

Role Of 'Ict' In English Language Teaching

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Information and communications technology (ICT) is an important part of most organizations these days (Zhang & Aikman, 2007). Computers began to be used in schools in the early 1980s, and several scholars suggest that ICT will be an important part of education for the next generation (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000; Grimus, 2000; Yelland, 2001). Up-to-date technology offers many methods of enhancing classroom teaching and learning (Ghavifekr et al., 2014; Lefebvre, Deaudelin & Loïselle, 2006). Dawes (2001) stated that new technologies have the potential to upkeep education across the curriculum and deliver opportunities for efficient student-teacher communication in ways not possible before. ICT in education has the potential to transform teaching. However, this potential may not easily be realized, as Dawes (2001) underlined when he stated, "problems arise when teachers are expected to implement changes in what may well be adverse circumstances" (p. 61). Due to ICT's importance in society as well as in the future of education, identifying the possible challenges to integrating these technologies in schools would be an important step in improving the quality of teaching and learning. Balanskat, Blamire, and Kefala (2006) argue that although teachers appear to acknowledge the value of ICT in schools, they continue encountering obstacles during the processes of adopting these technologies into their teaching and learning.

Key Words: classroom, communication, language, learning, teaching, technology, tools

Introduction

English is one of the most important languages which have played role in the process of globalization and knowledge explosion. It is the most common means of communication throughout the globe. This is why it is termed as Link language, Global language as well as Lingua Franca. In Indian context it is treated as ESL (English as a Second Language). Use of English language has become vital for better learning and earning. Therefore, it is necessary to teach English and develop English language skills among the students from school level. The government, NGOs and educational institutions are working at various levels and taking measures to ensure better ELT (English Language Teaching) and developing English language skills among the students. To teach English and develop English language skills various approaches and methods are in use in our country. But most of them are traditional, less interesting, ineffective as well as less motivating.

So, it is necessary to use modern approaches and tools of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) to develop better understanding and acquisition of basic skills i.e. LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) of English language among the students at school level. ICT has a lot of things to offer to both teachers and students for the enhancement of their vocabulary and improvement of English language skills. Now a day's ICT tools and approaches are being used widely due to their convenience, omnipresence, effectiveness and being economic. Some of these approaches, facilities and tools are CAI (Computer Assisted Learning), CALA (Computer Assisted Language Assessment), CALI (Computer Assisted Language Instruction), CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning), MALL (Mobile Assisted Language Learning), TELL (Technology Enhanced Language Learning), Blogs, Wiki, e-mail facility, Digital libraries, multimedia, mobile learning, free and open source software and social media, MOOCs, Virtual classrooms, documentaries, Digital storytelling, Mobile Applications, i-Pads, Digital Notebooks, Tablets, Smart Phones, Recorded audio- video materials, Online spoken tutorials, Digital pronunciation dictionaries etc. Modern studies and researches show positive results of integration of ICT in the field of ELT and development of English language skills. These facilities have paved the way of individualized learning and provided freedom of learning anytime, anywhere according to needs and convenience of the learners. So, we should take proper step to integrate ICT in the field of ELT to make the learners well versed in English language skills.

ICT stands for information and communication technology. It is concerned with the storage, retrieval and manipulation, transmission and receipt of digital data. ICT is a power and playing a crucial and vital role in all aspect of human life. There is no area that has not been influenced by digital phenomenon. Education is not exception to it. ICTs are becoming a crucial part of our education system. It has transformed our education system into knowledge and information society. It has become an integral part of our today's teaching and learning process. The use of ICT in the classroom is very important for giving students opportunities to learn and apply the 21st century skill. With the world moving into the digital media and information. The role of ICT in education is becoming more and more important. In this paper an attempt has been made to discuss the role of ICT in education. This paper also highlights on what are the issues and challenges in the implementation of ICT in education. This paper discusses possible solutions after analysis of issues and challenges.

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the challenges to technology integration in education (Al-Alwani, 2005; Ghavifekr , Afshari & Amla , 2012; Gomes, 2005; Osborne & Hennessy, 2003; Özden, 2007). This study provides teachers' perception and perceived barriers to the use of technology tools in classroom's teaching and learning process.

Therefore, the main objectives of this study are as follow:

- I) To identify school teachers' perceptions in implementing ICT tools in teaching and learning in classroom.
- II) To determine the challenges of using ICT tools in teaching and learning in the classroom among school teachers.
- III) To identify that to what extent do teachers use ICT tools in teaching and learning in the classroom.

However, in this paper ICT tools refers to the common technology-based tools that are using in schools such as computer, Laptop , LCD, digital photocopy machine, digital Audio and Video devices, digital camera, scanner, DVD player and multimedia projector.

ICT TOOLS AND APPLICATIONS USED IN THE FIELD OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

1. Computers: This is the most important tool of information and communication technology and backbone of modern human life. All the modern communication process are impossible without the use of computers. It is helpful in storing, preparing, collecting and preparing of data for communication. It is helpful in the development of listening and speaking skills. It is helpful in English language speaking and listening skills.

2. Over head projector: It is an important tool of displaying information and processes to a large number of people simultaneously. It can be used in teaching and training of personnel. Prepared forms of information are easy to display with the help of over head projector.

3. Lingua phone: This tool is very important in language training of the students. A number of students can practice speaking and hearing drills with the help of lingua phone. It is especially useful in the training of English language listening and speaking skills.

4. Radio: It is very useful in education and training of the students of rural areas. Many distance and open education programmes are being conducted with the help of radio. It is also useful in audio conferencing. Programmes relayed on radio are helpful in the development of language skills, especially dialogues and dramas.

5. Television: It is useful in education as well as entertainment of the people. It is found that It is helpful in developing listening skills, useful in learning situational language as well as It is highly motivating also. It is very helpful in understanding the language of mass media. A large number of students may be benefitted with the programmes of television simultaneously. Many distance and open universities are running their educational programmes on television, such as Indira Gandhi National Open University, Maulana Azad National Urdu University etc. It is an important tool of audio video conferencing. Live telecast of training and discussions are done through this.

6. Internet: It is the most important facility of communication. All the modern communication takes place through this. It has made the communication facility very fast, convenient, economic, and attractive.

FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR COMMUNICATION ON INTERNET

1. Social media: Social media has become an important tool of communication. It provides a platform for sharing thoughts and ideas. Blogs are made on it. Students can add themselves with the English language learning groups and take advantage of sharing information. Lots of

social sites are available on it like, Face book, Twitter, Instagram etc. It is very helpful in learning situational language.

2. Online facilities for English language learning: A lot of online facilities are available on internet for the development language skills. Some of them are eguidance, e-tutoring, e-teaching, e-journals, emagazines, e-books, e-library, online training, virtual classes etc.

3. Online language related courses: These courses are available on internet. Some of them are free and some of them are payable. Students can enroll themselves in these courses and get education and training easily on their own place. Some of the agencies which are providing on line courses are following MOOC, Future Learn, NPTEL, and IIT's, Concordia University etc. Students can watch online and offline videos of language learning for the enhancement of their language skills.

4. Feature Films in Teaching English: Films can be used in the teaching of English language. Films may be documentaries, educational and entertainment based.

These can arouse high level of motivation. It results in a most satisfying learning experience. Uses of ICT for an ELT teacher: we cannot think of better educational environment without a better teacher. In earlier times the teacher was the focal point of education, but now the role of teachers has changed a lot. He is considered as a guide and friend of students who helps in learning, does not provides knowledge. To teach better a teacher need to be update with the changes. For this ICT helps a lot. ICT can be useful for a teacher in the following ways. a. It is helpful in the professional development of the teachers. A teacher can learn various language skills with the help of information and communication technologies. He can do various certification programmes in English language teaching run by the famous educational institutions like Cambridge University, British Council etc. These programmes help in enhancing his capacity to teach English language and to make his subject content easy, economic and more understandable.

Role of ICT in Education

ICT's play a great role in education. At all levels of education, whether at school or College ICT has promising results. It can enhance the quality of education in several ways.

Student Centred Learning

Information and technology can facilitate a shift in students learning. It implies a move from teacher centered to student centered learning. ICT helps in students learning from reproducing knowledge conveyed by others to constructing knowledge themselves.

Promotes Students Engagement and Knowledge Retention

Students become more engaged in their work when the teachers integrate ICT in the classroom. ICT enhances learning in multiple ways, ICT helps the teachers to make the classroom more engaging and teach the lesson, in interesting way. Students also learn better leading to knowledge retention.

Upgraded Classroom

ICT has upgraded the classroom. With the help of ICT teachers can built the classroom more dynamic and make the lessons more enjoyable for the students. Now the concept of smart classroom is gaining popularity.

Any Place Learning

The use of ICT has extended the scope of offering programme at a distance. Now, students those who are deprived of getting education because of their problems they can learn through technology facilitated learning setting.

Catering to the Individual Difference

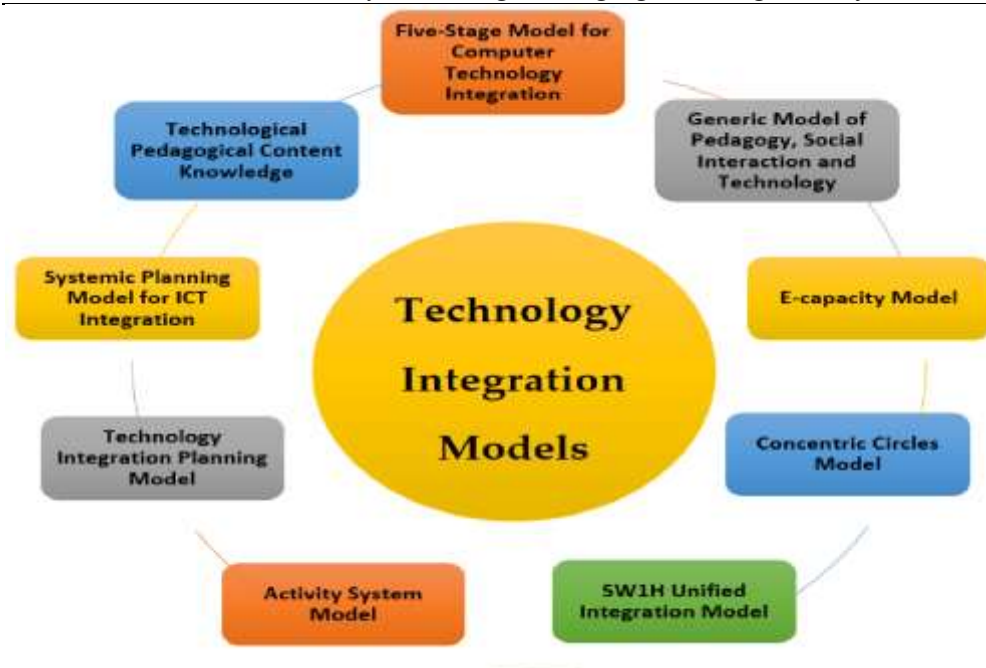
ICT can contribute in catering individual needs of the learners. Because of the technology, teachers are able to consider the needs of every students in the classroom. ICT helps the students to learn as per their capacities and interest.

Connecting Geographically Dispersed Regions

With the advancement of ICT. It has become possible to spread education even in the remote areas. Students from different parts of the world can learn together using online offline resources which was quite impossible in traditional classroom. No matter where the students are every learners can learn anytime and anywhere.

Access to Variety of Learning Resources

In the era of ICT, Information technology provides variety of resources to enhance the teaching skill of the teachers and learning ability. The scope of learning resources are now being widened. Teachers and learners can utilize the variety of resources. For that they do not have to depend on the printed books and material available in the library. They can access wealth of unlimited learning resources from anywhere at any time day with the use of ICT.



Recommendations

- a) Adequate funding is very important for the implementation of ICT in education.
- b) Govt. should provide adequate fund in the education sector. Technical support should be provided to the teachers to overcome identified barriers.
- c) Govt. should undertake strong policies to implement ICT in educational institution.
- d) Teachers should be trained on how to use ICT in teaching.
- e) Workshop Training programs should be organized to train the teachers and non teaching staff in order to make them competent to handle ICT infrastructure and services.
- f) In order to solve the problem of language and content more content in local languages should be created for preservation of cultural values.
- g) Positive attitude needs to be developed towards the use of technologies.
- h) The language of the authorized content should be clear and easy to understand.

LIMITATIONS OF ICT TOOLS

Though ICT tools are very helpful in the teaching and learning of English language, still these tools have some limitations. Some of the limitations are discussed below:-

1. Often student fail to learn the targeted objectives of the English language teaching.
2. Due to freedom of time and space often students become careless about their targets and indulge themselves in meaningless works.
3. Repeated use of recorded programmes creates boredom in the students that leads to the problem of indiscipline in the classroom.
4. Most of the times students remain passive and inactive in the teaching learning process because they get less opportunities to participate actively in the teaching learning process.

5. The use of ICT tools needs technically trained teachers that lacks and create problems in the TLP.

Conclusion

The integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in education has brought dramatic modifications in the paradigms and methods practiced, particularly in the developed countries. In recent years, the exploitation of ICTs in teaching and learning of different subjects is being expanded in the developing countries too. This study has made an attempt to explore the opportunities and challenges of using ICTs in English language teaching (ELT) in school education in the developing country Nepal. The English language teachers and the students learning English from two different schools were the informants in the study, and interview and focus group discussion (FGD) were used as the research methods. The study concluded that ICTs were useful for the teachers and students in their teaching and learning activities for accessing learning resources, preparing and presenting their lesson and for conducting collaborative learning activities. However, it was found that the teachers and students were not satisfied with their utilization of ICTs in teaching and learning of English. Access to ICT tools, and the skills needed to use ICTs were the main problems for them in the integration of ICTs in English language teaching and learning. Therefore, these constraints need to be minimized to improve the integration of ICTs in ELT.

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