

## INTEGRATION OF ICT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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### Abstract

*Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is defined as a range of technological tools and resources used to communicate, to create, disseminate, store, and manage information. The previously dominant term for interactive electronic media, Information Technology (IT) is now increasingly being replaced by Information and Communication Technology (ICT). In the present era, Information Technology infuses all aspects of modern life, and the growth of digital information continues at an unprecedented rate. Indeed, the way in which the information technology revolution has reshaped “the social landscape of human life is unparalleled in history” (Castells,29). In today’s era where information and communication technology is rapidly developed and turns to be a lifestyle for people throughout ages and places, its literacy has undoubtedly become a prior necessity.*

Key Words: ICT, Technology, Communication etc.

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The simultaneous impact of globalization, the spread of English and technological development have transformed “our learning and teaching English as a lingua franca in an

unprecedented way”(Warschauer,56). Both English and ICT have become essential literary skills for a growing number of non-native speakers of English to ensure full participation in the present society. Computer assisted learning opens up vistas of expansion in this field through facilitating learner’s engagement in active communication which in turn facilitate the development of second/foreign language competence. As a result the teaching of English language and literature has witnessed a paradigm shift in its approach and methodology.

. The global adoption of ICT into education has often been premised on the potential of the new technological tools to revolutionise an outmoded educational system, better prepare students for the information age, and accelerate national development efforts. Technology or multimedia is not a teaching method or theory, but rather it is a tool that aids educators by improving access to different types of media already in use. Technology is used to “simulate real-life situations and helps learners to have control over the learning process”(O’Leary,22). Computer Enhanced Language Learning will enable learners to pool their knowledge in effective ways and enhance peer correction and language repair work.

The search for the ‘one best method’ of teaching the English language other than the existing methods like Grammar translation Method, Direct Method, Audio-Lingual Method, The Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Community language Learning, Communicative Approach and The Total Physical Response Method led to the development of the latest method that is Computer Assisted Language Learning(CALL).

ICT is found to be advantageous in several ways: 1) technology facilitates exposure to authentic language; 2) technology provides the access to wider sources of information and varieties of language; 3) technology gives the opportunity to people to communicate with the world outside; 4) technology allows a learner-centred approach; 5) technology develops learner’s autonomy.

In the context of language learning, ICT has an important role as the ‘media bridging and enabling the learning process, or direct communication between students and teacher although they are not present in the same room or place in certain time. Language learning program can be created to enable students to learn the lessons with guidance, instruction, information or further explanation. Multi-media assisted language learning and Internet – based instruction contribute to EFL student’s cultural competence.

Since the technological advancements move at such high speeds today, there is no way of avoiding adaptation of technology in teaching-learning process, and teachers should adapt, not only for their own sake but also to prepare their students for the future. In short, teachers should take advantage of the technology that is available to them to make their students competent in this digital era.

Four factors associated with the teacher were found to contribute significantly to the success of class room technology innovations: Teacher's attitude, technology proficiency, pedagogical compatibility and social awareness.

Teacher's attitudes are a major enabling/disabling factor in the successful implementation of educational technologies. Teacher's attitude towards computer technologies is related to his/her competence. Although many teachers believe computers are an important component of student's education, their lack of knowledge and experience lead to a lack of confidence to attempt to introduce them in to their instruction. It is therefore essential for policy- makers to sustain and promote teacher's attitudes as a prerequisite for deriving the benefits of technology initiatives.

With regard to technology proficiency, a knowledge beyond the actual application, a broader understanding of technology played a critical role for success. As far as pedagogical compatibility is concerned positive results were more likely to materialize when teachers viewed technology as the means to an end, rather than an end in itself, and when they saw an intimate connection between technology and the curriculum. The social awareness suggests that the teacher should know the social dynamics of the school so that they could understand which innovations the social context would constrain and which ones it would afford.

The range of emerging information and communication technologies used in the field of language education is fast growing, and student's acceptance and use of new technologies is also significantly growing up. Due to the advent of online communication and the development of new technologies, non-native speakers of English have greater communicative opportunities than ever in history in a situation of diglossia on the internet, and it is increasingly important for the students to harness cultural –linguistic pluralism and media diversity.

The idea of language partnering and cultural exchange through instant messengers, e mail, cell phones, electronic message boards, video conferences, weblogs has been proved a very effective way of indulging language learners in the target language and culture.

The use of ICT in class rooms signals a shift from the conventional position of power held by the teacher to a more collaborative approach to learning. Here the teacher will assume the role of a facilitator while students taking the initiative for their ICT based learning. "Computer assisted language learning provides new opportunities for learners to engage in active communication that facilitates the development of second language competence"(Peterson,27)

English teachers can maximize the impact of ICT in their class rooms by ensuring that they and their students use ICT as an integral part of lessons, present ideas dynamically and

use a range of media. Incorporating ICT into the English curriculum can improve writing and reading skills, develop speaking and listening skills, support collaboration, creativity, independent learning and reflection. Technologies which can be used in education are Emails, Weblogs, Instant Messenger, Online resources like e-books, e-journals, videos, Mobile devices like IPODS, Internet, Audio and Video conferences etc. Presentation software such as Power point provides useful tools for performance, creates a more fluid environment for communicating as a message, and elevates a speech to a more filmic medium.

Through the Internet students and teachers can obtain as many as possible sources related to learning. The great thing about Internet is that not only does it allow communication; it also provides vast resources- a global CD-ROM, as it were, for teachers hunting for authentic and up-to-date material, or for students engaged in a project or research work. Also it increases opportunities for student interaction and decision making. This interactive process has the potential to cater individual learning styles.

Computer laboratories enhance the student's performance in English language as it is very useful in the teaching of vocabulary, grammar and listening skills. The most obvious gain of using computers and Internet in the English class room is that it creates variation. Variation might lead to increased motivation among the students and this in turn creates a good foundation for a healthy learning environment. Students are positively inclined to working with web and find it useful, with the majority preferring to use the web as a supplement to face-to-face teaching. They also enjoy the programme and feel it helps them learn and they enjoy having teacher supervision while using the programme individually.

Using word processor students can plan, draft, revise and edit their own and other's writing. It expands student's means of expression and deepens their understanding of complex issues and enhances their global connections. They can use hypermedia to write up, lay out and present their work for publication on the Internet, transform different media into one text, e mail for a range of communication purposes, design websites, communicate with a wider audience through email, online conferences etc., thus facilitating open forum for discussion which allows for more opportunities and democratic participation and dialogues.

The performance of learners with different cognitive styles did not significantly differ indicating that hypermedia-based instruction could accommodate the needs and ability of different individuals. There are various kinds of learners- auditory, visual and kinesthetic. Teaching through ICT tools address the various needs of the learners as it helps a lot as the three senses work together to increase the student's proficiency. Researches have proved that ICT integrated language instruction helps students with intellectual disabilities to promote their communication skills and self confidence, increase their cultural awareness and develop their social identity in the target culture. As technologies shift the emphasis of activities away

from the teacher and enhances social interaction, it also empowers the students with low traditional literacy skills.

In recent decades, technological change has brought inner connectivity to all aspects of life and every day living, and so ICT has constituted an integral part of learning and teaching process. The sensitivity of the technology helps one in attending a more important task and in attaining a higher achievement in the area of education, professional career, and social relationship at which its literacy is a major requisite.

In order to encourage the use of Information technology in the teaching and learning of English language the following criteria should be satisfied: 1) English language teachers should be encouraged to learn the use of Information Communication Technology. 2) Parents should be encouraged to be computer literate in order to assist their children at home 3) All the teachers and students should have access to the use of Information Communication Technology gadgets in their schools and colleges and use them regularly.

The bridge between education and Internet technology has made a deep impact on the perspectives about teaching and learning. In fact, as a result of the application of ICT not only the relationship between teachers and students have undergone a phenomenal change, but also the role of the teachers, the nature and context of learning, as well as the function and relative importance of the contents of course have all been challenged and redefined.

There must be a complementary relationship between source language learning and computer assisted language learning (CALL) practice to create a successful language and literature learning. As teachers are the key figures who will promote any innovation in education, it is prominent to help them amalgamate technology effectively into their instruction. The trendy, intrepid and creative teacher would venture into this virtual realm, find authentic resources, and use them to make language class room a marvelous place to learn.

The integration of ICT into the English class rooms represents a paradigm shift to acknowledge the importance of the emerging technological learning style which is increasingly becoming the fourth learning modality for students of the click and go generation.

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