

The Role of ICT in English Language Teaching and Learning

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ABSTRACT: *The modern age is termed as the era of knowledge explosion. English is as the most important language and played a major role in the process of globalization and knowledge explosion. It is the most common means of communication throughout the world. This is why it is called Link language, Global language, and Lingua Franca. In the Indian context, it is treated as ESL (English as a Second Language). Use of the English language has become vital for better learning and earning. Therefore, it is necessary to teach English and develop English language skills among the students from the school level itself. The government and other educational institutions are working at various levels and taking measures to ensure better learning and developing English language skills among the students. To teach English and develop English language skills, various approaches and methods are in use by people. But most of them are traditional, boring, ineffective and less motivating. So, it has become necessary to use modern approaches and tools of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) for the development of better understanding and acquisition of basic skills i.e. LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) of English language among the students at the school level. ICT has a lot of things to offer, to both the teachers and the students for the enhancement of their vocabulary and improvement of English language skills. This all has become possible due to the progress of science and technology. Each and every aspect of human life has changed due to the effects of science and technology. The use of science and technology in the field of communication has revolutionized the whole world. Use of modern technological tools has led to the rise of ICT (Information and Communication technology). Thus, learning and teaching of the English language become so easy for the students and the teachers as well.*

Key Words: *ICT, English Language, Global Language, E-learning, etc.*

INTRODUCTION

ICT can be defined as scientific, technological and engineering based management techniques used in information storage and communication mechanism with optimal time and space utilization in comparison to other traditional methods adopted for the same. The word 'ICT' includes any communication device or application such as a computer, mobile phones, radio, television, satellite system, etc. Today, teachers can make use of these different tools of technology and can make his/her teaching innovative and interesting. Some of the important ICT tools and applications used in the field of English Language Teaching are as follows:-

Computer

This is the most important tool of information and communication technology and the backbone of modern human life. All the modern communication process is impossible without the use of computers. It is helpful in storing, collecting and preparing data for communication. The Internet is the principal medium by which students can communicate with others at a distance, (e.g. by e-mail or by participating in discussion forums).

Radio and Television

The radio and television are one of the most useful devices for teaching the English Language. Radio and television are two important instruments for distant education. Those who fail to get admission to colleges have to continue their education through open universities. Here radio and television play a vital role in the teaching of the language. We live in an age in which distance education has become the order of the day. A number of good English teaching programs are broadcast by the All India Radio, the material prepared by the CIFEL, Hyderabad and ELTIS, IGNOU and BAOU in India. They can be recorded and used for lifting sessions in the class. The television appeals both to the ears and eyes. In radio the only ear is employed with the help of both these technological devices, it is possible to teach the students the pronunciation. They may be taught to speak properly. Radio and T.V. can bring the experience of the real world into the classroom so that teaching does not become dull. The traditional teacher of books changes his/her role to become the teacher of the real living language. Today T.V. plays many roles in advanced countries. It is a companion, entertainer, and instructor. Today in our cities, most learning occurs outside the classroom. The quantity of information conveyed by T.V., Radio, and Film far exceeds that which is conveyed by educational

institutions. The notion that education is a process that goes on within the four walls of the classroom is also shattered. T.V. programs can be recorded in advance and played in the class.

Overhead Projector

It is an important tool for displaying information and processes to a large number of people simultaneously. It can be used in teaching and training of personnel. Prepared forms of information are easy to display with the help of an overhead projector. It is used as an alternative to chalkboard. Writings or pictures on transparencies are projected on a screen. It saves time by preparing the materials in advance. It is also important as it is a visual means of learning.

Internet

Internet in Education has been incredibly useful as it facilitates both information and communication. The Internet has increased the accessibility of education at all levels and has turned out to be a giant repository of knowledge. Students can access free video lectures online and refer to encyclopedia and study material in multimedia formats; teachers can make their lessons interesting by incorporating online-based projects in their study plans, and educational institutions can reach out to a wider audience by offering quality online courses. The Internet also acts as a platform for retired teachers to reach out to children in poor countries and educate them.

Internet is not only a great place to gather and store information but also allows its easy retrieval whenever desired. In fact, it has turned out to be better than libraries when it comes to gathering information and doing research work. It also provided teaching learning material with multimedia.

MHRD and IGNOU have also developed Sakshat Portal on the lines of MIT OCW as a digital repository of eBooks, study material and eJournals for students. IGNOU's eGyankosh is another digital repository of learning material.

Language Lab

Modern language labs are known by many names, digital language lab, multimedia language lab, language media center and multimedia learning center. A language lab creates a learning environment much more effective than traditional classrooms enhancing the capabilities of students and allowing a high degree of immersion and attention to diversity. A language laboratory encourages the participation and integration of the students in the different exercises.

Language laboratories offer a number of advantages over traditional teaching systems, allow several students to talk and interact at the same time, you can record all these interventions, send different exercises to different groups of students, work with media, etc. In addition, the use of the language lab allows students to have access to the information quickly and easily developing many types of classroom exercises, personalizing the learning process, encouraging creativity, innovation and training. Language laboratories also favor a high degree of skill development, team and collaborative work eliminating socio-temporal barriers since information is not found in a particular and specific place and at the same time, they foster digital literacy responding to new educational and social needs.

Knowledge Consortium of Gujarat (KCG)

Knowledge Consortium of Gujarat has also taken up initiatives like promotion of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in higher education and SANDHAN: All Gujarat Integrated Class Room. ICT is the new idiom of the new change in the way the world operates today. In Education today it is the need of an hour to make use of the ICT and to integrate it in its entire core processes teaching, learning, evaluation, research administration. KCG conducts training and workshops for creating awareness and for promoting the use of ICT in education. It has been observed that technology has been an integral part of education and teachers dealing with the courses in higher education have also started utilizing the computers and ICT. SANDHAN is creating a platform which provides an excellent opportunity for the use of Audio Visual medium for the telecast of lectures in a very innovative and manner with an aim to provide a very creative base for faculty and students to fulfill the need for having the Audio-visual aids for imparting education in the higher education. This program was conceptualized and implemented by Commissionerate of Higher Education with the purpose that the VSAT facility of BISAG, Government of Gujarat could be leveraged better by setting up an All Gujarat Integrated Classroom. Thus, SANDHAN is a unique initiative. Academicians are invited to deliver lectures on several streams-Arts, Commerce, Science, Law, etc. Some of the lectures have also been uploaded on YouTube also. The Phone-in-facility and the Roobroo Two-Way Video communication software is systemized too make the lecture interactive and thus it adds liveliness to the programs provides satisfaction to the quest of the students (SANDHAN).

Conclusion

ICT's are intrinsic tools in many educational institutions. The use of ICT increases the scope of teaching and made the teaching and learning process more lively and innovative. 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.

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