into the language teaching area of the curriculum.

Computers offer interactive learning and can repeat an activity any number of times. They can offer more frequent feedback than the teacher and can accommodate different speeds of learning. Exercises can be modified accordingly. According to Higgins, computers possess the quality of infinite patience, they treat each learner in the same way without favoritism. They are also very consistent in their responses, regardless of how many hours they have been working. Even the best of teachers cannot show the same level of enthusiasm, interest and energy, day in and day out.⁶

Computer applications can help to improve student performance in basic skills and other key areas. We can use Internet as a stimulus for developing writing skills. Students tend to be motivated when they write for real reasons-communicating with a friend about a mutual interest, writing to a magazine, or for a magazine preparing information for a bulletin board, taking part in an online discussion, or debate. Using the Internet for any kind of learning gives the learners' lot of space and independence.

Computer networking is a boom to the distance learners. They can sit right at home and communicate with their group and their tutors provided they have computer/terminals at the disposal of the other distance learners. Lessons can be delivered through this system and feedback

⁶ Higgins, J, and T Johns. *Computers in Language Learning*. Reading Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1984.



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from the tutors on learners responses can also be had immediately or very quickly. As Seema Jain observes how major initiatives and policy for introducing ICT's in higher education is taken. For instance, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) uses television and internet technologies, Eklavya initiative uses internet and television to promote distance learning, Jadavpur University using a mobile learning centre, IIT-Kanpur's Brihaspati, an open source e-learning platform and other kinds of programmes in this direction.(Jain 14).⁷ The use of modern technologies and methods in the process of teaching-learning is an innovative way for uplifting our learners to be skilled citizen in the world of globalization.

Literacy in ICT is fundamental to life in the contemporary society. In order to equip students to be literate lifelong learners, we should integrate ICT in our language and literature classrooms. The use of ICT can help to use different modes of teaching for every genre of literature and every linguistic concept. As ICT tools work at different levels and the learners can have an opportunity to see, read, visualize, hear, discuss, interact and learn. In order to make an interaction between language learners and teachers, tools of ICT, mobile devices are of the most popular and valuable ways in teaching and learning language and literature.

Technology enhanced language learning includes use of technology such as internet, computer assisted language learning, digital language laboratory etc. The language teachers can effectively use these tools to facilitate target language (TC). Teachers must adopt various methods and approaches to deal with target language. As we know new technologies develop and disseminate so quickly that we cannot avoid their attraction and influence in any form. The technology enhanced language learning devices help us to go beyond the traditional aspects of foreign language learning and teaching. Education is a lifelong process with the need to learn new skills and discard old ones.

Currently traditional classrooms are replaced by smart classrooms. Furthermore, learners now make a claim that there is no need of teachers since learning doesn't depend upon teaching

⁷ Jain, Seema. "Inclusion of ICT in Higher Education: Technology Literacy for Today and Tomorrow" *University News*, New Delhi, AIU vol 49, no. 41, Oct 2011, p-14



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because there is no shortage of resources and materials to comprehend any subject. ICT does not only enhance students understanding but also their presence and active participation in the classrooms. ICT should be used only as teaching aids. It must be kept in mind that no machine can replace the role of a teacher.

In the present scenario, English has acquired the global status in the world. Thus, it is imperative to use the recent trends particularly ICT aids/tools in teaching English language. The modern e-learning aids of teaching and learning language seem to be very helpful for the learners. It provides quick access to the information and makes learning process quite easier. The new technologies are assisting teachers and learners to gather and disseminate information which seems impossible through any other means. But the excessive dependency over online sources may lead towards plagiarism. The adverse effects of mobiles, TVs and ICT cannot be avoided. However, these methods and modern technologies cannot take the place of teachers. The process of e-learning is covering ICT but that is too without value based teaching and fine tuning among teachers and learners. It weakens the intimacy and mutual understanding between teachers and learners.

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