Role and Significance of E-learning in English language teaching

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Abstract

We live in a world when technology is all around us. The pedagogy of teaching approach has also changed as a result of the widespread presence of technology. In every educational setting, the term "E-Learning" or "Technology in Education" has become a buzzword. Incorporating technology into education is critical because it meets the needs of today's students. Today's educational setting is vastly different from the traditional classroom. Traditional techniques, which rely mostly on lecture and rote learning, restrict English language acquisition to mechanical memorization and utterly fail to establish English language as a skill among the learners. There has been a great surge in technological innovation over the last few decades, and the importance of this in the field of education cannot be overstated. Internet, Twitter, Blogs, YouTube, Skype, mobile phones, interactive boards, and other new technology have increased not only stimuli but also student engagement and actual interactivity in the classroom. The use of e-learning in the study of English as a second language, in particular, is an area that has seen tremendous growth for quite some time. The current paper emphasis on the role and significance of e-learning in English language teaching.

Keywords: *Technology in Education, E-learning Tools, E-learning in English language teaching.*

Introduction

As information technology progresses and spreads, a rising body of literature highlights the need for E-learning to make studying English as a second language (ESL) more convenient and easy depending on the country or environment. In today's world, e-learning mainly refers to the use of the internet as a teaching and learning tool, either as a primary or secondary educational resource. New Applications of E-learning Tools as Information and Communication Technology (ICT), which includes communication devices or software products such as overhead projectors, projectors, interactive boards, blogs, the world wide web, cameras, audio equipment, scanners, computers, printers, I-pads, e-mails, video conferencing, and many other, are not only influencing and continuing to support what is being learned in schools, but also influencing and supporting what is really being learned outside of schools.

There is also a lot of research about the relative potential benefits of using technology in this way for teachers and students. Traditional learning settings include both temporal and spatial limits, which are removed with e-learning. The teachers can engage the learners to become skilled at English Language by using the innovative ELT techniques like English songs, movie clippings, dramatics, advertisements, sports commentaries and many more. Furthermore, English learners can access valuable resources and communicate with native English speakers directly through some E-learning applications. Students can also study English listening, verbal communication, reading and writing using many E-learning applications.

Teaching English in the Past

The teaching of languages in general and English Language Teaching (ELT) in particular, has evolved dramatically over the centuries. When English became a compulsory topic in the students' curriculum, it presented a challenge for English language teachers to teach, but they did it as a 'Knowledge' subject rather than a 'Skill' subject because their major goal was to train them to pass tests exclusively. As a result, they established the 'Grammar-Translation

Method,' in which the teacher explained each term to the students in their home language in order for them to understand and learn English.

Regardless of the fact that this method overlooks the development of the learners' oral skills, it remains popular among most teachers in its modified form. There were also other ways utilized, such as the bilingual method, direct method, audio-lingual method, structural approach and situational education, communicative language teaching, and so on, but no method was claimed to be ideal. ELT has been swinging like a pendulum between the extremes of approach since then, as language teachers have always been on the lookout for new and more effective methods.

Teaching English in the Present

Due to the pervasiveness of technology in all aspects of life, the residents of the twenty-first century face new options, opportunities, and difficulties. In this era, educational institutions cannot simply be places where a prescribed set of information is transmitted from teacher to student over a set period of time; rather, educational institutions must promote "learning to learn" or the acquisition of knowledge and skills that enable continuous learning throughout one's life. The current demand is to equip people with English language proficiency, which can only be accomplished through a right blend of edifying and e-learning tools (modern technologies).

The integration of e-learning tools into educational processes has shattered traditional teaching and learning paradigms. E-learning refers to a variety of technology tools and systems that qualified and innovative teachers might use to improve teaching and learning conditions. These are used to make students' learning more engaging, motivating, stimulating, and meaningful. These tools have been hailed as potentially strong enablers of educational reform and development.

Effectiveness of E-learning in English Language Teaching

E-learning is a useful tool for establishing successful learning environments that motivate students and ensure meaningful and worthwhile learning outcomes. It is conceivable that e-learning provides ample opportunity for students to reflect and focus. Computers can effectively correct writing errors in an e-learning setting, allowing students to learn from their mistakes to improve their skills. Software can identify errors in writing and can provide corrective instructions, which may enrich student learning.

- **Promoting key learning skills through E-learning**

Providing students with an e-learning program can help them develop their listening skills. Speaking in English is one of the most important talents, and e-learning can help with speaking skills when using English-language chat rooms. Because we live in a country where English is not widely spoken, e-learning will aid in the development of students' speaking abilities. Chat rooms may be useful for students to practice their speaking skills, providing possibilities not available in typical teaching and learning settings.

- **Promoting Independent Learning through E-learning**

E-learning supports diverse learning styles since it is an individual's natural, habitual, and preferred mode of receiving, processing, and retaining new knowledge and abilities. Students frequently adopt tactics that directly represent their preferred learning when they are permitted to learn in their preferred manner, without being pressured by the learning environment or other variables. A lot of material can be made readily available to students through e-learning, allowing them to learn independent of circumstance. Students do not always need to be in the classroom to acquire pertinent information, nor do they always need a teacher's presence. But, it would be difficult to use e-learning without prior experience and supervision. This emphasizes the significance of the teacher's involvement in assisting students use e-learning tools. E-learning can provide instant feedback, which is highly useful. Students also find it inspiring since they can learn independently using e-learning technologies without their teachers monitoring or interfering.

Promoting Flexible Learning through E-learning

Students that use e-learning have access to their coursework 24 hours a day, allowing them more time to catch up on what they missed in class. Instead of focusing solely on the availability of tools online, more emphasis should be

placed on the flexibility given by the opportunity to practice at any time. Students can access coursework from school, home, or any other location where they have access to a computer and an internet connection. Teachers can have the same level of flexibility when it comes to monitoring their pupils' progress. For students, e-learning reduces geographical and spatial restrictions. This emphasizes the fact that, by utilizing e-learning materials, students from various geographical locations can readily converse. This functionality can thus urge students to interact with others regardless of region, influencing them to employ e-interactive learning's features. The Internet has a worldwide reach and can provide access to a wealth of international information. Similarly, e-learning allows English students to connect with native English speakers and access important language learning resources. E-learning allows students to learn English as a whole, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

- **Promoting Interactive Learning through E-learning**

E-learning is an interactive tool that allows students and teachers to communicate more effectively. Because e-learning is a comprehensive set of technology tools that allow teachers and students to connect in a new style via the internet outside of the classroom to assist everyday learning and teaching of English, it differs from traditional learning environments. Learning and teaching English using e-learning can aid in the development of an interactive interaction between students and teachers. E-learning also enables students to contact with individuals all around the world via chat rooms in a more convenient, flexible, and participatory manner.
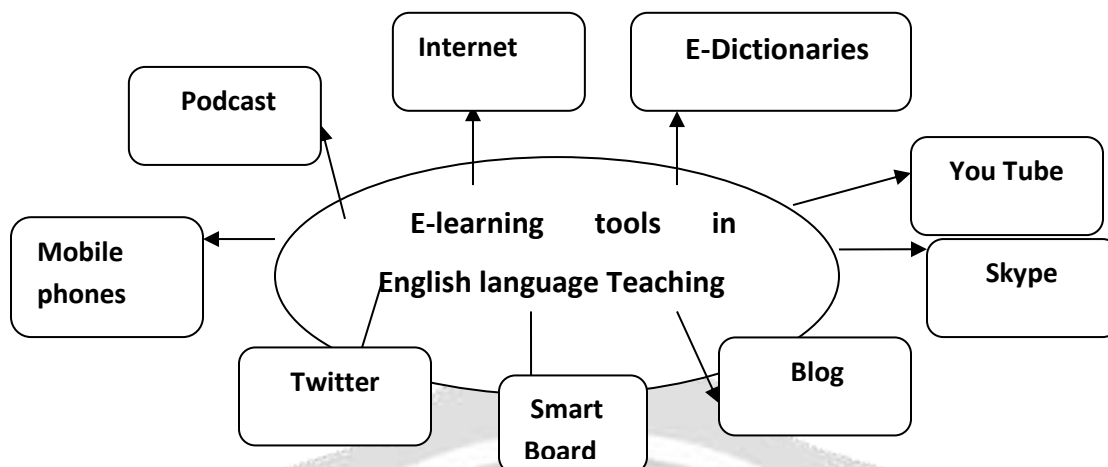
Advantages of E-Learning

Some of the advantages of e-learning are:

- It facilitates and increases interaction time between students and learning resources, students and teachers, and students.
- Even if students are not physically present in the classroom, they can continue to study.
- Enables students and teachers to communicate information or comments regarding learning material in order to maximize the amount of face-to-face time available to focus on the subject.
- Improve teacher quality and performance by establishing better learning models and materials that are simple to grasp and learn for students.

E-learning tools in English language Teaching

There are many e-learning tools which can be used for English language Teaching. Some of these e-learning tools are mentioned below:

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                    │ Internet │          │ E-Dictionaries│
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        │ Podcast │
        └─────────┘                                            ┌──────────┐
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- **Use of Internet for English language Teaching**

The internet is not only a source of original English material, but also of information in the form of articles, courses, and conferences, among other things. The teacher can use e-mail to distribute homework to students and can also take online tests. Parents can access their children's work at any time over the internet. Students no longer skip classes because they can now view a web cam version of the class online and download worksheets and notes from electronic online whiteboards. Schools are connected via a network and collaborate on projects and materials online. Every school has its own online presence. Many free software programs are now available on the Internet for students to use. Spelling Bee is one of those online programs that assist students in correctly spelling English words. The teacher can also select the level of difficulty at which he or she wants to instruct his or her students.

- **Use of E-Dictionaries for English language Teaching**

When learning a new language, students rely on dictionaries as reliable sources because they allow them to be confident in their predictions about the meaning of new terms. As a result, dictionaries can be a helpful tool in the language learning process if they are used in a controlled manner and do not make learners overly reliant on them.

- **Use of You Tube for English language Teaching**

YouTube videos can be utilized in an ELT classroom to improve vocabulary, accents, pronunciations, voice modulation, and many other characteristics of English. The true benefit of utilizing YouTube to teach English is that it provides authentic examples of individuals using English in everyday situations. The teacher can use it to assist pupils in improving their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The teacher could select a movie portion that is appropriate for the kids' level and show it to them as movie clippings. In addition, the teacher can create worksheets based on the movie clippings ahead of time and assign them to the students to complete while watching the movies. By allowing to view news headlines on YouTube, one can also improve your listening abilities. Because the news is summarized quickly, the teacher might ask pupils to listen to the headlines and place them in order. As a result, it could be an excellent activity to help kids enhance their listening and writing skills.

Use of Skype for English language Teaching

Teachers and students can collaborate with one other from anywhere in the world using Skype. It enables students in a foreign language class with several options to connect with classes in other countries and practice their language abilities. Teachers can provide mentoring or homework assistance to students via Skype. Students can read, present, or perform for other students, as well as work on writing or research projects with other students. They can also take part in professional development opportunities both inside and outside the school district.

- **Use of Twitter for English language Teaching**

Twitter's ability to engage students in learning topics is limitless as an online educational technology tool. The teacher can choose any genre for the tale and start the exercise with a story opener that is tweeted to the students for their input. The teacher can evaluate the work of all twitter network members once they have all participated to the creation of the story line. Editing, plot structure, innovative writing, and proper language usage are all part of this process. The teacher can have students choose a word of the week and tweet it around the network, asking for synonyms, homonyms, and antonyms. Once all of the replies have been received, the teacher can double-check them for accuracy and create a link between the challenging words to help pupils expand their vocabulary.

- **Use of Smart board for English language Teaching**

Teachers can use Smart boards to teach language arts in a student-centered manner. Smart Boards can be used by language teachers to increase reading and comprehension, as well as to teach grammar and writing. Teachers can use a Smart Board to teach students interactively by combining video, music, Web browsing, and text processing. Word games are a great method to get students together and revise vocabulary. For the learners, they can use anagrams or jumbled sentences, or they can ask for synonyms, antonyms, lexis, or collocation terms.

- **Use of Mobile Phones for English language Teaching**

There are numerous uses for using mobile phones as a learning aid. The teacher can assign the pupils the task of creating a photo documentary utilizing the camera function on their smart phones. Students can be given a documentary theme by the teacher. Students can upload their documentaries to websites like Flicker and type narrative descriptions for each picture to share with their teachers, classmates, family, and friends after taking a sufficient number of photos. Instead of pulling out a dictionary, students can just use their translator, and instead of sifting through books to find a piece of literature, they can look it up online and be directed to it.

- **Use of Podcasting for English language Teaching**

A podcast is a collection of digital media files distributed via the Internet via syndication feeds for playback on mobile devices and computers. It's simple to use podcasts in the classroom. To use in class, the educator can download a variety of free ESL podcasts from the Internet. The teacher can also offer a music podcast that introduces students to the culture and how the language is frequently utilized creatively, or news channels that teach students about intonation and stress.

- **Use of Blog for English language Teaching**

Blogging has grown in popularity, particularly in the field of education, because it is a terrific method to share information and spark debate. Many educators prefer to use these new techniques to help teach pupils and get experience with various forms of social media rather than textbooks and traditional ways. Teachers should urge pupils to visit the blog on a regular basis. They should swiftly respond to student posts by writing a brief comment on the subject. They should also inquire about the learner's writing in order to stimulate writing. It may be possible that posting to the blog will be obligatory, and that it will be graded as part of the class. Instead of handing it in to the teacher, students should be encouraged to put their writing homework on the blog.

Teacher's Role in English language Teaching

It is critical to recognize that teachers may lack the necessary understanding to combine the two pedagogies (traditional and E-learning). Therefore, teachers should be aware on how to integrate technology into the educational curriculum. Things to keep in mind:

- Teachers should be encouraged to master skills for effective teaching with e-learning, such as the capacity to locate learning resources, select and implement learning strategies, monitor personal performance, and apply skills and knowledge effectively to achieve learning objectives.
- Teachers should share ways with their pupils for comprehending and learning from authentic materials. By doing so, pupils will be better able to develop the skills and strategies needed to process authentic materials.

E-learning Pedagogical Strategies for building English Language skills

Pedagogical strategies should include those effective teaching programs that are based on the teaching tasks and attributes of the students, as well as the selection of appropriate teaching content, methods, and approaches. When e-learning is used to teach English, the pedagogical tactics are drastically altered. E-learning can help students grasp English as quickly as possible by focusing pedagogical tactics on cultivating linguistic sensitivity and boosting listening comprehension and ability to express them. Language development is not dependent on incorrect activities or grammar, but rather on the student's own ongoing practice. E-learning pedagogical strategies for developing different English skills are as follows:

- **Developing Listening Skill**

Language learning should begin with the auditory sense. E-learning allows pupils to select their own learning materials. Audio lessons can be provided through electronic learning to improve students' listening skills, which may include listening to and watching videos. For students in grades 6-9, the teacher can assist them in locating resources that are of appropriate complexity and that they are interested in from the start. They usually learn rapidly and, without the assistance of a teacher, will soon identify extremely relevant learning materials. Similarly, part of the materials for group discussion might be recommended by teachers, while other things can be found by students themselves for students in grades 10 to 12. For them to strengthen their language abilities, e-learning is a more valuable resource than textbooks.

- **Reading Skill**

   E-learning allows pupils to read that they are interested in. There is ample reading material on the internet which can help the students to sharpen their reading skills.

- **Speaking Skill**

The teacher can ask students to expound on an incident, including who, when, where, what, and why, based on the learning materials that they have listened to, read, and translated, so that students can improve their oral skills.

- **Writing Skill**

After listening to, reading and speaking the material, students can be asked to write it down to describe the event itself, and their own feelings, comments, etc. In this way, students can develop their ability of outputting information in English.

Conclusion

We live in an era of information explosion. Once there was famine of information, today we are drowned in the cascade of information. The e-learning tools are changing the world we live in and the way we learn to live. E-learning uses computers and the Internet to transform pedagogical practices and, as a result, enhances the efficiency of teaching and learning.   Language ability is a mental skill that necessitates the use of appropriate educational methodologies and training approaches. English's presence and significance in the globe have exploded in recent decades as it has evolved into a worldwide language. Technology evolves on a daily basis to meet the changing needs of the hour (time). We are in the twenty-first century, a technologically advanced epoch. In the past, learners were not offered any productive, creative, or constructive activities to help them improve the four language abilities. However, if language teachers continue to teach as they have in the past, the required goals of learning English may not be met in the current global scenario. Those with vision and a scientific mindset, on the other hand, will recognize the importance of e-learning in English education. E-learning will not only relieve teachers of their onerous workload, but it will also make it easier for pupils to learn English.

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