Harnessing ICT Tools for English Language Teaching and Learning During the Covid-19 Pandemic.

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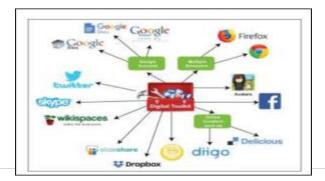Email id: slavanya_css@kluniversity.in

Abstract

Communicative and digital knowledge have become indispensable components of our daily lives. The English language is a prominent global means of communication. ICT (information and communication technology) is crucial in many aspects of life, including education. The current massive waves of globalisation, as well as the increased dominance of the English language on political, cultural, and economic levels, necessitate our effective preparation of the young generation to acquire the abilities and skills that will help them meet the needs of their future careers.

Introduction

The role of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) tools in English language teaching and learning has become particularly pronounced in light of the Covid-19 pandemic[1]. This global crisis has prompted a paradigm shift in education, compelling educators and learners to adapt to remote and online modes of instruction [2]. ICT tools have played a crucial role in this transition, offering a range of benefits that have enhanced the teaching and learning of the English language [3].

English is a worldwide language that is widely spoken all over the world. It is utilised worldwide for communication and as a medium of teaching [4]. The area of language learning is constantly developing in a globalised environment. As a result, the utilisation of e-learning materials in language study is unavoidable [5]. Because traditional language teaching practises are incompatible with modern technology, they must be changed to meet the changing demands of both teachers and pupils. (2011) (Istifci, Lomidazde, & Demiray) [6]. Incorporating ICT into teaching and learning techniques is a vital first step towards enhancing teaching and learning strategies (Bingimlas, 2009). The world is experiencing a technological revolution in many areas of human life [7].

1. **Access to Learning Materials:** ICT tools have facilitated the creation, sharing, and dissemination of a wide variety of learning resources [8]. Through online platforms, teachers can provide students with access to digital textbooks, interactive modules, videos, and audio materials, enriching their language learning experience [9].

2. Interactive Learning:** ICT tools offer opportunities for interactive and dynamic learning experiences [10]. Virtual classrooms, video conferencing, and collaborative platforms allow teachers to engage students in real-time discussions, group activities, and peer-to-peer interactions, all of which are essential for language development [11].

3. **Personalized Learning: ** With the help of ICT tools, educators can tailor instruction to meet the individual needs and learning styles of each student [12]. Adaptive software and online assessments can identify areas of improvement and provide targeted practice exercises, enabling a more personalized learning journey [13].

4. **Language Skills Practice: ** Language learning involves the development of various skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing [14]. ICT tools provide a range of opportunities for learners to practice these skills through multimedia content, language apps, language exchange platforms, and virtual language labs [15].

5. **Cultural Exposure: ** ICT tools enable students to connect with English speakers and learners from around the world, offering authentic exposure to diverse accents [16], cultures, and communication styles. This exposure enhances both language comprehension and cultural awareness.

The Use of Web 2.0 in Education

Web 2.0 technologies have brought about a significant transformation in the landscape of education, ushering in a new era of interactive and collaborative learning experiences. This paradigm shift in how information is accessed [17], shared, and created has revolutionized the way educators and learners engage with educational content. The use of Web 2.0 tools in education has led to a range of benefits and innovative teaching approaches [18].
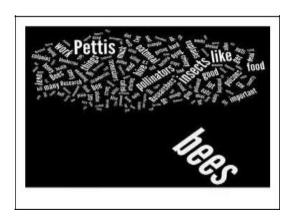
Web 2.0 refers to the second generation of the World Wide Web, characterized by user-generated content, social networking, and interactive applications [19]. In the realm of education, Web 2.0 technologies have enabled educators to transcend traditional teaching methods and foster a more dynamic and participatory learning environment[20].

English Learning App for Mobile

The cell phone has turned into one of the most crucial technological devices in our everyday life. It can best be characterised as a little computer [21]. It is used not just for making phone calls and sending text messages, but it is also used in education. Many programmes are available for language learners to download to help them with various tasks such as translation, writing, spoken language, grammar, and others (Pegrum, 2014). Applications may be obtained via the Google Play and Apple App Stores. Apps provide students with tests [22], podcasts, dictionaries, games, quizzes, and other tools. The aforementioned applications can act as a personal English language instructor who is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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6. **Teacher Professional Development: ** ICT tools also support educators by offering online training, webinars, and professional development resources. Teachers can stay updated with the latest teaching methodologies, language trends, and technology integration strategies.

7. **Flexibility and Convenience: ** The Covid-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of flexibility in education. ICT tools allow learners to access lessons and materials at their own pace and convenience, enabling them to continue learning even amidst disruptions.

8. **Assessment and Feedback: ** Online assessment tools enable teachers to evaluate students' language proficiency and progress. Immediate feedback provided by these tools helps learners understand their strengths and areas for improvement.

9. **Motivation and Engagement: ** Gamification, multimedia content, and interactive exercises provided by ICT tools can enhance learners' motivation and engagement, making the language learning process more enjoyable and effective.

In conclusion, the role of ICT tools in English language teaching and learning, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, cannot be overstated. These tools have revolutionized the way language education is delivered, offering diverse opportunities for interactive, personalized, and culturally enriching learning experiences. As technology continues to advance, the integration of ICT tools in language education is expected to further enhance language acquisition and proficiency.

Conclusion

Technology has permeated every element of human life and is viewed as an indispensable tool in our everyday lives. ICT technologies have an essential role in education, notably in the transmission and acquisition of English. It assists teachers in motivating students to learn a second language. ICT tools help students improve their listening, speaking, writing, and reading skills, as well as their vocabulary and pronunciation. The COVID-19 epidemic has shown the genuine worth of ICT tools in online education.

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