E- LEARNING TOOLS: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO ENGLISH LANGAUGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract

Today we are living in an age, where technology has a great power and influence. The emergence of new technologies like "E-Learning" or "Technology in Education" created a paradigm of changes within educational circles as many began to understand its significance and benefits. The classroom environment is quite different from the tradition classroom environment. Usually the traditional methods which are based on delivering lecturer and notes learning reduce English language learning to the mechanical memorization. But, they miserably fail in developing and growing English language as a skill among the learners. New technologies like Internet, Blue Tooth, YouTube, Tweeter, Blogs, i-pad, Mobile phones, E-mail, Interactive/smart boards and many more engage learners and true interactivity session within the classroom. Learners engage in different ELT technique like English songs, movie clippings, dramatics, advertisements, sports commentaries, and other activities to become skilled at English language. This paper will focus on implanting of various ICT tools and the famous trends in ELT to make English language more enjoyable and comfortable through innovative ELT methods. It will also discuss the availability and use of various ICT tools. E-learning is a catalyst agent into education in the present day and its importance or benefits cannot be ignored by teachers and students. Once there was famine of information, but today we are drowned in the cascade of information/ new technology. New Applications of e-learning tools act as a source of Information and Communications technologies (ICT), which comprises of communication devices or applications encompassing radio; television as well as newer digital technologies such as overhead projectors, projectors, i-pads, blogs, computers, the Internet, interactive/smart boards, cameras, printers, audio equipment, scanners, e-mails, video conferencing and many more are not only influencing and supporting and promoting what is being learned in schools, colleges and universities, but it is also help to changes the way students are learning and grasping.

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WHAT IS E- LEARNING?

Learning facilitated and supported through the use of information and communications technology, e-learning can cover a spectrum of activities from supported learning, to blended learning (the combination of traditional and e-learning practices), to learning that is entirely online. Whatever the technology, however, learning is the vital element."[1]

'The delivery of a learning, training or education program by electronic means. E-learning involves the use of a computer or electronic device (e.g. a mobile phone) in some way to provide training, educational or learning material.'[2]

PAST TRENDS IN TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE

English language teaching in particular has undergone tremendous changes over, especially the last few years. When English language entered in the modules of the students as a compulsory subject, it becomes a challenge for the English language teachers how to teach to the foreign language to the students, so they taught English as a "Know-ledge Subject" not as a "Skill Subject" because their main intention was to teach students just/mere to pass the examinations. Students are burdened with studying, learning and grasping the materials. One can see that learning environment is restricted within classroom and has limited choice of learning. Teachers adopted "Grammar-Translation Method" in which they used to explain word to word students in the native language to make them understand and to learn English Language. Though this sort of method ignores the development of oral proficiency or professional proficiency skill of the learners, it is still in use with majority teachers in the modified or changed form. Many other methods were also used such as bilingual- method, audio-lingual- method, direct -method the structural approach and the situational teaching, communicative language teaching, etc. but no method was said to be a successful method. Hence, ELT seems to be swinging like a pendulum between the extremes of method as a language teachers have ever been in search of better and more effective method of teaching. Now a day ELT trends that were very popular in the past have vanished and have been substituted by innovative ELT methods. Simply, a new / revolutionary society demanded new skills and this meant that new technology could play an important role in education.

PRESENT TRENDS IN TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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[1] Available at: www.internal.bath.ac.uk/web/cms-wp/glossary.html
[2] Available at: http://derekstockley.com.au/elearning-definition.html

Deena Boraie has discussed eight trends in English Language of Teaching, "Change is the Goal of Teaching English" says Boraie "In my opinion there are two key changes in the purpose of teaching English. Firstly, as Penny Ur (2009) noted, the goal is to produce fully competent English knowing bilinguals rather than imitation of native speakers. The purpose is not to aspire to become native speakers of English because we are already native speakers of our own, but to focus on English as a means of communication. Secondly, English is not viewed as an end in itself, but as a means to learn content such as science and mathematics". Modern learning paradigms have improved the skills of students. The improvement of technology is said to benefit the student in improving digital learning, communication, collaboration, listening skills, problem-solving skills, math skills, self-evaluation skills mobile learning, planning, valuing diversity, global awareness, social skills and also in presentations. Such a technology is a good productive and constructive tool in education institutes to enhance productivity of both teachers and students. Educational institutions should also promote "learning to learn" i.e. the acquisition of knowledge and skills that make possible continuous learning over the lifetime. It is responsibility of English language teacher to equip students with proficiency in the English language with a proper blend of edification and e-learning tools (modern technologies)" (T. Mani-chander "Emerging Trends in Digital Era Through Educational Technology" 1)Technological tools should be used to make learning more interesting, motivating, invigorating, appealing and meaningful to the students. These tools have been recognized as potentially powerful helping tools for educational change. They are encroached into the combination of digital technologies in language learning and teaching.

USE OF E-LEARNING TOOLS IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH

Internet

Internet is one of the most effective tools for teachers to help students collaborate, interact and participate actively in the learning and teaching process. It is an important source of information and materials in the form of mails, conference, seminar, research material and many more and also in promoting communicative approaches that are fully operated through use of collaborative technologies. One can find that there are three such types of electronic communication, within a single class: first teacher- student communication, and second out-of-class electronic discussion, third within-class, fourth real time electronic discussion. Usually, these lesson plans focus/ light on integrating four different courses: English

Composition, Journalism English, Word- Processing, The Application of Computer Software. *"It contains several learning modules, where each can have two teaching aims: one is in the realm of reading and writing skills (main content aim), whereas the other focuses on using the Internet as a tool (instrumental aim)."*[3] Sometimes available resources / tools may cause confusion among students, and will discourage them from participating/initiating, if they are not given the proper guidelines/information and support. One of the most important tasks for teachers is to assist their students so that they can discover what they enjoy and gain most according to their level of linguistic competence. No doubt, teachers are also responsible for the evaluation and instruction of all the web tools offered.

Using YouTube

You tube can be used as a tool for improving their Listening and Speaking, Reading and Writing skills. It can also be used in an ELT classroom for different aspects of English as to enhance vocabulary, accents, pronunciations, voice modulation, intonation, and stress many more. The teachers can select a part of movie and ask the students to watch it carefully and replay it once more and thereafter ask the students to frame the dialogues of the movie clip and just see whether the students able to narrate the rest of the story or the climax of the particular movie. For example: The teacher can also ask the students to write a paragraph related to the movie as: "If I were the hero of the movie……………." Or "What, according to you, should be the title of the movie?"

Using Skype

Every internet service has audio functions, and technological instruments like laptops with cameras. The students could communicate with their teachers and friends who are far away from them. Likewise, they could very well communicate with the speakers of native language and get their pronunciation checked, so as to improve their speaking skill. The students can read, learn, write, present, or perform task for other students and also collaborate with other students on writing or research projects. They can also participate in proficiency professional development activities within or outside the town/country. The students could also connect their classes with classes in other town and countries to practice their language skills.

Using Smart Boards

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[3] Available at: https://www.hindawi.com/journals

Smart Boards can be used as a student-centered approach to teach English language. Language is an art, where teacher can use SMART Boards to improve reading and comprehension, and teach grammar and writing. The teachers can also enhance student's communicative skill by using anagrams or jumbled sentences and short or peer story, the synonyms or antonyms or the lexis or collocation words, displaying paragraphs with errors and ask the students to edit the paragraphs or proofread them. This will teach the students the usage and functions of the language.

Using E-Mail

By creating a personal e- mail account (g-mail, yahoo, hotmail, etc.), the students can send text to teachers on concerned topic and get revert corrected. Educators can also provide feedback, suggestions, and reviews for the betterment of every work done.

IPODS

Ipods, one of the multimedia devices, enhance the users to generate, exchange texts deliver, image, audio and video scripts as per the requirement of the users. The teachers can also reach to the quires of students and answer to them. In addition to this, the students can record and listen to their speeches, poems, drama, short stories etc. The teacher can also give students assignment for homework on the given topic for next day. Thus, ipods give a chance to the learners of English to improve their writing, learning, reading, listening, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar.

Mobile Phones

Mobiles phone has a large range of applications, such as messaging text, MMS, , Internet access, Email, short-range wireless, communications (infrared, Bluetooth), business applications, gaming, and digital photography. Using the camera functions can make a photo documentary and teachers can assign a theme to the students for creative work. After clicking/taking a sufficient number of photos, now the students can upload the given documentaries prepared by them to websites, such as Flicker and type narrative descriptions for each picture to share with their teachers, classmates, family and friends. Students can also make use of   dictionary or translators instead of trawling through books for a piece of literature. They can also easily access and purchased online books on Flip Kart, Amazon, Snap Deals, Infli-beam and Bookstore many more.

Blogs

Blogging has become the most popular forms of sharing and generating information especially in the realm of education. Many educators prefer these new techniques to teach students and gain experience with different form of social media. One can easily use guest blogging as a way to earn links and learn such as Blogspot, Wordpress, or Tumbler to host the blog. Blog display photo s and audio and video. The teacher should also encourage the students to visit blog frequently. He should respond to student posts quickly, writing a short comment related to the content. He should also ask questions about what the learner writes to create stimulus for writing. Writing to the blog could be required, and it may form part of the class assessment. Students should be encouraged to post their writing homework or assignment activity on the blog instead of only giving it to the teacher.

Twitter

Tweet starts with short conversation and message with friends of the same or different classroom. Examples include "Rahul is a better writer than a singer" Impact of fast food restaurants on health issue, and other many more. Smart-boards are interactive, whiteboards which is a good replacement for traditional whiteboards or flipcharts as they use to provide ways to show students everything which can be presented on a computer's desktop (educational software, web sites, and many others).

CONCLUSION

We are living in the age of technological advancement where a teacher plays the role of a controller, organizer, assessor, promoter, participant, resource, tutor and observer to achieve goals of learning English Language in the present global scenario. The traditional method of teaching lay more emphasis on a teacher or teacher centered and its repetitive practice, mechanical drills and memorization are traditional hallmarks. Little Wood conceptualizes the role of the teacher as a facilitator of learning, an overseer, a classroom manager, a consultant or adviser and at times a co-communicator with the learners. "Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), the current paradigm is basically an off shoot of Communicative Language Teaching. Nuan (2004,12). The teachers of the ELT should understand current trend and evaluative method of the ELT. The teacher becomes a true facilitator of learning for the language learners, purely by means of dialogic communication (Vygotsky, 1978). The

teacher's role is not   shunned altogether, but is restricted; the teacher is expected to be a guide by the side.

 "Teacher is the pivot of civilization" as said by Dr. S. Radha Krishnan, every teachers play a pivot role to shape the future of child to learn English in the most enjoyable and appealing manner and to face challenge in career and life settlement.