

## **Innovations in Teaching English Language – A Perspective of Technology Usage**

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### **Abstract**

*The role of a teacher has a significant impact on any student from elementary to Higher Education. In this age of Technology and Globalization, even today some of the teachers use the out-dated concepts in their pedagogy. In fact, the situation is like Gen X teachers (need not be the age but even the mind set) are teaching to Gen Y and Gen Z, without actually understanding the expectations of a student of today's times.*

*Teachers handling subjects like English, History, and Geography etc. in a traditional way of using pedagogy ultimately results in the present generation showing their disinterest towards these subjects. For a subject like English, innovative teaching makes the student a better learner rather teaching the subject in a boring manner.*

*As students are exposed to technology from their formative years, to develop interest in the English language, a teacher should effectively integrate technology to enhance Reading, Speaking, Listening and Writing skills while teaching the language.*

*In this article, the author suggested several innovative ways of usage of technology in the pedagogy while teaching English language. A focus was given on the need for learning the language and the role of a teacher in making the subject interesting using technology at a level of Post-Graduation in Management Studies, as students will be judged based on their communication skills during their campus placements, though they will be working later in different domains like Finance, Marketing, Human Resources etc*

**Key words: Technology, language, teacher, integrate, pedagogy, English.**

### **Introduction**

English language traditionally adopted from the British era, needs a transformational change due to today's technological developments. Many post-graduate students are getting their employment, mainly based on their Domain Knowledge in Programs like Sciences, and Technology. But in Management Studies, the main difficulty that a student faces in getting his employment opportunity is not just based on his Domain Knowledge but also based on the his command on Soft Skills, in which Communication plays an important role.

One of the solutions to this problem would be usage of Technology, while teaching English language. One can create resources such as a website to support English as a subject and to consider a value-added course to their curriculum that helps in interacting English with the support of Technology. Thus, with the proliferation of computers in the colleges, the students can access technology and they can easily learn English language using the support of Multimedia, videos, etc.

We can categorise the users into three types: digital natives, digital immigrants and technophobes. Most of the students are 'digital natives', who grew up with the digital technology. Whereas, majority of our teachers are 'digital immigrants', as most of them grew up without digital technology and adopted it later as an adult. But, technophobes are the older generation people who are averse to usage of technology, as they feel threatened by technology.

In Management Programs, the usage of English as a subject will be covered under written and oral communication. But teaching such a subject for today's generation requires the technology usage in order to make the subject interesting. On the other hand, the MBA aspirants and graduates will be tested on their language usage during admissions time as well as campus placements in the form of Group Discussions and Personal Interviews.

### **Literature Review**

K.S. Srinivasa Rao (2004) studied on the Interest of a student in a course and indicated how the teacher can influence a student – both positively and negatively. The influence of a teacher on specific subjects like Mathematics and Biology makes a student's career towards either Engineering or Medicine, which are more popular professional programs, among the student population.

Jon Clausen (2007) through his empirical study addressed the issues of new teacher development and the role of the institutional context on new teachers' instructional technology use. The study examined to first year teachers-who begins their career in

teaching, their development during their initial year of classroom experience, and how the institutional context they entered affected their instructional decisions about the technology use with students. Results underscore the challenges many beginning teachers face and how those challenges affect instructional decisions of beginning teachers. Results also stress the importance of the institutional context in valuing beginning teachers' instructional decisions about technology use with students.

Chrystalla Mouza (2011) investigated the potential of a professional development program centred on case development to help urban teachers: (a) integrate technology with content and pedagogy and (b) cultivate habits of reflection required to learn from practice. Qualitative analysis revealed that case development helped teachers develop an understanding of the nuanced relationships among technology, content, and pedagogy and engage in the type of reflection that enables learning from practice. Nevertheless, variability existed in the ways that teachers applied new knowledge to practice. Factors that influenced teachers' learning and practice included beliefs about students, prescribed curricula, and lack of resources.

Jamuna A S (2012) compared all the new methods in learning of English i.e., Poetry, Vocabulary Building, and Mock Advertisement for Resume Building that prepares the students for the Job Interviews to different levels of students, from school level to PG level which attempts the whole teaching and learning a pleasurable activity.

John Tanner and Joel Whalen (2013) suggested a strategy to speed teaching innovation transfer between marketing educators. Innovations include how to regulate students' classroom behaviour via formal contracts, do means-end laddering, develop personal branding, learn from failure, enhance career development, stimulate creative thinking, increase cultural awareness, and apply hot yoga to business statistics.

Jamuna A S and Srinivasa Rao K S (2014) have made an attempt to portray the understanding of select management students' about the leadership qualities. The data on their opinions about the leadership qualities was analysed and conclusions were drawn about the students' perception towards the leadership traits. The findings of the Research Study will be useful to the B-School students to become a good leader in order to compete and create a niche for themselves in the corporate world.

## **Discussions**

Whether one teaches elementary level students or PG level students, teaching can be boring and monotonous, if we use the traditional blackboard and chalk method. Thus, finding some innovative and interactive ways of teaching always makes both teaching and learning very enjoyable. For using technology one has to be literate in the said field. Using an access to the internet, knowledge of computer is of primary importance i.e. one should be tech-savvy. To integrate technology into the classroom, a teacher should be computer literate and must ensure that students have the knowledge of computer skills required.

### **Road Map**

While assigning a task or activity, a particular website should be pre-selected so that the student doesn't waste time to start from the scratch just for searching the required material. Secondly, the student should be provided with tools to evaluate the websites. Thirdly, Technology has opened up to multi-avenues to communicate beyond the written word. It is possible to communicate with sound, video, text, animation and hyperlinks. This was not happening a generation ago. Therefore, a teacher should be well-equipped and literate to access multimedia also.

While internet is there in everyone's mind when we talk about technology, there are some of the following offline tools which can be utilized by a teacher while teaching the English language.

### **Tech-Teaching**

While teaching the English language, text usage in MS-Word, type any long sentence in a word file and replace the capital letters with lower case and punctuation using the MS-Word Tools for spelling and grammar correction. Through this activity, a student can improve their language using the technology. This makes the students to understand the nuances of the written communication where punctuation and spelling correction can be done by technology. This is essential in today's world, as the younger generation are used to SMS language of texting without proper grammar usage, though the students are tech-savvy.

Also, by highlighting different parts of speech (noun, adjective, verbs, proposition, and phrasal verbs) in a passage, we can highlight with different colours while working on screen. As an alternative to highlighting with colours, we can use different fonts, bold, Italic or underlining the parts of speech by using the Word processing toolbar.

### **Enhancement of Reading and Writing skills using Technology**

For reading a comprehension, a passage can be made bold for the main idea and italicize the linking words, underline the key details and highlight with different colours for facts and figures. This way we are utilizing the technology for the fullest enhancing their **reading** skills.

MS-Power Point Presentation is an excellent technological tool to communicate the language using the bullet forms, images, animation, and videos in terms of multimedia. It can be linked to outside resources such as other files like MS-Word, MS-Excel and also to other websites rather than a liner progression in presentation which avoids the monotony in the communication through presentation. This activity promotes both **oral** and **written** aspects of the Language.

### **Enhancement of Listening Skills using Technology**

Computer games have come a long way in a short span of time. Some of the changes that are worth noting include the stunningly impressive graphics and authentic sound effects which are often cited as being the hallmarks of a successful game. Another change that is not so obvious is the increasingly strong narrative element. Story-telling in games is becoming more sophisticated and realistic, and this aspect is ripe for exploitation in the language classroom. Apart from being rich sources of narrative, many of these games contain language, specifically English that has to be understood and often used in order for players to fully participate in them. Depending on the game, this language can either be content to be understood or more interestingly, if the gameplay takes place online, then it could involve real negotiated communication taking place between players. Through the Computer Games, the students can learn Communication Skills, and Language Skills. One has to understand the difference between Language learning games and Games in Language learning are two different tools.

One can see that computer games can provide a context for language acquisition and so are well suited to the communicative goals of the English language classroom. Because games are all about the performance of skills within a system, players do not think about the language in use, but only about the action and where it might lead next. Teachers can use this to focus on language acquisition often with surprising results. But simply playing a game with learners is never enough. The teacher must ensure that, each time the game is played; there is a context to allow language learning or practice to take place. The teacher should do

some ground work before starting to introduce digital play to a class. Also this will equip the students to write exams like IELTS and BEC and TOFEL exams as well.

Using multimedia CDs and software through Language Labs, through its audio and visual effects, one can improve the listening and skills and speaking with the right pronunciation. Some of the common technology-enabled communication tools used are telephone, FAX, Teleconferencing, e-mail, Text Messaging (SMS), Whats app, blog, Podcast, Videos, Video-conferencing, Social media.

The face of communication has changed dramatically over the past few years. Traditional ways of communication, which have historically dominated two-way inter-personal conversations, are increasingly being challenged by new technology-backed modes of communication that use open platforms to meet diverse and rapidly changing business needs. The internet and new web tools such as web-blogs, microblogs like Twitter, and social media like Facebook etc. allowing teachers to communicate to students across globe. These technological developments over the decades preceding this one have radically changed our communication patterns and led to the creation of what has been called the *Network Society*.

As a whole, our educational systems have been slow to respond to the changes that are rippling through society. Many schools are still shackled to an out-dated “sage on the stage” teaching methods. The 21<sup>st</sup> century teachers should have the approaches like Revolution with technology, Innovation using computer games, Motivation through online teaching through video games and Engagement with the students of Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), while teaching to the younger generation.

### **Usage of Technology in Communication Courses at MBA**

As far as teaching the MBA students i.e., at PG level, many Institutions are ensuring that knowledge of English language is enhanced for them to get better placements. Courses like Business Communication, Executive Communication or Managerial Communication are offered to make them learn the importance of English language and communication. Also autonomous institutions provide Value added courses like Additional English to make them well equipped for the Job market.

To make all this possible, effective usage of technology and its usage hold the key. The usage of professional language through e-mail writing, sending resumes in response to an e- Advertisement (Mock Advertisement), Mock Interview through Skype, Video Conferencing for GD, all can form part of activity for students at PG level. This will surely ensure their

improvement in language and communication and of course, usage of technology to the fullest.

In today's job market, the Management Student should be trained in developing their Video Resume – where the student speaks about himself/herself, creating a self-branding to the recruiters. But, he/she should be trained by the faculty, how the recruiters will review the Video Resume, by analysing the Communication skills, Body Language their gestures and postures and even the way they present themselves not just in their appearance but the attire they wear.

### **Conclusions**

The role of English teacher in present context has remarkably changed because of various factors such as social, cultural, economic and technology developments across the globe. Due to globalisation, the world is changing rapidly and hence a teacher has to improve and update themselves. English language teachers must be innovative, imaginative, and resourceful and have thorough knowledge of the subject and adopt new techniques to change the Traditional one way teaching into an Interactive teaching to make it more participative and effective teaching.

When the students are involved actively in learning than when they are passive recipients of instructions. Active learning strategies can be designed to target visual learners through models and demonstrations, auditory learners through discussion, debates and games and kinesthetic and tactile learners through models and role playing to learn effectively as long as the teacher provides a blend of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic activities.

Also, strong vocabulary is one way children develop their English skills as they grow. Vocabulary can be developed through books, reading, and writing. When children read literature, those books help children to develop strong vocabulary skills and, in turn, their English skills also grow. Games can be a wonderful resource building vocabulary for English language learners. Using vocabulary games can strengthen skills already in place or develop new skills yet to be learned. There are several English language games like English Word Recognition Game, Finding the right Synonym, Idioms Game, Word Builder Game, Spell Bee, etc.

Students at an elementary level can use vocabulary games to help strengthen their English skills as well. By playing fun online games to help with word association, students who use English as a second language can more easily remember difficult language rules. While at a

higher level usage of websites, e-mails, MS word, and PPTs can enhance the learning of language to a greater level. Many teachers find games to be a strong classroom tool for learning language. Students can often get bored with books and worksheets. Using online games/home task online and interactive tools can keep students focused and learning for extended periods.

With the progress in Information Technology, the scenario of contemporary teaching methods and techniques has entirely changed. Therefore, a teacher of the 21st century should do away with Traditional concepts and techniques of classroom teaching and should adopt innovative and more interactive methods of teaching. English language teaching requires potential excellence of a person their skills, knowledge etc.

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