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ICT IN ELT- THE NEED OF THE HOUR

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Abstract

Today science and ICT have left their impact on every aspect of human life. Most of the significant developments we observe today can be attributed to the impact of science and technology. Even in education sector, we witness the advancement and innovations have made a visible impact and have changed a scenario. Traditional methods of teaching education have become less motivating. Technology plays an important role in creating innovation and motivation for the learners. The word 'ICT' includes any communication device such as computer, mobile phones, radio, television and satellite system with the internet facilities. The paper discusses the role and increasing demand of technology as a tool for teaching English where educators have understood its ability to create both independent and collaborative learning environment in which students learn English with much ease. The use of ICT in teaching and learning process is the need of the hour and teacher is expected to be innovative and enthusiastic in his/her teaching-learning process by integrating ICT.

Keywords: *ICT, communication device, motivation, innovation*

Technology is what students live and breathe every day. If a teacher wants to make her class the most interesting class that everyone loves to go to, then she incorporates some kind of technology. Instead of lecturing and having students takes notes, a smart board may be used and have students come up to the board and interact. Instead of giving students a quiz on paper, a computer or a tablet can be used. Instead of having students work on a project together, have them video conference with another country and work on a project. Utilizing technology in the classroom makes the students interested and engaged in what they are learning. Overall, talk less and involves students more. The more the teacher makes her class interactive and the more that she utilizes technology, the more students will enjoy what they are learning.

English language learning and teaching methodologies have undergone many changes over the last four decades: moving from a traditional grammar-translation method to more students centered methods such as Total Physical Response, Communicative Language Teaching(CLT)and Task-Based Learning (TBL) which are more popular among language teachers (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). As the recent innovations, Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MAAL), Computer

Assisted Language Learning (CAAL), Technology Enhance Language Learning (TELL) and E-Leaning have been increasingly used in English language classroom (Holmes & Gardner, 2016).

For decades educators have been trying new teaching strategies to keep their students on their toes and get them excited about learning. While some strategies [illegible] are found to be quite effective. The present-day [illegible] must try thinking outside of the box and do something [illegible] is completely out of the ordinary. The digital skills [illegible] teachers need have long moved on from just being able to use word processing and spreadsheets software. [illegible] skills that 21st-century teachers should have include [illegible] storage and sharing solutions, social media, web 2.0 [illegible] image editing, presentation software, and [illegible] multimedia. The 'flipped classroom' model is [illegible] heralded by some as the future 21st century learning.

Technology has created opportunities and challenges to the teachers and learners to a great extent. [illegible] surge in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) is having an impact on how English and other languages are taught and learned. The value of ICT for language learning is widely accepted, albeit in some cases with caution. In the context of developing countries ICTs are often seen as an empowering tool which provides people with access to opportunities and choices that were hitherto not available. However e-devices for English language teaching and learning are still an emerging [illegible] in developing countries.

Teachers in the 21st century must have to integrate technologies to teach language effectively in the classroom. In technology integrated instruction teachers and students make use of e-devices. E-devices are those devices which accomplish their purpose electronically. They can be seen as empowering tools which provide people with access to opportunities and choices for [illegible]

exercises and activities. Technology is a way in which people use the ideas of science to make their task easier, faster and available. Nowadays, some modern electronic devices such as computer, television, overhead projector, mobile phone, multimedia and web-based application have vital roles in language teaching because they help to teach language more effectively and appropriately.

Different types of technology and electronic devices are applied in the field of ELT that help language teachers to make their professional life easy. Karris (2008, p.32), states that the major impact of the recent development in the teaching of foreign languages can be seen in terms of a learner-centered, motivation- based and activity-oriented approach to language teaching supported by television, radio, and audio-visual aids. Technology in the classroom is a double-edged sword. Engaging modern students into the s-called 'digital natives', for whom smart phones and social media are the way of life a dire need of the day. So, the educators feel that they must integrate digital teaching strategies. At the time, many of the modern electronic devices and software are introduced into the classroom to learn language more effectively.

In this regard, Dash and Dash in their book *Teaching English as an additional language* (2007) view, The electronic media can now bring real English to all our schools, however remote, if we provide them with the channels of distribution, students will learn real English in school with much greater eases and eagerness through radio, television and other electronic devices (32-33).

Literacy in ICT is fundamental to life in our modern technological society. To equip students to be literate life-long learners and global citizens of the 21st century, ICT must be successfully integrated into both the English curriculum and English pedagogical practice. ICT is a professional resource: a mode of classroom delivery, a source of valid and valuable text types. For students, it provides opportunities to communicate more effectively and to develop literacy skills in critical literacy. It is a valuable tool for, researching, composing and responding, viewing and representing in English.

Some commonly used ICT tools associated with searching and managing knowledge include Communication and Collaboration system such as group E-mail, teleconference, video conference, chat, IMO, forum, Listserv, groupware calendar, log, shared information spaces workflow management systems, group decision support system. Similarly, Documents management system, Content management system. Internet, search engine, computer and Google manager. Similarly, the teacher can integrate mobile phone, email, social networking site, messenger, mobile apps, online dictionaries, radio, television, cable, tabs, CDs, DVDs, and other highly accessible data based sub-systems in language teaching and learning (Pears, 2015).

Hopkins in his *Centre for Technology in Education* has presented some forms of technology-based learning strategies. Those strategies include Micro-learning, Personalized learning, synchronous e-learning vs. asynchronous e-learning, blended learning, mobile learning, and open and distance learning. Technology enhanced learning has several advantages to the teachers' professional learning and the students' language learning process. The benefits of technology enhanced learning include creating no boundary and no restrictions in learning, providing more fun in learning, being cost-effective, making learning ease by creating engaged and becoming a self- assessment tool.

Technology integrated learning requires certain strategies to make it effective in learners' learning and teachers' professional development. The strategies are as follows

- The teachers must know the subject.
- Similarly, they should appeal to all learning styles.
- In the same way, they should facilitate the content.
- They have to create platforms for learning.
- The course documents should be available to every student.
- They have to communicate clear goals.
- Teachers can establish social networking.
- They have to list the course pathways.
- They need to make effective usage of available resources.
- They should mention the clear expectations and establish a supportive community.

If the teachers follow the above strategies in their integrated ICT based instruction, there will be positive outcomes in students leaning.

Nowadays, we use e-devices as a gateway in learning and teaching language in ELT classrooms. Despite many more advantages of implementing ICT into ELT in the context like ours, we have some challenges too. Shrestha (2011, p.33) has mentioned some pitfalls that can be existed in an ICT integrated classroom. We may have difficulties in infrastructure development. Similarly, ICTs may not be in the access of all the teachers and learners. They are quite costly. We may face problem of transportation and electricity. The teachers can have the problem of providing training to the students. There can be

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problems in time management and material development. Similarly, some other problems are related to practicality, lack of authentic material, local English materials and cultural appropriateness. In the same way, there can be a problem of finding out expert teachers to handle their teaching with ICT.

Despite the challenges discussed above, Ur in his book *A course in English Language Teaching* (2015) states that learning language with e-devices at least addresses the issue of content, cognition, communication, and the relationship between culture and language. Besides, the use of ICT in learning language in daily life seems effective to develop intercultural communication skills. Similarly, the students get opportunities to study content through different perspectives, access and subject-specific target language terminology. They can get opportunities to improve overall target language competence and develop oral communication and socialization skills. In the way, the students will be motivated to learn language with ICT.

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