

Amalgamation of Technology in English Language Teaching : Challenges and Remedies

Dr. P. Anantha Lakshmi, R.V.R.& J.C.E. Guntur, India. sbsrikrishna@gmail.com

Abstract - The rapid improvement of technology in the contemporary years influenced the field of education. Teaching English pronunciation is an area of language teaching that many English teachers may shun. Over the past decade there has been a growing interest in the use of information and communication technology for the teaching of pronunciation. ICT enabled sources like Computer internet language lab, online dictionary, podcast, tailor-made videos, blogs, smart phones etc play an effective role in the teaching and learning English language pronunciation.

Traditional education methods have become inadequate in catering the needs of students and their expectations. Many changes occurred even in the learning habits of students. The rationale for the effective use of information and communication technologies in education is mainly based on increasing the learning speed of the students during the education process, reducing the cost and providing effective learning. Though technology cannot play the vital role of a teacher, it can be used as a supplementary tool for enhancing teaching methods in classroom.

The objective of this paper is to highlight the productive usage of ICT tools in English language teaching and learning with specific reference to pronunciation, their practical uses and the problems of basic English language skills and concludes with recommendations for key technological competencies required by any teacher who examines pronunciation related issues.

Key words: pronunciation, ICT, communication, blogs, integration, language labs, discussion, software .

I. INTRODUCTION

Technology is the vehicle to get access with this modernized world. More than the process of communication, trade and transactions, today technology is widely used in educational sectors. It is an implied fact that the integration of technology in English teaching and learning is significant in the development of basic English language skills such as listening, reading, speaking and writing. Various software and modern technologies are being introduced to make students to get access with their subjects easily. The technological tools used in teaching English language contribute greatly to teachers as well as students .

Knowledge base is fast mounting in so short a time. In the fast budding 21st century various innovative technologies are being introduced to teach English in the classrooms. To avoid themselves being demoted in the job market students have to update their knowledge by using modern technologies.

Vast amount of reading on any topic and in many languages are now available on the web, and the chance to participate in discussions with people from all walks of life is motivating for many learners.

Through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as interactive boards, tablet PCs,

smartphones, the Internet and computers in education, it is possible that class engagement increases, the lessons become more productive and fun, learning becomes more effective and students become more motivated. Besides, the use of ICT in education can increase learning speed of students, reduce the cost of education and appeal to different learning styles. In addition to all these, it is necessary to integrate technology in order to be able to benefit from the use of ICT for teaching and learning purposes.

Technology integration is a process that requires a systematic approach. The major obstacle with ICT is, its use is **unplanned and unintentional, but also not monotonously** done. ICT can provide great contributions to the learning and teaching process when it is planned and integrated into the course for a specific purpose. In order to integrate ICT tools into the field of English Language Teaching (ELT), there is a need for all education stakeholders to support the integration process in order to make effective planning and cooperation.

In English teaching and learning, ICT tools are considered to be the most important components of teaching-learning environments. The benefits of technology integration are:

- Encourages students to learn actively, cooperatively based on learning and critical thinking
- Supports various learning styles of students
- Provides individual development and motivation



- Increases teacher-student interaction
- Improves communication skills
- Helps students build cultural bridges.

A brief overview of pronunciation approaches:

The Intuitive –Imitative Approach focuses on listening and imitating the rhythms and sounds of the target language without any explicit instruction.

The Analytic –Linguistic approach consists explicit information on pronunciation such as phonemic alphabet, articulatory description and vocal charts. This information can be delivered through interactive speech software and website using ICT tools.

The Integrative approach throws light on listening activities to facilitate the learning of pronunciation with more significance on supra -segmentals of stress, rhythm, and intonation beyond the phoneme word level.

Internet

Internet is a universally accepted term and extensively used by people throughout the world. Internet is now used in the classes or labs to learn English. Online teaching in the classroom appears to be interesting and enables the students to find out the suitable materials for them. Students are instructed to do the grammar exercises which are available online. Through Internet we can collect data from various sources for any instruction.

Communication Labs

Software's are available to develop LSRW skills. By incorporating suitable software through computers the students can use it several times with their own interest and try to improve their LSRW skills. The sounds of English language can be written down using the international phonetic alphabet(IPA)for adequate exercise.

Listening skills make one to understand what another person speaks. Speaking skills is essential to convey the desire and idea of a person in the right way to the other. Reading skill is important to interpret what is given in the text. Writing is used to express our thoughts. The usage of headphones in the lab makes the students to have interest over the subject and induces them to repeat again and again instead of feeling boredom.

Lingua phone:It can be called a mini language lab. It can be available on CD,MP3 download & MP 4 media player for students of all levels.

Videoconferencing

Videoconferencing is the method in which one person can access to the speeches of other persons in some other parts of the world. It is the live transmit of a programme, which is mostly used to view the lecture of a professor who resides in foreign country. In short it is very helpful for the students to

understand what is going in this world and to hear the speech of the top most personalities in a lively manner. The most notable point in video conferencing is that the students can post questions immediately and get their answers at once.

The Web

In some online sites English self exercises are available. For example www.smic.be has over 100 free exercises covering grammar and vocabulary. Another interactive site is www.eslgo.com. In this site a student can learn English language with an ESL teacher. There are two examples out of thousands of websites, which combine ICT and English teaching.

Videotapes

Scenes from popular English films can be screened first without any running script on the scene. Then the students are asked to identify the words, script etc., Again the scene will be repeated with the scripts on the scene. This kind of telecasting videotape with and without script makes the students to get access with the pronunciation, accent and word usage of English with interest. This method will make the students to repeat it again in their homes voluntarily.

Podcasting

Pod casting is the integration of audio files where we can feed our own materials and practice it inside and outside of the classroom. It facilitates students to use their tech-based entertainment systems for educational purposes. **Pod casting** enables students to move away from the traditional face-to-face training without losing the student-to-trainer relationship that is so effective in any learning process. Podcasts assists students and teachers to share information with anyone at anytime. An absent student can download the podcast of recorded lesson and is able to access the missed lectures. They could also access lectures of experts which may not otherwise be available because of geographical distance and other reasons.

Video Library

Video Libraries are most essential in our fast and modernized world. This is helpful for the students to those who miss some interesting session. In this process the teaching of the faculty will be recorded and made available to the students. The students can view the tapes in their leisure hours. The advantage in this method is that students can replay it when there is a necessity.

Quicktionary

It is a pen-like device. It allows the reader to easily scan the word and get its definition and translation on its own LCD screen. Technology such as Enounce and Sound-Editor enable learners to adjust the speech rate of listening materials to assist their comprehension, and present spectrum of speech

waves and visual depictions of mouth and tongue movement to ease the learning and refine pronunciation.

The following suggestions should be taken into consideration for the successful and effective technology integration process in English, especially by teachers:

- The technology use should be planned in such a way that it can provide flow of English learning of students.
- The achievements that students are required to reach in listening, reading, speaking and writing skills, should be identified and technology should be used based on these achievements.
- Technology should be used in such a way that students can use English language creatively and develop basic English skills.
- The teacher should recognize the students ownership, accessibility and readiness for ICT and should work on the technology considering the individual differences of the students.
- Student-centered approach should be focused while using technology. Students should be encouraged to use technology for learning purposes.
- Technology should provide an environment for using high-level thinking skills such as critical thinking and creative thinking.
- Technology should facilitate the acquisition of English language skills

Significance of technology in developing LSRW Skills:

Listening skill: One of the basic skills in English language is listening skill. Listening skill plays a vital role in language acquisition. Listening involves understanding the accent, pronunciations, intonation, meaning of words and meaning of speaking (Saricoban 1999). The audience should be able to understand all these factors simultaneously. In this context, listening skills are very important in ESL. As for listening skills of students, it is important that multimedia technology is integrated into English teaching and learning. Multimedia technologies such as audio, video and animation are becoming commonplace and becoming a potential tool for listening.

BBC Learning English: This website is rich with downloadable interactive exercises, quizzes and radio program me from 2005 on pronunciation. It provides free resources and activity for teachers and student s of all levels. It's a combination of general and business English, grammar .vocabulary, words in the news,,

Phonemic chart:The British Council 's downloadable phonemic chart helps students hear the sounds of English by

click in on the symbols. It can be downloaded from www.teachenglish.org.uk/article/phonemic-chart.

Pronunciation Blogs: Blog writing: Blogs have become common platforms for young people to express their thoughts and there is evidence to support that the majority of students with personal blogs tend to be writers. On the other hand, in addition to blogs, writing via e-mail, social networks and internet text chatting students can interact with someone else. Thus, students can improve their writing skills with the help of real-like activities.

John Maidment: <http://blogjam.name/EPTips/>

The use of computers in listening activities provides visual and auditory inputs that enhance listening skills and contributes to listening skills (Hoven 1999).

Reading skill: There are many technological tools that can be used to develop reading skills in English teaching and learning. At the time of reading, the student can acquire new knowledge and ideas which can improve the knowledge of English vocabulary.

Students can improve their reading skills with tools such as browsing the Internet, using multimedia software, using electronic dictionaries and gloss, reading newspapers/books on the internet, and using reading-based computer programs (Nomass 2013). Reading-based computer programs, electronic glossaries and electronic dictionaries increase students" vocabulary while the use of multimedia software provides motivation. Websites that teach English make reading activities as enjoyable as much as possible and offer the opportunity to interact with vocabulary learning. Students have become able to understand concepts and relate concepts with the help of English reading materials. For example: storytelling or animation.

Speaking skill: Speaking skill, which can be said to be the last achieved language skill, can be seen as an important problem when learning English language. This skill can be improved with technology support more easily. On the other hand, with the help of software such as Internet voice chat and speech synthesis program, ESL students can work on speaking Internet voice chat. A study by Sun and colleagues (2017) found that social networking systems have improved the speaking skills of ESL learners. A study by Hwang and colleagues (2016) found that web-based storytelling enhances student motivation, promotes creativity and imagination, and provides students with more opportunities to practice speaking.

Writing skill :The use of ICT tools in teaching writing skills allows students to discover themselves and supports their independence. On the other hand, it can be easier and more fun to do writing work on computer programs as errors can be easily determined by software.



One of the popular tools that are widely adopted in the teaching of writing skills is blogs.

Blog writing: Blogs have become common platforms for young people to express their thoughts and there is evidence to support that the majority of students with personal blogs tend to be writers. On the other hand, in addition to blogs, writing via e-mail, social networks and internet text chatting students can interact with someone else. Thus, students can improve their writing skills with the help of real-like activities.

E-learning: Refers to the electronic media and ICT in learning teaching. There are plenty of web-based tools available to teach English pronunciation in the classroom which can be easily accessed by students. The **e-portfolio** is an electronic archive that shows students experiences, progresses and achievements and also includes writing studies written by them in the process. The e-portfolio, which supports students self-evaluation and autonomy, emphasizes the process of products. On the other hand, e-portfolios help students to reflect their language skills and knowledge. Alternatively, social networks with character limitations like **Twitter** can encourage students to use language effectively.

Challenges in Teaching English Pronunciation and other skills:

Inadequate time: Teachers need time to prepare English multimedia materials as well as integrate technology in lessons. If the integration is not effectively done, on the contrary, technology may have a negative impact on the students learning process.

Classroom management: Because knowledge and experience of classroom management is a necessity that needs to be updated in classrooms where technology is used. Technology can lead to motivation and attention as well as loss of time, classroom control, disruption of communication and distraction, especially when effective technology integration is not done by the teacher. It can be said that the process of technology integration needs to be carried out consciously and in a planned way in order to make significant contributions to the use of technology, which is an essential task for teachers.

The existence of serious problems in the use and integration of technology strengthens the judgment that the use of technology does not go beyond perception and attitude in terms of teacher and management.

It can be said that teachers with high technology usage knowledge have higher technology integration competencies

- It requires the sole attention of the teacher to a single student which poses a problem to class environment.

- Learning pronunciation can involve a large amount of monotonous repetition, thus requiring a lot of patience and time from teacher.
- Pronunciation being a psycho-motor task, it is not only a mental task but also demands coordination and control over many muscles. There are no language and computer laboratories with proper equipment in many educational institutions in rural areas.
- Poor maintenance of the existing ICT gadgets is a debilitating factor against the use of ICT in language education.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Technological environment should be adapted to English teaching and learning and the technology infrastructure should be organized in this direction. (setup of language laboratories in institutions)
- The teacher should evaluate and improve himself/herself on his/her technological competence.
- Technology should be used regularly throughout the term in the English language curriculum and ICT tools should be selected for each activity.
- Social interaction design should be developed in the digital environment for basic language skills such as listening, reading, speaking and writing.
- employing ICT tools effectively,
- continuous training to the language teachers,
- giving importance to pronunciation in syllabus,
- The teacher should integrate the technology in a planned and purposeful manner at the point of acquiring English language skills
- a specific evaluation process providing certificates to the students after completing pronunciation modules can be instrumental in learning and teaching pronunciation,

III. CONCLUSION

The modern tools are in addition to the inputs given by the teachers in the classrooms. The magic is real in that it helps the students to enhance their language learning in a fruitful way. These steps and stages in the integration process are crucial to the success of technology integration in English language discipline. Apart from these steps and stages, the use of unplanned, haphazard technology is far from the integration process, and can damage rather than contribute to the benefit of technology in learning outcomes. As a result of this study, it can be said that the process of technology integration needs to be carried out consciously and in a planned way in order to make significant contributions to the use of technology, which is an essential task for teachers. Consequently, it should not be forgotten that the technology

is to be effectively integrated into English language teaching and learning. For best results it can be suggested that effective technology integration environments should be provided first, and then experimental work should be done to reveal the effects of technology.

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