

Current Trending Apps for Teaching and Learning English Language

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Abstract - Language is a specialized skill which advances in a student continuously. The teacher of English language in the ESL classroom has some strategies to teach effectively. In the earlier days, the teachers used to exploit conventional materials. Nowadays, they are provided with computer, LCD projector, CDs/DVDs, etc. But, there are many more modern teaching devices like electronic gadgets, mobile applications (apps), and social networks available to teach English in the ESL classroom. This paper mainly centers the practices of such groundbreaking methods while teaching English language.

Key Words: English Language Teaching, Electronic Gadgets, Digital Tablets

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a specialized skill which advances in a student continuously. English is a communicative language which is used as a second language in the non-native speaking countries like India. It has become an important means of communication among the people of different cultures and languages, with the diffuse and development of English language around the world. As a number of English language learners are growing up, distinctive teaching methods have been endeavored to see the efficacy of English language teaching. The use of technology in the form of films, radio, TV and tape recording has been there for a long time.

Present generation is highly affected by the era of information technology and technology plays a very crucial role in the development of human life or society. Since it is the fact that technology leads the present world, it is required to take benefit of the contemporary technological masteries in promoting the task of English language teaching and learning. Pupils who are learning English as a second language (ESL) need to practice in listening, speaking, reading and writing language in order to prosper their experience and capabilities. For doing the above said tasks, the students are in need of utilizing several tools that can help them learn the language with ease and efficiency.

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CDs/DVDs, etc. But, there are many more modern teaching devices like electronic gadgets, mobile applications (apps), and social networks available to teach English in the ESL classroom.

Why can't the students learn English in the ESL classroom?

Teaching and learning in an ESL classroom is often limited to processes within classrooms, whereas language learning is a natural process that extends beyond. Today, most of the young are pursuing Engineering course, but are unable to enhance their skills due to lack of awareness on the global importance of the English language. Teachers are also unable to encourage the students properly due to time constraints. The main challenge that the teachers as well as the learners face in the classroom is less use of technology as the syllabus is more and time is less. That is the main reason why the teachers are unable to improve the language of the students in the ESL classrooms.

On the other hand, students of rural areas, who join the undergraduate courses, come from the economically and educationally backward families. Most of them do not buy the prescribed English text books. On the contrary, the teachers go to the classes with textbooks and teach through translation method. The use of mother tongue is useful for better perceptive of the content of the text but not in acquiring the basic skills of English as the teachers are translating and explicating everything from the text in the mother-tongue.

The other teachers, who deal with distinctive subjects other than English language, also use mother tongue while teaching in the classroom and outside the classroom while interacting. They also feel the same that the mother tongue is useful for better perceptive of the content.

Having troubled with such conditions situated in and around the ESL classrooms, students are unable to notice the function of English language and its importance.

II. TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS FOR TEACHING ENGLISH

A key challenge for English language teachers is drawing out the limits of language learning to the learners' lives outside the classrooms. Though there have been advancements in teaching tools, the classroom challenges are persisted. The students of the modern generation are addicted to Technology and the ease with which they use these electronic gadgets in technology is really remarkable. The teachers/educators of English language should accommodate the needs of the learners at different levels of teaching English in a better way.

The term 'New Technology' includes communication techniques for language teaching in which the personal computer plays a central role (Davies & Hewer, 2012).

Technology has remarkably bestowed to the shaping of a digitalized panorama of English language teaching and learning in the current era. The days have experienced various changes in technology-based English language teaching and learning.

However, there are, besides computers, other technological tools that can be utilized in English language teaching and learning. Each technological tool has its peculiar advantages and applications with one of the four language skills, viz. listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In order to use these techniques successfully, the student who learns English as a second language should be familiar with using computers and internet, and capable of interacting with these strategies.

In language education, materials are essential part of the learning and teaching processes (Ahmet Başal, 2011). In traditional classroom settings, materials are mainly text-based and static. In a view of Mutiara, 'Online resources or web materials are important resources for distance learners to achieve effective learning' (2007).

The teachers or the instructors used to exploit conventional methods and materials to teach or instruct the students in the ESL classrooms. Later, they are provided with DVDs/CDs, OHPs (Over Head Projectors), LCD Projectors, etc. Now every technology is handy to the teachers and the learners in an ESL classroom.

The different roles and characteristics of e-learning come out with lots of limitations in usual information, including

the perpetual advancement of information technology and the accelerated promotion of the Internet. Associating e-learning pattern perfectly with Internet tasks could improve students' learning effect, and practically applying digital technology to aiding in teachers' instruction is a future trend of instruction.

III. TEACHING AND LEARNING THROUGH MOBILE APPS AND ELECTRONIC GADGETS

There are various studies presented that mobile learning can provide impending possibilities for the second language learners to practice language skills on their smart mobile phones and tablet PCs. A number of apps have been created and used for English as Second Language (ESL) learning. However, few studies extended with practical examples of activities for mobile learning. The majority of the existing apps have not yet been very pedagogically useful, due to the possible knowledge gap between the app developers and language teachers (Sweeney & Moore, 2012).

We can see many mobile apps that can be integrated into English language teaching and learning. The mobile apps can be employed not only in the classroom but out of class also to enhance learners' and can also provide sources related to lessons offered more support to learners in and after the class. Such a case caters the facility of self-study to the English language learners.

The mobile apps those are functional to the learners of English language to improve their language skills are Bussu, FluentU, Duolingo, Memrise, enguru, etc. Besides the mentioned, whatsapp, viber, telegram, messenger, etc. can play very significant role in gaining knowledge from the distant educators and also to share information on language teaching and learning with their mates. Some teachers who are teaching English online from distant areas also make use of such apps as their teaching platforms.

Electronic Gadgets, like digital tablets, electronic slates, Livescribe 3 Smartpen, etc. can even provide a facility to teach English language in the classroom which consists of large number of students. If a trainer in the classroom having a large number of learners uses a blackboard and a piece of chalk for writing, it may not be visible to all the learners in the class. So, using gadgets mentioned above is a good way to the teachers for teaching and to the learners for easy understanding.

In this way, the learners are also able to grasp the subject easily through such technological teaching methods and techniques. Using such apps and gadgets, the teachers as well as the learners would enhance the language and would also create new ways of learning English language through technology.

IV. CONCLUSION

Technology has significantly contributed to the shaping of an increasingly digitalized landscape of today's English language teaching (ELT). This research aimed to take up teaching and learning English language through mobile applications and electronic gadgets. And also to make both educators and learners of English as Second Language understand the current and future situation of mobile app and e-gadget oriented language teaching and learning.

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