

ICT a Boon to English Language Learning

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Abstract

Online technologies have given the language teachers a goldmine of materials for exposing learning to enormous opportunities for a genuine learning, either individually or cooperatively. It provides a virtual environment to students with different backgrounds, learning styles, interests, and abilities, and place of learning can acquire and practice a new language input. They provide portable access to learning, which can be personalized and flexible. The infusion of information and communication technologies into language courses must be taken into account as the need of the hour.

Education is preparation for life. English language and English communication skills are the need of the hour. A good command over English has become highly essential. A number of innovative and easily understandable teaching methods to learn and teach English are becoming popular. It is a teacher who lays foundation on which the individual can build throughout his career. For this a teacher should be aware of the latest technologies, explore new ideas and have a certain amount of specialization in the subject.

There are breathtaking developments in understanding of human learning as well as in ICT. It is equally true that there is an increasing gap between the knowledge creation and knowledge utilization. As a revolution to the conventional methods of teaching, the emerging new technologies makes teaching and learning English a profitable and interesting. 3D animation, electronic scripting, dictionaries with CDs, e-books, mobile phones, online video-conferencing, Tele-conferencing, computers, media players, radio, over head projector, microphone, internet resources are the various information and communication technologies. This paper attempts to focus on the technologies that have emerged to learn and teach English and teacher development to cope with the changing scenario.

English communication lab :

A well equipped communication lab contains a TV set, mini library with English books, Digital video camera, microphone, group discussion tables, DVD player, charts displaying speech mechanism, 3D animation, techniques and so on. This lab avoids monotonous learning of the young children. Simulation can be created and students can be exposed to real life simulation can be created and students can be exposed to real life situations. It gives much scope for self motivated learning. 3D animation, technique is used to illustrate the movement of lips and mount during articulation.

Language Lab :

A well equipped language lab contains a server, lingua phones, head phone, tape recorder, microphones, etc. In this lab each learner is individually connected with teacher by a system. This system is individually connected with teacher by a system. This system is loaded with software which helps in learning. Student learn basic skills like spelling rules, reading, pronunciation, voice modulation, etc. It provides practices for listening speaking, intonation and pronunciation.

Mobile Phones :

SMS facility activated from 'My Today' service can be used to learn words, their meaning, usage, idioms and phrases, quotes free of cost.

Tele-presence and online video conference:

This advanced technology has a major impact on learning. Through this native speaker teach English and this can be visualized and heard from the remote corners of the globe.

Dictionary with CDs:

As a language learning device dictionaries have revolution English language learning. The new 8 in 1 dictionary with CD provides possibility to improve pronunciation by practicing sounds, vocabulary, spelling, usage, etc.

E-Classrooms:

Power point presentation and overhead projector play a major role in teaching English to students. Phonetic sounds and symbols are dumped in CD and students can be made to visualize and hear sounds of the symbols with the help of windows media player software in the computer. Tense Buster 2001 – This software comes from Clarity Language Consultants Ltd. It gives training in word pronunciation, usage, grammar. Technical Report Writer- This software comes from clarity Language Consultants Ltd.. It teaches how to write report with the help of many keys such as objective, title, summary, contents, introduction, procedure, results, discussions, conclusion, recommendation, appendix.. Café English software- It has 40 chapters, 6 CDs, and rich multimedia content with tons of audio and video that give lot of listening and speaking practice. Discovery Educational Software- it teaches English vocabulary through pictures and games.

Spelling1.0 :

The features in this software are, Mark by Words- A list of words is given in the left side. The right side of the screen has a big box containing many words in the shuffled form. The task is to identify and mark the words contained in the list, in the big box of shuffled words. WordGarden – The user listens to a word types it with its usage and meaning by referring to dictionary. Spell disaster – It is a word game. Different words drop down towards the earth from the sky; the user shoots the words by placing the mouse on the rocket. Spelling quest – The user clicks the correct word out of many words given with variations in spelling. Cast a spell – Here jumbled words are given; correct form of the word is typed and listened to. Spelling rules – This gives an ideal of the French words used in English, consonants that change their normal sound when paired with a vowel or 'y' Retro depot- It contains nouns that have irregular plurals.

Grammar 1.0 :

This software gives training on all the aspects of grammar. Read button provides the material, practice button gives many exercises to work and show answer button shows the answer.

Composition 1.0 :

This software concentrates on writing skills. A classroom set up is seen, a click in the coach button provides the guidelines on writing. Lists of words are given where the trainee selects a word and types a poem or a story on the selected word. Exercises can be done online, provided the computer has internet facility. Research Park room - This feature gives tips on how to convey news in a clear, accurate and factual way. He wonderful world of me- By providing many samples of resume, cover letter and job application, it guides the user to write effectively.

Teaching and learning have change radically due to the advent of a range of technologies that bridge time and space. Some of the websites that offer service in learning and teaching are: www.supertutor.com/ABC vocabulary:

It is a super online tutor has several zones to teach vocabulary. In the Quiz Zone- the best meaning should be matched to a given word among the list of meanings given. In the Search Zone – by clicking on any one of the alphabet gives a list of words starting with the letter. A click on each word gives definition and

simple sentence of the word. Study Zone – helps to practice vocabulary. Game Zone – It gives training through games to know the synonym and antonym of the words. Custom lesson – The user can type any word, its definition and sentence to create a new entry into the word list. Select lesson – it helps to select any lesson, read, listen and answer the question in the exercise. www.myenglishteacher.com: This site offers to send free English lessons through e-mail that focuses on correct grammar usage and writing skills. www.englishstogo.com: This site provides ELL for both resources at 5 ability levels equivalent to 35 text book. www.onlineenglishteacher.com: English classes in this site are real time, conversation oriented with correction and feedback from qualified and experienced ESL professionals. www.englishstudyonline.com: Global English learning company offers both interactive courses are live online teaching. Classes in this site have the latest technology, with boards, video, audio and interactive quizzers that can be uploaded in the classrooms as immediate study tools. www.thelinguist.com: This site provides fun system to learn English online. It assures to improve English skills within three months with the help of the English tutor.

Conclusion :

The world is increasingly becoming digital and hence communication and the means of communications are being redefined. It is in such a contest that online technologies are increasingly getting integrated into ELL. The belief is that online educational spaces which are need-based, student centered and process oriented make language teaching and language learning enjoyable as they offer flexible and attractive environments suitable for multilevel continuous interaction. As a result, they lead to satisfactory teaching/learning experiences and thus enhance the effectiveness of language classes and lead to deeper learning.

Education however, should be aware of the fact that in spite of the sample options online technology provides to learners, it can still be harmful to them. Therefore they should not be negligent of the pitfall of virtual world as they, with their engrossing power and charm, can distance students from social life and leave them in a real island. Technology should empower learners, and not handicap them.

There is a need for strengthening of the research effort with in educational and teaching methods in general, including a special effort within the new ICT based education and teaching methods so that a systematic gathering and development of new pioneering education and teaching methods will be ensured.

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