REVIEW ARTICLE

ASSISTED APPLICATIONS OF ICT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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ABSTRACT

Once there was famine for information but today's generation is drowned in the deluge of information. The ICT (Information and Communication Technology) has been used in all fields of life, including education. In Indian education, the computer technology has become so significant that the government has incorporated the ICT in the curriculum. The use of the ICT in English Language Teaching has of late started to stress the potential and significant progress in language learning. It has become one of the major issues in the world of education and has been in use from preschool to the tertiary level which could facilitate students and teachers during the process of teaching and learning. The ICT has been gaining vitality as it is an enabling tool for educational revival as well. As indicated above, the importance of the ICT as a teaching aid, especially in imparting the nuances of teaching and learning English is being dealt with in detail in this paper.

Keywords: Facilitator, ICT tools, Proliferation, Application, Second Language Acquisition, Technology, Educational revival.

I.   INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of computers plays a significant role in the learning process particularly in acquiring a second language. Hartoyo (2008) states, 'a computer is a tool and medium that inspires people in learning a language, although the effectiveness of learning depends totally on the users.' The technology in this era has grown up not only quality wise but also from the view of efficiency as well.

Technological innovation has brought about the communication revolution and also the rapid development of its application in teaching and learning. This technology has made specific contribution to the improvement of language communication. In the 21st century, almost all the institutions have used the ICT to facilitate the teachers to teach the students in the smart classrooms and the applications that they use in the classrooms have improved and enhanced better teaching and learning process.

II.   COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL)

In the current scenario, when information and communication technology is fast developing, its literacy has undoubtedly become an utmost necessity. The use of Computer Assisted-Learning Language (CALL) has been remarkably increased by English teachers. Considering the utilization of computers in Computer Assisted Language Learning, it is high as the tool is flexible, rich and interactive. The CALL has also assumed and encouraged students in learning a language more than any other media. This is because of the capacity of computers

to present materials rather in diverse ways than either books or videos by providing authentic materials to the self–learning or class. The method (CALL) highlights the significance of computers in enhancing language learning.

"Experts and practitioners of CALL, strongly supports the utilization of ICT in language learning to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of learning that can improve the quality of understanding and mastery of the language studied. In other words, the integration of ICT in the field of language learning is inevitable. It is known that the ICT and language learning are the two aspects which support each other like two sides of the coin" (Hartoyo, 2010).

The uses of the ICT to support learning and for deploying teaching and learning are:

(i)   Electronic Books

Using computer technology, electronic book or e-book is being employed to deliver multimedia information in a compact form. E-book can be sighted as the integrated impressions with sounds, graphics, images, animations, and movies. So, the information presented is richer than the traditional books.

(ii)   E-learning

Victoria L. Tinio states, ''e-learning includes learning at all levels, formal and informal, which uses a computer network for the delivery of teaching materials, interaction, and / or facilitation'' E-learning is learning by using electronic technology as a means of presenting and distributing information. On a par with the given definition, television and radio broadcasts are also a form of e-learning. Even in the absence of face-to-face communication between the people concerned involved (administrators, facilitators, or learners), the learning activities are managed. The awakening awareness of the technology and the ICT literacy is elaborated as follows.

III.   INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The ICT encompasses any product that will store, retrieve, manipulate, and transmit or receiving information electronically in a digital form. For example, personal computers, digital television, email, robots, etc. Thus, the ICT is concerned with the storage, retrieval, manipulation, transmission or receipt of digital data. It is also concerned with the way these different uses can work with each other.

IV.   EMPLOYMENT OF ICT TOOLS IN LANGUAGE CONTEXT

There are some specific technologies that have been classified into information and communication technology in the language context as indicated below:

- Interactive multimedia
  Interactive multimedia is the integration of digital media using electronic text, graphics, moving images, and sound into a structured digital computerized environment that allows people to interact with the data for appropriate purposes.

- Computer
  Computer, being an electronic device is capable of receiving information (data) and performing a sequence of logical operations in accordance with a set of procedural instruction (program) to produce results in the form of information or signals.

- Audio devices
  Audio devices can be used in combination with other media to form an interactive multimedia. However, it can also be utilized separately as independent tool. Audio devices include speaker, earphone, CD etc.

- Internet
  Internet can be used as a source of language learning through email, World Wide Web (www), text, audio and video conferencing.

- Television
  As per the Oxford dictionary, television is a system for converting visual images (with sound) into electrical signals, transmitting them by radio or other means, and displaying them electronically on a screen.

- Telephone
  The medium of telephone has not been in much use for language teaching because of the poor quality of analogue transmissions. Still, there is new advent of digital quality and lower connection that are suitable for conference calls.

J. AUNGSTON, SREE MAYA

- **Mobile gadget**
  Mobile gadgets like cell phones and smart phones which are well equipped with programs like computer enable it to perform better as mini personal computers. With the help of this gadget and its internet connection the facility of chatting, browsing, and discussing with each other with the wider range can be availed.

- **Social interface**
  The media enables an interaction between a human and a computer. ''People set up more interaction with computer in a more intuitive way with less effort-through writing, voice, touch, eye movements, and other gestures.''(Hartoyo, 2012:34) This technology is a milestone of the recent development of interactive multimedia, audio-graphic computer teleconference, and interactive television via satellite (National Broadband of Employment, Education and Training, 1993:5).

- **Interactive whiteboard**
  IWB or interactive whiteboard is a large interactive display (such as a touch screen monitor) that is connected to a projector and a computer. A projector projects the computer's desktop onto the board's surface, where the user controls the computer using an electronic pen or finger.

V.   MODERN DAY APPLICATIONS OF ICT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

In the context of language learning, the ICT has an important role as the "media" enabling and enhancing the learning process, or that which creates a direct link between students and teacher even if they are present indifferent places. To make students learn the lessons with guidance, instruction, information or further explanation, language learning program can be created. The ICT in language learning can be used as a reference book as a computer can store unlimited lessons or references, which can be accessed accurately anytime, anywhere. The seven ways in which the ICT is used in language learning are highlighted below by Fitzpatrick and Davies (2002).

a)   **Presentation**
Text-based and audio-video materials are expected to be presented to the learners for better understanding. Presentation also helps the learners in understanding the learning material well.

b)   **Practice**
Some of the different exercise types are possible to be provided with the ICT, incorporating the presentation stimuli in varying combinations of text, audio and video format. The ICT also offers the possibility of the analyzing learners' responses with appropriate feedback. (Hartoyo, 2012:40)

c)   **Authoring**
In applying the ICT in language learning, teacher can either purchase ready-made materials or create their own exercise materials using a variety of authoring tools based on Hartoyo (2012:40).

d)   **Computer-Aided Assessment (CAA)**
Computer-Aided Assessment (CAA) plays an increasingly important role in foreign language teaching and learning. This media is used for testing and assessing students' understanding after learning the prescribed courses.

e)   **Publishing**
The ICT tools exist to help teachers and learners or students to publish or get linked with their work in a local area network. The ICT may be used by the teachers and learners to help them publish their work in these ways:

- Word-processors and Desk Top Publishing (DTP) software.

- Doing audio recording and editing tools to record interview, discussions, learning materials etc.

- Using digital camera and camcorder to record presentations, drama, role play, and so on.

- Using power point as the medium to publish presentations.

- Web pages using web authoring tools.

f) Communications

Technology can help learners and teachers to communicate with one another. Some ICT tools which can use as the medium of information are: 1) Email, which allows language learners to communicate with 'web pals' in other countries 2) Tandem Learning 3) Computer Mediated Discussion 4) Web-Based Learning Environment 5) Audio Conferencing 6) Video Conferencing.

g) Simulations

The computer can act as a stimulus which generates analysis, critical thinking, discussion and writing. The programs which include simulations are especially effective as stimuli. Examples of language learning tasks which 'simulate' real tasks are : 1) Web Quest 2) Action Mazes 3)Adventure Games 4) Sun Power 5) Explodes 6) "Real-life" simulations 7) Video Conference.

VI. ADVANTAGES

1. There is fast accessibility of information for educational purposes.
2. Innovation of e-learning further facilitates the educational process.
3. Progress of the ICT allows the development of virtual classrooms.
4. System administration in an institution will be more effective because of the application of the ICT systems.

VII. DISADVANTAGES

1. Progress of the ICT may result in the violation of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) because of the easy accessibility
2. There could be recklessness in running the systems without a gap especially in educational institutions would prove to be dangerous.
3. Children fail to develop the capacity of thinking and analyzing as they manage to fulfill their requirement using the ICT without much stress or strain.
4. Over indulgence or too much of dependence of the ICT may result in lethargy or laziness in general.

VIII. CONCLUSION

In the implementation of learning, the ICT is a form of advanced science technology which needs to have optimized function. In the era of global competition, the ICT provides opportunities for students who need to obtain adequate supplies through the innovative ICT-based learning. This provides vast opportunities for students to promote competence on an international level. Moreover, the mental attitude and self-reliance of the teacher and the taught in accessing any information necessary for independent learning influence the value of teaching and learning. Innovative education which can be done by using the ICT based learning can make learning the most interesting experience.

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J. AUNGSTON, SREE MAYA