Use of ICT in Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT   *The most striking innovation in the field of education is the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education. The educational institution in general and the teachers of language in particular, should cope with the suddenly increasing demand for information and skills. One cannot depend on only the same big blackboards, an overhead projector and video-graphed concepts as either because the transaction of curriculum is poor or the tools used in its transaction lack application and skill. Instead, to add spice to the otherwise traditional dishes of teaching strategies, the use ICT is a must. In fact, ICT is a valuable tool to enhance teaching and learning. For teachers ICT is a professional resource, a mode of classroom delivery, and a source of valid and valuable text types. For students, ICT provides opportunities to communicate more effectively and to develop literacy skills including skills in critical literacy. It is a valuable tool for researching, composing and responding, and viewing representing in language.*

Key words: ICT, Learning, Teaching, Language, Skill, Students, Learners, Technology.

Introduction-

One of challenging profession in our country is teaching. Also it is said that teaching is the noblest of all professions. The development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and only then they can discharge their duty effectively and usefully. ICT not only facilitates delivery of instruction, but also learning process. ICT develops international collaboration and networking in the field of education and professional development. Much evidence is available in support of ICT enabled teaching and learning.

Definition and Meaning of ICT

"Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is scientific, technological and engineering disciplines and the management techniques used in information handling and processing, their application computers and their interaction with man and machines, and associated social, economic and cultural matters.''

- By UNESCO

ICT means not only the use of computers, but also the effective utilization of all the possible digital media from Radio to Satellites. Ex. Radio, Television, MP3player, Computer, i-pod, PDA, Mobile, Telecommunications etc.

Needs of using ICT

In the post- industrial society command of communicative language has become a major prerequisite for employment. It has become quite imperative for the language teachers to take resort to several means for making his/her presentation quite attractive to the learners. Keeping pace with the emerging needs and opportunities, it is needed to incorporate the technological developments in the teaching and learning of language, especially ESL in India. The objectives that can be summed up as follows–

I) Learning of a language becomes also an out of the classroom affair and thatis the concept that has been enjoying the greatest attention of the educationist in the present century.

ii) From both the sociological and the economic points of view, use of ICT has made an impact on teaching and learning.

iii) Usage of ICT would make today's learners look for more sources of information, thus tapping the potential of new technologies, as per their needs and requirements.

iv) It enriches learning environment and the learners to achieve marketable language skills, termed as soft skills in today's technical context.

V)Animated teaching programs could cut through a mass of ignorance could cut through a mass of ignorance of just about any concept of language.

Vi) ICT offers learners more complete and individual control over their learning. Learners may set their own pace through the material and review material as many times as needed for understanding.

vii) It provides a private non-judgmental learning environment to the learners. Hence, the learners remain free from the inhibition related to the interaction between or among certain persons.

viii) It provides clear and well defined instructional objectives –here the acquisition of

LSRW through preparation of content and offers support for both learners and staff.

ix) Abstract concepts, especially in relation to the theoretical aspects of grammar, can be easily explained with the help of animation and graphics. It ensures self –paced learning.

x) Experience has revealed that ICT strengthens the hands of the teachers in general and language teachers in particular. It makes one's teaching effective.

Various forms of ICT

There are various forms of ICTs available for the usage in a language classroom. Among them, in today's field of language education, the following items may be considered.

I) Interactive whiteboards (IWB) - An interactive whiteboard is an instructional tool that allows computer images to be displayed onto aboard using a digital projector. The instructor can then manipulate the elements on the board by using his finger as a mouse, directly on the screen. Items can be dragged, clicked and copied and the lecturer can handwrite notes, which can be transformed into text and saved.

ii) Resources & Useful Website- Various website, related to language learning have become ready resources for the learners to experience an exposure to the language games, readily available through several websites, that may make the young learners acquire concerned skills in a really enjoyable way.

1) Language Games use in Listening:

Story Time:-I) participants pick and listed to a tape randomly selected from a provided stack of taps (the recording contains a spoken excerpt of a well-known children's story, such as the snow white, the Ginger Bread Man, etc.).

ii) After listening to the entire excerpt, competitors correctly identify the title of the story from a provided list. The recorded stories are all classical bedtime stories for young children and have been translated into most of the major languages worldwide. Students should be familiar with those stories. This game focuses on gist-listening skills. Students only need to catch the key terms to figure out what the story is.

2) Language Games used in Speaking

Mysterious Landmarks: -

I) competitors assemble a 20-piece jigsaw puzzle of a world famous landmark (such as the Eiffel Tower, Mt. Fuji Great Wall, etc.).

ii) Then they describe puzzle image in five sentences to complete the task. This game encourages students' productive skills and elicits their speech fluency. Cross-culture concepts are also addressed. The number, the length, and the patterns of sentence can vary depending on the students' language ability and linguistic points the instructor would like to reinforce.

3) Language Games used in Reading:

What's cooking?

I) Participants read a recipe and make the dish.

ii) The amount of ingredients and assembly process must follow exactly the instructions laid in the recipe.

iii) The participants eat the dish they have prepared, all together and as fast as possible, because whoever finishes the five tasks first wins the entire competition.

This game not only reinforces food vocabulary, but it also tests the ability of students to comprehend written instruction. This is also good for introducing cross-culture topics. Recipes may vary depending on what food terms and cultures the teachers wishes to cover. Salads and sandwiches are easy-to-prepare recipes. The eating part adds an additional element of fun to the game.

　　Although the whole competition is a combination of five games, each game is

suitable for reinforcement of individual language skills and easily applied in the classroom. One feature of these games is that students with lower language ability in a team can still contribute if they are good at skills other than languages, such as putting together jigsaw puzzles, calculating numbers, drawing, or eating fast.

4) Language Games used in Writing:

A) Art Master

I) the instructor describes a picture orally.

(ii) Competitors simultaneously recreate the picture on a sheet of paper, correctly including named objects in accurate positions. This game reinforces the use of preposition, such as to the right of, to the left of, in the middle of, or under, etc. it also reinforces the vocabulary of concrete objects students have already learned before. The complexity of the picture will depend on level of the students.

b) Pictures/Slide shows:-

Visuals are a powerful way to provide context and background for any writing. Make sure to use attractive, stimulating and if possible real photos to prompt student writing. Students can describe a scene or they can describe a series of pictures from a slideshow.

An excellent activity is to show a nice photo and get students to guess and write their guess in the form of the 5ws.They answer all the 5w questions and then share their thoughts with the class. Show a picture and get students to write a story or as background for writing prompt. For example, show a picture of a happy lottery winner. Ask students to write in their journal- If I won a million dollars I would……This is a much better way to ''prompt'' writing than simple script.

iii) **Computer:** Recently, the concept of computer-assisted instruction (CAI) or computer-based instruction (CBI) has gained momentum due to the ever-growing usage of ICTs in the field of language teaching. CAIs are there is flow of information and interaction between the computer and the learner. The computer delivers instruction directly to students and allows them to interact with in through the lessons programmed in the system. Computer provides feedback to the learner on the basis of his/her

performance. On the whole, it may be said, that the computer acts as a teacher to the student.

iv) **Virtual Library:**

Virtual library is also known as image library. The images in this gallery may be used for education purpose for primary, secondary and tertiary students, then for teacher or for home school learners. Learners may be made to write paragraph on certain images or computer- made collages. The learners may also be made to give a power-point presentation regarding certain image. All images are copyright of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and may not be used for commercial purposes. Credit must be given to the authority if any these images are reproduced in any format, electronic or otherwise e.g. photographs. This section contains a link to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Auto Image collection server and a range of 30 seconds movie clips.

v) **Video conferencing**:

Video conferencing also called teleconferencing is the use of television video and sound technology as well as computers to enable people in different locations to see, hear and talk with one another. It can still consist of people meeting in separate conference rooms or booths with specially equipped television cameras. A whole class can be conducted through video conferencing where one teacher will remain seated before on one side of the communication system and the students on the other side. One teacher may also accompany the students and here the teacher will play the role of a facilitator. Through this technique the learners may have an exposure to the language activities of an experienced teacher belonging to a neighboring or distant school.

Vi) **E-Library:**

An E-library, also called digital library is a special library with a focused collection of digital objects that can include text, visual material, audio material, video material, stored as electronic media formats (as opposed to print, microform, or other media), along with means for organizing, storing, and retrieving the files and media contained in the library collection. Digital

libraries can vary immensely in size and scope, and can be maintained by individuals, organizations, or affiliated with established physical library buildings or institutions, or with academic institutions. Due to the varieties of resources-aural ,visual, audio-visual, etc.-the young learners feel attracted to such ICT to a great extent. E –book library aims to extend digital bending capabilities enabling greater availability of books to greater number of students and delivering real cost savings and convenience to libraries and book publishers'- Library caters to one's specific needs, say models of story writing, writing a letter (personal, official), grammatical exercises, language games, etc. It offers several lending models, including multiple concurrent use and short-term rental. E-books are cheap usually priced at list.

vii) **E-mail:**

The World Wide Web is getting all the headlines but for many people the main attraction of the Internet is electronic mail otherwise called as e-mail. Studies have shown that children have a natural tendency to avail themselves of the Internet facilities. To exploit this tendency for the development of language skills among the learners e-mail may be deemed as a ready means. Most of the students do not want to be exposed to the whole class regarding their skill of communication-speaking or writing. Having made the learners a little conversant with the method of e-mailing the teacher can provide the learners with various assignments, related to different language skills. It is one of the most attractive out-of-the classroom techniques for teaching language.

Conclusion-

To conclude, we may say that we are in need of now technologies to growing knowledge. Mere acquisition of knowledge is not enough; we should have a complete access and mastery over the knowledge getting process. It is only possible myth the help of the science of information and communication technology. The technology employed in the form of tools, equipment's etc. can support and help an individual learner to develop not only knowledge but also attitude and skill too.

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"The greatest barrier to success is the fear of failure."
– Sven Goran Eriksson