

Importance of Using E-Learning tools in Teaching and Learning: A Perspective Study

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Abstract

We live in a world where the technology is ubiquitous. Due to the very presence of technology the pedagogy of teaching methodology has undergone a revolutionary change. The phrase "e-Learning" or "Technology in Education" has become the buzz word in every phase of education. Infusing technology into education is really important as it caters the needs of the contemporary learners. The classroom environment, today, is completely different from the traditional classroom. ew technologies like Internet, YouTube, Skype, tweeter, blogs, mobile phones, interactive boards and many more have added not only stimulus but also learners' engagement and true interactivity within the classroom. This paper deals with a brief review about the traditional teaching methods in India and further the focus will be on the availability of various tools of ICT and their practical uses. We live in an era of information explosion. Once there was famine of information, today we are drowned in the cascade of information. E-learning is a catalyst agent as it has made a triumphal entry into education in the past decade and only a lay man would deny that it has brought no significant benefits to teachers and students alike.

The e-learning tools are changing the world we live in and the way we learn to live. New Applications of e- learning tools as Information and Communications technologies (ICT), comprises of communication devices or applications encompassing radio; television as well as newer digital technologies such as overhead projectors, projectors, interactive boards, i-pads, blogs, computers, the Internet, Cameras, Audio equipments, Scanners, Printers, E-mails, video conferencing and many more are not only influencing and supporting what is being learned in schools, colleges and universities but it is also supporting changes to the way students are learning.

Keywords: Technology, Contemporary, Traditional, Internet, Interactivity, Explosion, Triumphal and Universities.

In the new arena of teaching and learning, technology plays a vital role than ever before. Teaching and learning are slowly moving into more of digital space and outsmarting the traditional class room system. The 21st century

confronts its citizenship with new choices, opportunities and challenges due to the all-pervading technology into all spheres of life. In this era, the educational institutions cannot remain mere venues for the transmission of a prescribed set of information from teacher to student over a fixed period of time rather the educational institutions must promote "learning to learn" i.e. the acquisition of knowledge and skills that make possible continuous learning over the lifetime. In olden days, the teacher used to explain every word to students in the native language to make them understand and learn the new language. Despite the fact that this method ignores the development of oral proficiency of the learners, it is still popular with majority of teachers in the modified form. So many other methods were also used such as bilingual method, direct method, audio-lingual method, the structural approach and the situational teaching, communicative language teaching etc.

Traditional teaching and learning paradigms have been shaken by the impact of the integration of e-learning tools into educational practices. E-learning is a diverse range of technological tools and systems that can be utilized by capable and creative teachers to enhance teaching and learning situations. These are used to make learning more interesting, motivating, stimulating and meaningful to the students. These tools have been touted as potentially powerful enabling tools for educational change and reform.

Use of e-learning tools in Teaching and Learning

Internet

Internet is a source of information in the form of articles, courses, conferences and many more. The teacher can send assignments to the students through e-mails and can also take online exams. Parents can view their children's work online at any time. Students do not miss their lessons as now they can see a web cam version online and get worksheets and notes from electronic online whiteboards. Schools, Colleges and Universities are linked in a network and work on projects together and prepare materials online. Every educational institution has got its own website. Many software are also available on Internet that students can use free of cost. Spelling Bee is one of those an internet resources, which helps the students to spell English words. The teacher can also choose the level of difficulty that s/he wants to train his/her students.

Using YouTube

YouTube is an American online video sharing and social media platform which can become part and parcel of every human being. You Tube videos can be used to enhance vocabulary, accents, pronunciations, voice modulation and many more. The real advantage of using YouTube is that which offers authentic examples of various forms of information in day-to-day life. The teacher can use it as a tool for improving their Listening and Speaking, Reading and Writing

skills. The teacher can select a part of the movie appropriate to the level of the students and s/he can show those movie clippings to the students for better understanding of the subject. For the first time, the teacher can mute the volume and ask the students to watch the movie attentively. Later s/he can ask the students to watch the movie once again and this time teacher can ask the students to frame the dialogues of the movie clippings simultaneously. This will improve their speaking skills. Another activity to enhance their speaking skills can be: the teacher can show a selected part of the movie to the students and further ask them to narrate the rest of the story of the movie or the climax of the movie. This will add to their creativity as well as their speech. The teacher can also prepare worksheets on the movie clippings in advance and ask the students to complete those worksheets while watching movies. This can prove a good activity to enhance their listening and writing skills.

Skype

Skype is also one of the important e-learning tools used by many. Using Skype provides unlimited possibilities for the teachers and students to collaborate with each other anywhere in the world. Through Skype the teachers can provide mentoring or homework help to the learners. The Students can read, present, or perform for other students and also collaborate with other students on writing or research projects.

Twitter

Twitter, a gift of Technology, is a social networking application that could help in improving students' technological skills to a greater extent. As an online education technology tool, twitter, and its impact on engaging students in learning concepts is unlimited.

The teacher can select any genre for the story and begin the activity with a story opener which is tweeted to the students for contribution to the story line. Once all twitter network participants have contributed to the development of the story line, the teacher can analyze their work. This involves editing, story structure, creative writing, and proper usage of language and vocabulary. The teacher can also conduct Online Debates through Twitter. It can be done with the students of the same classroom or the students of the different classrooms on the class twitter network.

Smart-Boards

Smart Board is a trending e-learning tool of the modern education system. Interactive whiteboards are good replacements for traditional white boards or flipcharts as they provide ways to show students everything which can be presented on a computer's desktop (educational software, web sites, and others). Smart boards help teachers to use a student-centered approach to teach different subjects. Language and Arts teachers can use Smart Boards to improve reading and comprehension. With a Smart Board, teachers can combine

video, audio, Web browsing and word processing to teach students interactively. The teacher can also display paragraphs with errors and ask the students to edit the paragraphs or proofread them. To teach writing skills the teacher can also use a story starter and ask the students to write a class story or chain story or peer story. The teacher can also write sentences based on photographs as it will teach them the usage and functions of the different methods of the subjects.

Mobile Phones

Mobile Phones can play a vital role in the day-to-day life of every student. The use of mobile phones as a learning tool has a wide variety of applications. The teacher can assign a theme for the documentary to the students. After taking a sufficient number of photos, the students can upload the documentaries prepared by them to websites such as Flickr and type narrative descriptions for each picture to share with their teachers, classmates, family and friends. Instead of taking out a dictionary, the students can simply use their translator, and instead of trawling through books for a piece of literature, they can find the book online books and be directed to a specific word.

Podcasting

Today the students are listening to news clips, music, and video clips via the Web. They are no longer watching movies at the theatre or on the TV, they are watching via computers and hand-held DVD players. The teacher can reach to these students in one new way i.e.,

through podcasts. Utilizing podcasts in the classroom is very easy. The teacher can download many free ESL podcasts on the Internet to use in class. The teacher can assign a podcast assignment for homework and form a discussion on the topic the next day. The teacher can also assign a music podcast that introduces students to the culture as well as how the language is often used creatively.

Blog

Blogging has become increasingly more popular these days, especially in the realm of education as they are a great way to share information and generate discussion. Instead of text books and traditional methods, many educators prefer using these new techniques to help teach students and gain experience with various forms of social media. Setting up a course blog doesn't have to be complicated. Writing to the blog could be required, and it may form part of the class assessment.

Conclusion

We are living in the 21st century and it is the age of technological advancement. In the past, no productive, creative and constructive activity was given to the learners to develop the learning and language skills. Moreover, teachers are also looking for some outstanding tools to fill the gaps in class room education when they are forced to deliver the teaching remotely. Experts always suggest educators not to depend on a single tool but to try multiple platforms and experience the benefits of many outstanding results. With the

changing needs of the hour (time), technology is developing day-by-day. Thus the recent trends in teaching and the usage of e- learning tools and modern technological tools in teaching have been affected a lot with the availability of these e- learning tools. When the world is moving towards virtual education, there needs a strong platform that connects well between educators and learners.

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