USAGE OF TECHNOLOGY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASS ROOM BY PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS - A STUDY

M. Parvathi
Assistant Professor of English,
Madanapalle Institute of Technology & Science,
Affiliated to JNTU, Ananthapur,
Madanapalle, Chittoor (Dist)-517325, Andhra Pradesh, INDIA

Abstract: The early part of the 21st century has become a platform for usage of technologies available in language learning and teaching. These diverse ways that they are being used in today's classrooms all over the world, as illustrated in this paper, have become central to language practice. We are now firmly embedded into the digital technologies, where these digital tools, are described as ‘technical cultural artefacts’. These tools have long been a feature of the world of education (Bates, 2005), and particularly language education (Salaberry, 2001). These digital tools are, of course, central in the field of computer assisted language learning (CALL), but are also increasingly a core part of English language teaching (ELT) in general. CALL makes an increasingly significant contribution to the general world of ELT.

Keywords: Technical-digital tools-ELT Teachers-Language Teaching-LSRW skills.

1. Introduction

ELT teachers today are faced with a bewildering choice of aims, methods and materials. How can they design or choose language curricula best suited to their learners’ needs? What options are open to them in designing and introducing new Syllabuses and methods? In answering these questions, a teacher begins using technology wisely by reviewing historically the development of ideas on language teaching and language curriculum. Technology facilitates teaching and always helps a teacher in creating good classroom atmosphere. He intends to present an overview of how language skills can be developed and / or honed by using technology/e-learning. It also intends to suggest rather discuss some ideas and necessary changes in the process of teaching a foreign language, present scenario, and some ways for getting united for digital content creation. It addresses those who are actually involved to some extent in e-learning/teaching. With the advent of high speed Networking facilities and multimedia, it is universally accepted that face to face teaching is not the only method of teaching in the University Curriculum Planning and there are also other ways which are much better, faster, and cheaper than the traditional one. More so over there is also some craze for developing multimedia (based) courses amongst the Language Faculty for the students who cannot come to the classroom and especially for those who pursue education through distance mode, not necessarily in a Formal Setup. This is not so difficult to implement in other subjects as it is in language learning. The reason, as we all know, is language learning / teaching is more an art based skill-demanding work than in case of the content based subjects. Because our concern is four basic skills – LSRW and that too developing them in that order. Hence, it is most advisable that a teacher should use technology in the class room. But the care should be taken that he does not compromise with his own role in the class room.

II. Technologies to support oral skills

For younger learners effective classroom strategies have traditionally involved use of songs, rhymes and traditional stories with repeated language structures. The internet can be a rich source of authentic oral models via recorded songs, talking electronic books, podcasts and video clips that help learners with pronunciation as well as acquisition and reinforcement of new vocabulary. These tools can also help to support teachers who don’t feel as confident with their own language skills. Technology also affords children the opportunity to record themselves for playback at a later time. Learners report that the ability to listen and play back recordings helps identification of grammatical errors and inaccuracy in pronunciation, encouraging self-improvement.

III. Focus on technology: Voice Thread

For standardized pronunciation Voice Thread is a free tool. It allows learners to upload documents, pictures, video and other digital media and then a voice recording. It is not limited to one voice recording. You could in theory upload a PDF document onto Voice Thread and then all the students in the class could add voice
recordings to sit alongside the document. This is exactly what the English Classroom is needed to enhance accent levels. Voice Thread also allows to click on a button, copy the code and then embed the Voice Thread into a website, blog or wiki. It requires no coding at all. It has quickly become one of the most popular Web 2.0 tools on the internet. 

IV. Technology in Writing Skills
The process of writing has been enjoying the development of an enhanced product approach called a genre approach to writing (Badger and White, 2000). In this approach we see an emphasis on the nature of the text itself and the community that produces these texts, these learners are developing the skills to become members of a different community of practice (Wenger, 1998). Teachers in an ESP (English for Specific Purposes, but described as English for any Purpose throughout the world) class focusing on a particular genre, the writing of scientific articles, for example, are doing more than simply teaching language; the writers in the class are having their identity moulded by the processes of writing in a particular way. They are becoming ‘writers of science’ not simply learning to write in English, the nature of their identity is changing. Since this early research into writing and word processors there has been a revolution in the production of text and because of the nature of the internet, the web and other tools like mobile phones, we find text everywhere and we produce considerably more than we were producing when most text was handwritten. We have seen cultural technical artefacts like blogs being socially shaped and changing the nature of the publishing industry, or wikis being used as malleable repositories for the knowledge base of the world, where a much broader range of people contribute to our understanding of what things mean. We also see this process occurring in language teaching where collaboration is seen as important for language development.

V. National Status
With the advent of high speed Networking facilities and multimedia, it is universally accepted that face to face teaching is not the only method of teaching in the University Curriculum Planning and there are also other ways which are much better, faster, and cheaper than the traditional one. More so over there is also some craze for developing multimedia (based) courses amongst the Language Faculty for the students who cannot come to the classroom and especially for those who pursue education through distance mode, not necessarily in a Formal Setup.

(A) International Status
In today’s world of digital everything, audio exposure to foreign languages is readily available at little to no cost. Satellite radio, Internet radio and podcasts are all available. Even as far back as the 1980s, visionary scholars began to see that one day, language labs would become extinct (Chen, 1996; Froehlich, 1982). They were right. In the twenty-first century, constructing audio language labs is not a wise use of a school’s limited money, time and other resources. Traditional ways of assessing language acquisition are inadequate in today’s world (Pappamihiel & Walser, 2009). Today language acquisition is seen as a complex, nonlinear and communicative endeavour. Traditional multiple choice or fill-in-the-blank (also called “cloze”) activities and tests, which are easy to grade do not reflect the complexity that is involved in learning a language. Over the past 20 years, there has been a worldwide movement towards the development and implementation of benchmark systems and frameworks that take an asset-based approach to language assessment.

VI. Significance of the study
Digital and multimedia projects offer evidence of their oral and listening competencies. More and more, electronic portfolios are being used. The beauty of the student portfolio is that the student owns it, not the teacher. There is a trend in language education overall to incorporate student self-monitoring and self-assessment (Rea-Dickins,2001). Students carry their portfolios forward from grade to grade, taking responsibility for their learning as they go. Portfolios are an excellent tool to teach learners how to self-monitor and evaluate, as well as providing them with provable demonstrations of their learning. Moreover, language is not only to communicate, but also as a means to find contacts, meet people and establish partnerships (Soontiens, 2004). Such activities can only be facilitated by learning other languages, but leadership and interpersonal skills are also necessary to make connections and develop lasting partnerships. There is a trend towards learning other languages as a means not only to become self-empowered, but also to empower others.

VII. Objectives
-At this point I intend to focus on two aspects i.e. Implementation and Requirements. Though both of them go hand in hand, we will consider implementation first because, it is the implementation that matters the most in a language classroom and two, we cannot think of specific requirements without implementing our ideology.
- When we implement e-learning/technology for honing the language skills of our students, first of all, I want to implement strategic graded planning right from the preliminary courses for the schools to intermediates ones to the advanced courses for the colleges.

- For the purpose, I think of Working (in) Groups, if as a teacher our aim is quality content and services. Here, I need to have contact with all contributors involved in e-learning / teaching so as to have cooperation and harmony through the exchange of ideas and proper planning.

- Finally, I prefer to teach English by choosing topics, vocabulary and expressions that are relative to situations in their normal daily life. By practice speaking, perform common activities reading and comprehension, writing, spelling, and/or oral expression of language, organizing and sequencing thoughts and ideas, the social use of language, strategies for reception, storage, and production of information, long and/or short-term memory.

VIII. Likely contribution to the society

- Identifying the problems of rural area students in learning of English Language.
- Developing and motivating them with typical Indian classroom reflects the multiple intelligences, cultural backgrounds, learning styles of diverse learners.
- Developing programming skills and defining different strategies in developing techniques for dealing mixed ability students to achieve better results in the teaching.

References