



INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY INTO ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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ABSTRACT

The importance of learning English cannot be overstated in an interconnected and globalized world. The advancement of technology has set new challenges and duties on the modern teacher. The English Language teaching has been significantly changed with the remarkable entry of technology. With the tremendous growth of information communication technologies (ICT) across the board in recent years, new doors have been opened up in ELT too. ICT integration in the teaching has become crucial to enhance learning. Relevant training to use computers to support learning plays a major role. Teachers are required to spare enough time so that they may become techno savvy as technology has a major impact on achievement. Learning evolves from being a shift of content and knowledge to the production of content and knowledge. The teachers design their own material, taking into accounts the needs and interests of their students and the new syllabi.

Key words: tremendous growth, technologies, worldwide web, CALL, personal learning, digital, Environment.

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INTRODUCTION

Man cannot live alone. This is the root cause of evolution of language. Language plays very important role in life. It represents culture, tradition, life style, etc in our societies where individuals interact and use it to communicate between each other. The global relations have now become more practical where people need to interact and share common interests with the improved means of transportation. Language plays very crucial role here. Times have changed, teachers have evolved, and we now have a new variety of learning technologists. The first changes began in the classroom with the use of new technologies such as overhead projectors; interactive whiteboards, laptop computers and wireless internet have opened up the classroom to the outside world. In this early part of the 21st century the range of

technologies available for use in language learning and teaching has become very varied and the ways that they are being used in classrooms all over the world, have become central to language practice.

The importance of Learning English: English has become the window to the world. Being an international language it has gained wide area of interest for non native speakers who wish not be in their territory but to flourish. For the millions of immigrants who travel the world from non-English-speaking countries every year, learning to communicate in English is important to enter and succeed in conventional English speaking countries. Working knowledge of the English language can create many opportunities in international markets and regions.

International Language: English is the fourth most widely spoken language in the world. It is the most

spoken official language in the world. In International affairs English language is primarily used. English is certainly the primary language of global trade and commerce. English is the means of instruction in higher studies in developed nations like the USA, Canada, Australia, and the UK etc. English is essential to be aware of the global world. The English language has official status even in nations like India, Srilanka, where it is not the primary spoken language or used as a third language. In many countries, most tourism authorities and other officials in contact with the public speak English to interact and engage with tourists and immigrants. Being the global language its usage has become essential to study.

English in Digital Age: The world is known as the digital age today. The language used by the World Wide Web is English all over the world. Language translation software is available due to innovation of related technologies where the primary language is English everywhere. English has been accepted as the language of latest-version applications and programs and social media networks and websites. Software manuals, hardware-installation guides and product fact sheets of popular consumer electronics and entertainment devices are also available in English. They are made available in other languages as per requirement.

English in Higher Learning: Higher learning attracts aspirant students to move to reputed universities and colleges of Great Britain, the Unites States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. The primary language of instruction is English in all higher learning Institutes in all nations. North America and Great Britain have gained repute in the fields like business schools, medical centers and advanced-study institutes where English is the language in use. Most reviewed journals and technical periodicals that give international acclamation to scientists, engineers, technologists, and researchers and technocrats are printed in English. Computers have brought revolution in language learning.

Technology and English: Computers and language teaching have walked hand in hand and contributed as efficient teaching tools in the language and second language classroom. As computers evolve,

applications to language teaching in form of relevant general volumes are published (Chesters, 1987; Brierley, 1991; Sabourin, 1994; Boswood, 1997; Beatty, 2003; Lee, Jor & Lai, 2005; Szendeffy, 2005; Towndrow, 2007). Internet has made it possible and the latest advances applicable to language teaching such as specialized websites, blogs, wikis, language teaching methodology, journals have brought revolution in English Language Learning. Tsou, Wang & Tzeng (2006) stated that many countries have done institutional efforts to modernize their equipment, spent large amounts in technology and proved the positive effects of integrating computers in language learning. Many non-English speakers tend to practice English classes in their countries before they migrate to any English speaking country to make it easier for them to interact with the people. When it comes to real life situation, many of them struggle to communicate to a native speaker. Computers here can be of great help to the ESL learners in many different ways such as teaching students to learn a new language. The computer can be used to test students about the language they already learn. Certain tasks can be practiced with the help of computers. Using internet the computer permits students to communicate easily with other from different places. Use of technology enhances language learning as it allows for increased learner autonomy and control and by providing a more student-centered pedagogy'. It helps the learners more actively engaged in their learning than in traditional direct instruction methods.

Gaining and maintaining students' interest: The teacher's role becomes very crucial to gain and maintain the students' interest. If the students are motivated it may enhance the learning in a better way. A lecture needs to be well organized in order for a student to make sense of it. Most texts on lectures or presentations describe about paying attention to the overall framework of the lecture i.e. the beginning, middle and end. These are aspects most teachers are comfortable with. The difficulty arises when the students do not find themselves comfortable with the structure as they lack knowledge of. The teacher knows the subject matter well but fails to provide the clues and signals to guide the students through the lecture. Thus,

despite the overall structure, the students get lost or miss the key points.

Role of Teachers: Teachers who used to spend their lives managing with a textbook, a tape recorder and a blackboard for teaching the EFL are now adept at using PowerPoint to present grammar, playing podcasts to practice listening skills, pulling texts off the world wide web to introduce reading skills and perhaps most ground-breaking of all – empowering students by giving them access to a wide range of web-based tools that allow them to publish work and engage with live audiences in real contexts. However, at the very beginning the teachers should: Appear enthusiastic and interested in preparing students for the use of technology while learning the language. Today's youth are digital natives, with a broader definition of literacy as a collection of contemporary activities involving information and communication technology (ICT), as opposed to the traditional definition as paper and ink texts and writing. They are skilled users of internet who enjoyed reading traditional materials while simultaneously looking for additional information, sharing their information, or communicating with peers online.

Be organized, and take control of the lecture room on arrival so that on getting the appropriate atmosphere the students may initiate their role of learners. A majority of secondary-level students are familiar with some form of instant communication such as texting, instant messaging, or authoring posts on Face book friends' "Walls. Video montage provides similar benefits, but makes use of software like Photo Story and I Movie, or a website such as Animoto.com.

Know how to use the presentation equipment so that it may not waste time and get the students impressed in learning in a different way. Also to keep students interested during the remainder the teacher could use relevant and current examples to illustrate the point. Connect to Books Online. Historically, supplemental reading materials were limited to the holdings on the English bookroom shelf. Technology now provides access to thousands of books online. Teachers are limited only by the students' ability to access a computer. The Online

Books Page offers more than 20,000 titles in its free digital library.

Be willing to learn and acquire new concepts as per the level of students, where possible draw on the students' experiences and be different between note taking, listening, and active participation. . With the advent of the World Wide Web, and sites and software that promote the creation of user-sourced content and communication like Face book, Twitter, YouTube the remixing practice has transcended the classroom, becoming a daily life activity for students. Teachers must use live links to the web to demonstrate exchange of the material being presented.

Change the demands on the student as the lecture progresses using visual materials or artifacts that are relevant to the topic of the lecture. Gainer and Lapp (2010) put an interesting "spin" on conceptualizing the process of reading, comprehending, and writing. In their view, the student is an active participant in this process, drawing their own meaning from texts according to their own perspectives and prior knowledge, and they blend their experiences and knowledge with new information drawn from the text, expressing their new understanding through "remixes" (p. 58). This is a process that has always been prevalent in the English classroom, as students read and interpret works, draw on prior knowledge and the work of others, and then blend information and understanding into a new, original text.

Writing projects that involve multiple drafts are well-suited to using word processing programs. Drafts are easily revised and formatted using these tools. Extend its power to aid instruction by using the "review" feature available in programs such as Word Perfect or Microsoft Word™. The feature can be used for teachers or peers to interject annotations or comments, line by line, on student work. You can also track changes to evaluate how students used peer review comments to improve or change their work.

Emerging Technologies-Digital Innovations:

With the spread of English around the world, English has been learned and used by more and more speakers. Latest innovations in technology are utilized for the upliftment of modern styles as they satisfy both visual and aural senses of the students.

Technology provides so many options by making teaching interesting and also making teaching more productive in terms of improvements.

As new generations of students who have grown up in a digital world coming into classes have changed the picture. Language learning integrating technology seems to be most successful when the technology is seamlessly integrated into the overall activity. There is a place for computer assisted language learning (CALL), particularly for independent, self-paced learning via assessable assets like language activities. This type of learning can be particularly effective due to the immediate feedback that is offered to the user. The feedback is received by the teacher indirectly. This can be considered as a highly significant attribute of 'visible learning'.

Outcomes for students are likely to be most successful, most 'visible'. Technology continues to be used for all sorts of specific language learning activities, such as enhancing listening, oral practice and reading and writing skills development. English can be acquired naturally through structured activities and different subject disciplines.

Technology-An authentic input material: Natives inherit the mother tongue. They acquire the language in natural environment. For non-native learners learning of English takes place in a non-English speaking context. Learners are exposed to English as a 'living language'. They are provided with natural opportunities to practice target language through the use of authentic texts and exposure to real models of spoken English. Technology can play a significant role in addition to the other more conventional tools like blackboards, textbooks, cassette players that are found in classrooms around the world. Technologies like the internet can provide wide range of access of authentic input material and at the same time can provide opportunities for practice. The most appropriate approach for teaching young learners depends on many factors. Factors like the age of the children, size of the class, the competency of the teacher, availability of resources, the school context and the framework constructed by authority bodies can create the educational landscape for the locality.

Listening plays an important role in learning a language. There is a school of thought that suggests children learn best by listening language being effectively modeled by skilled teachers. If natural opportunities are given to use language in productive activities language can be learnt efficiently. However, the relative success of this type of approach may lie in the oral competency of the teacher and easy access to appropriate resources. The teacher may be competent enough to attract the students to the desired goal of acquisition of the language. Digital texts and electronic books (e-books), particularly when accessed on cool, portable technologies, can inspire students to read. Many offer effective oral modeling via text-to-speech synthesis and access to other tools like electronic dictionaries. Specialized software can be used to record, measure and track progress in reading. Interactive narrative can promote active reading by enabling learners to affect outcomes. Students are also motivated by their own personal writing. There are many tools available to support writing and allow them to author for different audiences and digital narratives like presentations, blogs, websites and extended prose.

Integrating Technology into the Language Classroom: The use of technological devices or audio-visual materials will stimulate the greatest number of senses. The best learning takes place when the greatest number of senses is stimulated. Audio – visual aids are not only different but also effective types of tools that appeal to the intellect of learning and vision. They are used in classrooms for presentation of abstract information. Research supports the effectiveness of technology-based instruction for language learning (Muehleisen, 1997; Warschauer & Kern, 2000). However, a language teacher in an EFL classroom experience challenging situations with the communicational activities given in the prescribed EFL textbooks. Stimulation plays very crucial role here.

Technical audio-visual aids are important in learning technical EFL. Technical audio-visual aids include computers, videos, overhead projection, and instruments. These aids stimulate the learners and encourage them to learn English language. Technical

audio-visual aids communicate facts and ideas through the eyes to the mind and emotions.

Technology at help: Good teachers are constantly on the alert for methods and devices that will make learning meaningful. With the use of technology a teacher can create visual aids for teaching and improve access to resources, such as online libraries. With the wise selection and use of a variety of instructional devices or audio-visual materials, experiences develop understanding. He can review and comment on student work more efficiently by allowing students to integrate video clips into presentations and broaden choices for students to demonstrate learning. Devices stimulate the imagination; of the students. Mental imagery can be used as a vehicle of thought and as a means of clarifying ideas.

Curriculum design and development: The teaching, learning and assessment strategies are issues with which we need to engage in a scholarly manner. It is our role to ensure that the learning outcomes we agree upon are achievable, that we are clear about the levels or standards expected at different stages and that the learning tasks and the assessment of learning are in alignment. The principle of 'constructive alignment' is central to curriculum design and development. Curriculum, teaching methods and strategies, the assessment processes and the methods of reporting results, the institutional climate, and climate created for interactions with students play very important role. Power point presentation is one of the effective modes of teaching.

PowerPoint presentation: In a PowerPoint presentation, the teacher can deliver more information than by traditional lecture. The amount of information transferred in a traditional lecture depends on the writing speed of the teacher on chalkboard. A PowerPoint file can be easily copied, maintained, transferred and printed than the chalk board work which is never available once the lecture is over.

PPT files maybe available on-web before or after the class for the students. This may be the most appreciated feature of PowerPoint. When combining PowerPoint with web, the timing of PowerPoint availability to students is important. If

PowerPoint file is available before class, students may feel responsible for knowing how to use slides for taking notes, and they may attend and participate in the lecture more easily. Learning process may be speedier. PowerPoint presentation saves time for students with learning differences that require more time to take notes, because they may download PowerPoint files from web and obtain organized notes or handouts and accurately drawn graphs.

CONCLUSION

Technology can help to create visual aids for teaching, to improve access to resources, such as online literature libraries. Technology is a complex, dynamic, and ever-changing part of our society and world today and, given this, it is important to have an informed approach towards its role within our own sphere of influence. Tools expand our cognition, and the current technology industry provides a perpetual stream of new tools daily. In turn, these tools create the need for new skills, flexibility, and a critical eye. Technology has broadened choices for students to demonstrate learning. Technology has fostered connections on the Internet, has become an essential medium for this emerging literacy, due to its growing prevalence and importance in our society and our interaction with the rest of the world.

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