TECHNOLOGICAL AIDS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

English language learning without technology is an inconceivable practice now-a-days. The increase in number of English learners gives a chance for the adoption of different teaching methods in order to test the effectiveness of the teaching process. The method of English teaching has been considerably changed with the entry of technology. Technology makes teaching interesting and more productive in terms of improvements. Technology is one of the most significant drivers of both social and linguistic change all through the world.

Keywords: ELT, English Language, Technology

The growth of English language has gone hand in hand with technological innovations. It is observed that the growth of the internet has facilitated the growth of the English language and that has occurred at a time when computers are accessible to many people. Mun Mun Das Biswas in the article, "A Study on the Technological Devices used by English Teachers at the Secondary Level in Private Institutions in the Capital City Agartala" states: "English is the only language through which we have distilled essence of modern knowledge in all fields of human activity. Therefore, language teaching methodology needs to be constantly updated with reference to the teaching of foreign language. The study attempts to determine the views of language teachers working at secondary level institutions in the use of technological devices in a multicultural classroom" (Biswas, 7). There has been a very significant rise of literature regarding the use of technology in teaching English language.

The integration of technology into learning English language gives an opportunity for students to learn English online with increased access to global information. This development makes teachers follow technological aids in the classroom in order to help students on par with global trends. The limited options of teaching English language are long gone because of technological advancement.

An important aspect of learning English is how to communicate with others in a social setting. A traditional classroom setting is often not encouraging to learning because the strategies do not create interest among students today. But technology has completely changed the classroom setting and makes it easier for English learners to focus on it because

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the content can be demonstrated in a number of ways. Various forms of lessons like computer-based instruction, visual aids, and technologically advanced materials help students' achieve much knowledge in less time. Vivian Chaplin, Mark Wong, and Manuel Noronha in the article, "The Use of New Media Technological Aids in the Language Classroom: Video and Internet" state:

> The integration of videos as a teaching tool, especially in a language learning classroom, could prove to be a multi-faceted option for teachers who wish to boost

> the students' level of interest as well as their productivity. This can be achieved by visually introducing the subject to be taught and relating it to a lesson. Students are thus given an opportunity to watch and understand the concepts as they observe what is represented through the use of simulated case reconstruction. Video lessons can be integrated as part of the lesson plan and reinforce multimedia resources teachers already have. (Chaplin, 1)

Technological advancement has allowed students to use mobile phones or laptops for learning English language. This not only helps students to absorb the material but also offers valuable practice on the proper ways to use tools of technology. Students prefer to combine technology and learning English because of the valuable skills acquired throughout the lessons. Computer software and online tools help learners to absorb the material very easily and also sharpen language skills. It helps to highlight the essential building blocks of language learning including vocabulary, comprehension, phonics, and overall fluency.

The various forms of technological aids in learning English language are:

Interactive whiteboards: Interactive whiteboards are a very useful way for English learners to access helpful resources or lessons. Instructors may include previous topics that are extremely important to progress to the next level. Besides, Interactive whiteboards help a great deal to support an online education and are a perfect example of how to incorporate technology and learning English. It helps them for the exercise of data interpretation which is a vital factor in English language learning. It offers the facility of saving the data used in a particular lecture or recording a lesson which can be used for further classes or absent students.

Web Search Engine: Web Search Engine is a tool designed to search for information on the World Wide Web about various kinds of information in relation to English language. It works by storing information from many web pages which they retrieve from 'the html'. It provides ideas for English classroom plans and important tips for disadvantaged or advanced students. It gives ideas for students with different proficiency levels.

Podcasts: Podcasts deal with social software in which a section of social Netizens have the opportunity to include their own contents. Podcasts are significant for the language teachers

because teachers find difficult to find resources for pronunciation with a variety of accents and registers to be used in the classes. Wikis and blogs integrate a wide variety of audio-visual points that are worth incorporating in the foreign language classroom. The podcasts produced by English language teachers are generally aimed at helping students learn by producing listening content which is not available anywhere in order to make students proficient in English.

Blogs: A blog or weblog is a regularly updated website that is similar to an online journal. The main reason is to provide a real audience for student writing. Generally, the teacher is the only person who reads student writing, and the focus of this reading is usually on form of the write-up. With the help of blogs, students can find themselves writing for a real audience besides the teacher that helps them to enhance writing skills in English language. Blogs guide students to utilize online resources that suitable for their level. It provides a room for out-of-class discussion. It also encourages a process-writing approach among students in order to get proficiency in English language..

Multimedia: It is used to produce Computer-Based Training courses (CBTs) and reference books like encyclopedia and manuals. It offers the provision for rich multi model input in the form of full motion video, text, sound, and colour graphics, potentially enhancing both input and response. Min Pun in the paper, "The use of Multimedia Technology in English Language Teaching: A Global Perspective" asserts: "As the English language teaching models change rapidly, there has been a significant growth of literature regarding the use of technology in English language teaching. These literatures unequivocally accept technology as the most essential part in teaching. Such a tendency has emphasized on an essential role of technology in pedagogy in which technology has been dominant over the teachers" (Pun, 30). In today's society, the utilization of multimedia technology is playing a vital role in learning English language because it can easily stimulate students.

Audio-visual aids: Audio-visual aids can develop students' comprehensive ability in the classroom. Taped recordings of lectures or movies are helpful to learners because they pick up tone and pitch readily. Computers with speech-recognition devices will also help students to process and retain information better than just reading from a textbook. Sadoon Salih Mutar in the paper, "The Effect of using Technical Audio- Visual Aids on Learning Technical English Language at Technical Institutes" states: "There are a variety of technical audio-visual aids which can be used by language teachers. It is important to select those which are appropriate to the method adopted for presenting English lessons. Technical audio-visual aids communicate facts and ideas through the eyes to the mind and emotions" (Mutar, 1). Students with hearing disabilities will also benefit from teachers who use microphones while lecturing.

PowerPoint presentations: PowerPoint presentations in the modern classroom help learners understand meaning of words or content in English through graphic pictures such as charts,

illustrations and diagrams. Integrating a 'YouTube' or any other instructional video clip into a lesson plan can greatly enhance understanding during the learning process. If an interactive white board with Internet capabilities is not available, many video clips from the web can be downloaded and demonstrated in a PowerPoint presentation for English classroom purposes.

Virtual Learning: Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is a software system that is designed to support teaching and learning in an educational setting. It works over the internet and provides a collection of tools such as those for assessment of English language communication, questionnaires, peer assessment, etc. It is really helpful to English language learning as it addresses the global learners. Initially, it was designed for distance education but it is used to supplement traditional face to face classroom activities. In this context, learning is not confined to a particular building or restricted to any single location or moment. Universities and other institutions of higher education are adopting this software in order to strengthen students for finding information and resources of English language.

E – Learning: The term 'electronic learning' is also similar to online education. In this method, the screen is the computer screen where the students receive course content, student support services and have access to the web and other materials. In the process of English language learning, the student can communicate with the teacher or peers from here via e-mail or chat session. Here, learners are not bound to a specific time to attend classes. They can also pass on learning sessions at their convenience.

M – Learning: M-Learning is a sort of learning process that can take place anywhere with the help of a mobile computer device. The device must be capable of presenting learning content and providing two-way communication between teacher and student. The student can receive English course content located on a remote server by means of a wireless Internet. The main difference in this model compared to e-learning is that all communication is wireless.

Conclusion: Technology cannot be ignored by English learners because all communication in social or business networks make use of the internet in some form or another. The English teaching community should learn to apply new techniques that are beyond the use of traditional classroom items such as blackboards, chalk, recorders, flashcards, books, photocopies, etc. Dr. Rooble Verma, Dr. Priyanka Verma, and Manoj Verma in the article, "Technological Innovations and Teaching English Language at School Level" assert: "In today's scientific and technological advancements where there are numerous technologically advanced instruments to train the students in the language it should be taken into cognizance that neither the application of all types instruments is advisable nor it is possible. Only after careful consideration of the advantages and disadvantages only those technical aids should be selected which would be effective in honing the language skills of the students at higher secondary level" (Verma, 43). The new teaching tools provide excellent opportunities for English language educators to explore and to enhance teaching and learning methods.

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