

Utilizing Digital Tools For English Language Teaching In The 21st Century



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Abstract: *In the world we live in, technology is pervasive and indispensable. The extensive use of technology has brought about a dramatic alteration in the way that English is taught. The use of modern technology denotes a significant advancement in the process of teaching and learning English. Most English language instructors working today are actively incorporating different tech solutions to improve the efficiency of their instruction. Digital media has become universal in the classroom with regard to language learning and education. The integration of technology into today's education has improved the quality and attraction of the process. They fostered an image of being creative and, above all, innovative in their methodology. In all educational contexts, the phrases "E-learning" and "Technology in Education" have become increasingly common. Students of the twenty-first century welcome the use of technology in the classroom. The modern learning tools are largely interactive, whereas the traditional approaches mostly rely on lecturing. In addition to offering excitement, emerging technologies such as blogs, the Internet, interactive whiteboards, mobile phones, Skype, Twitter, YouTube, and others have also raised student engagement and enabled real-time interaction in the classroom. The goal of this study is to identify the various technological elements that are employed in English teaching and learning to ensure efficient and superior training by utilizing cutting-edge methods.*

Keywords: Digital Era, English Teaching, Interactive Activity, Modern Technology, Pedagogy

Introduction

In the traditional method of teaching, teachers were considered the sole providers of knowledge in the classroom, including when it came to teaching English as a foreign language in India. Students, on the other hand, were seen as passive receivers of this knowledge. Students assumed a passive role, serving as the silent recipients of instruction, while teachers held the central position of attention and focus. Currently, this concept has undergone a significant change. The current emphasis of the teaching and learning process is on the students.

Teachers facilitate learning in the classroom and outside of formal learning environments by fully dedicating themselves to their roles as instructors, administrators, advisors, and exemplars in the language they teach. Employing current technology for English instruction typically refers to the utilization of innovative methods, tools, materials, devices, systems, and strategies specifically designed for teaching English and aiding in accomplishing the desired goals. Technology is widely recognized as a valuable tool in teaching and learning, particularly in English language instruction. It offers numerous opportunities to

enhance traditional pedagogies in terms of content and delivery. This is achieved by providing the instructor and student with the chance to review challenging material repeatedly until it is fully assimilated and understood. Utilizing advanced technology encompasses more than just using current appliances and gadgets. It also involves implementing state-of-the-art teaching techniques and methodologies that facilitate faster and more comprehensive learning progress. According to prevailing pedagogical ideas, learners can more successfully acquire and improve their language knowledge and skills by using the learning opportunities provided by technology. The use of technology in English instruction consolidates the integrated view of modern systems and their interaction with other components, resulting in students getting the desired outcomes. Therefore, the incorporation of modern technologies in teaching English has become crucial, especially considering the remarkable progress in several fields and areas of study. In order to keep pace with the global technology transition, the education business must use new technologies. Employ modern technological resources such as computerization, multimedia devices, mobile phones, audio/visual effects applications, and social media to improve English language teaching and facilitate effective interaction between teachers and students in a systematic and sophisticated way. The Internet provides simple, immediate, and virtually unlimited access to software, applications, and other platforms and resources that can expedite the process of teaching and learning English. While these advantages are available to anyone, it is important to acknowledge that teachers often play a vital role in using different technologies and instructional methods. In addition, there are many programs designed expressly to enhance English teaching by simultaneously boosting learners' understanding and proficiency in English language skills.

Literature review

Woodill & Officer (2004) were recognized as the originators of the notion of digital learning, also referred to as E-Learning. As technology

has progressed, other terms and concepts have evolved to describe different forms of education and training, including internet-based training, web-based training, online learning, network learning, and distance learning. Harasim (2006) defined digital learning as the application of digital media, such as text or images, that are communicated via the Internet. This learning method aims to increase learners' knowledge and competence while simultaneously improving the effectiveness of instruction. Computers and network technologies are used in learning scenarios, such as synchronous and asynchronous network learning, to address limitations associated with time, location, and scheduling. This technique aims to streamline learner-centered individualized learning (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008). Due to the swift dissemination of knowledge and information, digital learning is being used across all sectors and industries. The definitions vary depending on different attitudes or perspectives (Carswell & Venkatesh, 2002). The definition offered by the American Society of Training and Education (ASTD) is often considered to be the most precise and all-encompassing. E-learning is the utilization of digital media by students for educational objectives (Attri, 2023). Digital media encompasses a diverse array of communication and entertainment formats, including the Internet, corporate networks, computers, satellite transmissions, audiotapes, videotapes, interactive TV, and compact disks (Monaco, 1999). The application encompasses network-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital collaboration. Digital learning is defined as the use of digital methods to obtain digital teaching resources for learning activities, whether online or offline, regardless of whether the connections used are wired or wireless (Kindem & Musburger, 2012). Experts from both local and foreign contexts have provided several perspectives on digital learning in the current literature. Through meticulous examination of many researchers' perspectives, digital learning may be categorized into four fundamental components (Liaw, 2006).

1. DIGITAL TEACHING MATERIALS

It highlights that learners can acquire knowledge by extracting specific digital teaching materials. The term "digital teaching material content" refers to electronic books, digitized data, or content that is given using other digital technologies.

2. DIGITAL TOOLS

It emphasizes the importance of learners engaging in learning activities using digital technologies, such as desktop computers, notebook computers, tablet computers, and smartphones.

3. DIGITAL DELIVERY

The statement highlights that learners can engage in learning activities using various online platforms, such as the intranet, the Internet, and satellite broadcasting.

4. AUTONOMOUS LEARNING

The focus is on learners independently participating in a digital learning experience, either online or offline. It emphasizes individual self-directed learning and necessitates the involvement of learners who engage in autonomous learning before engaging in learning activities.

CURRENT STATUS OF TEACHING ENGLISH

The 21st century offers its inhabitants new options, prospects, and challenges due to the widespread incorporation of technology into every facet of life (Jones & Flannigan, (2006).. In the contemporary day, educational institutions are no longer limited to the transmission of a predetermined body of knowledge from teachers to students within a fixed timescale. Instead, educational institutions should promote the concept of "metacognition," which refers to the acquisition of knowledge and abilities that empower individuals to engage in lifelong learning. Thus, teachers need to modify their approach in order to align with the present expectations. The present requirement is to ensure that persons possess a proficient level of expertise in the English language, which can only be attained through a harmonious blend of

formal education and e-learning tools (cutting-edge technology). The integration of e-learning tools into educational processes has profoundly transformed traditional teaching and learning paradigms. E-learning refers to a diverse range of technical tools and systems that skilled and creative educators can use to enhance teaching and learning environments. These strategies are utilized to augment the attractiveness, motivation, involvement, and importance of learning for students. These technologies are being commended for their ability to enable educational revolution and reform effectively. They are becoming more common in the realm of digital technologies and among persons who are learning the English language.

USE OF E-LEARNING TOOLS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

E-learning is an educational methodology that combines conventional teaching techniques with the utilization of electronic resources. E-learning mostly relies on the utilization of computers and the Internet, irrespective of whether it takes place within conventional classrooms or outside them. E-learning, also known as network-enabled knowledge transfer, is the process of delivering education to a large group of people simultaneously or at separate times. Previously, this technique faced resistance due to its perceived deficiency in the essential human factor necessary for efficient learning.

Nevertheless, as a result of swift technical advancements and the widespread growth of educational systems, it has been widely adopted by the general population. The advent of computers established the foundation for this groundbreaking transformation. Due to the increasing reliance on smartphones, tablets, and similar devices, they have become indispensable instruments in the realm of education. Electronic educational tools, such as optical discs or pen drives, are progressively supplanting traditional books. The Internet is a widely available platform that enables the widespread sharing of knowledge without being restricted by geographical or temporal limitations.

1. INTERNET

The Internet is an essential tool in contemporary society that serves a dual purpose, offering advantages for both personal and professional endeavors. It is commonly employed in the realm of education to collect data and conduct research, hence enhancing understanding of many subjects. The Internet has become an essential instrument for fostering successful education and collecting knowledge. Teachers can utilize it as an instructional tool by uploading their educational materials (such as lecture notes and videos) onto the school's website or forum. The integration of instructional films with written content enhances the learning process by increasing engagement and diversity. Teachers might employ animation, PowerPoint presentations, and graphics as teaching methods to captivate students' attention.

2. SKYPE

Skype provides teachers and students with limitless possibilities to collaborate on a worldwide scale, regardless of their physical location. The foreign language class provides ample opportunities for pupils to interact with classrooms in different nations, allowing them to improve their language skills. Skype enables educators to provide guidance and support to students in their academic pursuits. Students are afforded the chance to participate in a multitude of activities, such as reading, delivering presentations, performing, collaborating, and working collectively on writing or research endeavors. Furthermore, they are given the chance to participate in professional development activities, both internally and externally.

3. YOUTUBE

YouTube videos can be employed in a language school to enhance several aspects of English, including vocabulary, accents, pronunciation, voice modulation, and others. The main advantage of using YouTube for English training is its ability to provide authentic examples of everyday English used by regular folks. The teacher might employ it as a technique to enhance students' listening,

Speaking, Reading, and Writing skills.

4. TWITTER

Twitter, a technical advancement, is a social networking tool that can greatly improve students' English language skills. As an internet-based educational technology tool, Twitter has a limitless influence on captivating pupils in the exploration of many subjects. The teacher can apply a diverse range of activities to effectively incorporate an online education technology tool into classroom instruction, thereby actively engaging students and improving their understanding of concepts.

5. MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones possess a wide array of applications that can be utilized as educational tools. Online lessons offer the convenience and flexibility of being performed without any restrictions on place or time. They are also convenient to transport and easy to handle.

6. Smart-boards

Interactive whiteboards are efficient alternatives to traditional whiteboards or flipcharts since they have the potential to show any content that can be displayed on a computer's desktop, such as educational software, websites, and other resources. SMART boards enable teachers to apply a student-centered approach to teaching language arts. Language arts educators can employ SMART Boards to augment reading comprehension, teach grammar, and facilitate writing instruction. By utilizing a SMART Board, teachers can use video, audio, online browsing, and word processing to involve students in interactive education actively.

7. BLOG

Blogging has shown a significant increase in popularity, especially in the realm of schooling, as it functions as a superb approach. The objective is to distribute information and promote discussion. However, certain educators may have a preference for textbooks and conventional teaching methods, and a significant number of them lean towards alternative alternatives. We are utilizing these cutting-edge approaches to enhance student

learning and attain the desired results. With expertise in a wide range of social media channels, setting up a course blog does not have to be complicated. Teachers can employ a cost-free platform like BlogSpot, Word Press, or Tumbler as the hosting platform for their blog. In the contemporary era, blogs can showcase photographs, and certain individuals are using them to incorporate both audio and video features. The teacher should encourage the children to participate actively and frequently in the blog. The individual should swiftly respond to student posts and write a brief and focused comment related to the topic. It is advisable to request information regarding the material created by the student in order to facilitate a meaningful conversation. We are writing a prompt. Participation in the blog can be obligatory. It could be incorporated as a constituent of the class assessment, and it is advisable to motivate students to turn in their written assignments on time. The blog should be disseminated to the teacher rather than solely presenting it to them.

8. PODCASTING

A podcast refers to a compilation of digital media files that are distributed over the Internet through syndication feeds, allowing them to be listened to on portable media players and personal computers. Utilizing podcasts in the classroom is exceedingly uncomplicated. Currently, the children are utilizing the Internet to retrieve news articles, music, and video clips. The teacher can effectively interact with these children by employing an innovative approach, specifically through the utilization of podcasts. Teachers possess the capacity to assign specific news channels to pupils, enabling them to acquire knowledge about the appropriate application of intonation and stress.

ADVANTAGES OF USING DIGITAL TEACHING MEDIA

Content that incorporates media in education has numerous benefits. They are ensuring uniformity in the delivery of educational material. Teachers may vary in their understanding of a concept. The media streamlines the interpretations of messages,

leading to a consistent transmission of information (Lapitan & Diaz, 2021). Media enables the communication of both auditory (audio) and visual information, allowing for the depiction of ideas, concepts, processes, and procedures, which can vary from being abstract and incomplete to concrete and comprehensive (Elleström, 2021). They advanced interactive learning methodology. When meticulously selected and effectively structured, media can actively enhance communication between educators and learners in two separate manners. With the presence of media, teachers may be able to communicate in a balanced manner with the students (Laurillard, 2013). Educators often need a substantial amount of time to clarify educational resources. When used correctly, media can efficiently decrease time consumption. As a result, students may dedicate more time to participating in exercises and other educational activities (Moro & Stirling, 2017). They have improved the academic performance of students. Using media not only improves the effectiveness of the learning process but also helps students fully comprehend and master the subject being taught (Muslem et al., 2022). Students' decreased dependence on the teacher is a synonym for the idea of media "conversation." When media are strategically organized, they enable the learning process to occur at any desired location and time, with little or no help from, and even without the presence of, the teacher (Sundli, 2007).

1. The integration of the digital realm with the educational environment is becoming prevalent. With the continuous advancement of technology, educators need to adjust their teaching methods to align with the evolving information landscape. This adaptation should benefit both educators and their students.
2. Our personal and professional lives are becoming more and more dependent on digital tools and platforms. Digital learning improves educational accessibility and facilitates information acquisition while preparing students with the mindset and abilities required for success in their present and future pursuits.

Google Classroom is a costless internet platform particularly created for educational institutions to simplify the procedure of generating, disseminating, and evaluating assignments without the necessity of physical copies. Google Classroom enhances the learning process and boosts efficiency by facilitating a smooth exchange of files between teachers and students. This platform functions as a medium for students to articulate inquiries regarding the teachings delivered in class and obtain responses from both educators and classmates. In addition, educators have the opportunity to upload supplementary educational resources for students to access and review outside of the classroom easily. Google Classroom integrates many Google technologies to perform a range of functions. The system utilizes Google Drive for the generation and distribution of assignments, Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides for written tasks, Gmail for communication, and Google Calendar for scheduling.

BENEFITS OF DIGITAL LEARNING

What are the factors influencing the decision to go for online distance learning at this specific moment? Online distance learning accommodates the needs of a growing population of students who are either unable or prefer not to participate in traditional classroom settings. These learners include individuals who cannot physically attend traditional classes, individuals who cannot find a specific class at their preferred educational institution, individuals who live in remote areas, individuals who work full-time and can only study during or after work hours, and individuals who prefer independent learning. In order to participate in an online course, students need to possess a computer, internet access, and the determination to succeed in a non-traditional learning environment. Online courses provide a very efficient method of providing courses without any constraints of time or location, allowing convenient access to education from any location and at any time. Students view the online environment as a convenient method to integrate education into their busy schedules. The flexibility of being able to participate in a course from any computer with Internet access,

at any hour of the day or night, is a major incentive for many modern students. Online learning is the educational process that takes place using the Internet. It is widely recognized as "e-learning" and is also referred to by various terms. However, it is important to note that online learning is actually a subcategory of "distance learning," which refers to any learning that takes place remotely instead of in a traditional classroom environment.

- **Correspondence Courses:** Radio or television transmission is used to communicate information.
- **Tele-courses:** Information is conveyed by radio or television transmission.
- **CD-ROM Courses:** When the student interacts with passive computer information
- **Online Learning:** Internet-based courses are available in both synchronous and asynchronous formats.
- **Mobile Learning:** We utilize technical devices such as mobile phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and digital audio players (such as iPods and MP3 players).

A NEW PARADIGM FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

The emergence of online learning is precipitating a substantial transformation in our perception of education and the acquisition of knowledge. Education is currently experiencing a revolution, shifting from the traditional way of delivering lectures and having students passively participate to a more participatory and collaborative approach. This involves a cooperative endeavor between students and instructors to create the learning experience actively. The instructor's role is shifting from being an authoritative figure who teaches knowledge to becoming a facilitator who offers direction and support.

CONSTRUCTIONS

This viewpoint argues that individuals actively produce original knowledge through their interactions with their environment. This strategy is distinguished by its student-centric approach, enabling active student participation

in the process of designing their own learning experience. This technique empowers youngsters to actively engage in their learning process instead of simply acquiring and retaining information merely for standardized assessments.

COLLABORATION

As an instructor, your main objective is to design learning experiences that are highly effective from the learner's point of view rather than just delivering and assessing the content that you think they should acquire. Each person who is registered in a course possesses the capacity and obligation to both teach and gain knowledge. Your job shifts from being the exclusive holder of knowledge to that of a mentor and role model. You interact with students by enabling dialogues and exercises that accommodate their unique learning requirements, ultimately directing them toward the class's overall learning goals.

TEACHING 21ST-CENTURY SKILLS AND THE "4CS" IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Many language instructors around the world may perceive today's classrooms as drastically different from the ones we remember from our childhood. During teacher training seminars and professional development activities, you may have come across debates regarding 21st-century abilities and "new literacies." Our present students need to develop more skills in order to engage actively in the future global society. However, educators who have hectic schedules may require assistance in navigating the uncertainties surrounding these creative talents and concepts or need help in smoothly integrating them into their teaching environment. This study will examine the significant transformations occurring in education in the 21st century, with a particular focus on the 4Cs. Moreover, it will analyze the approaches via which these modifications should influence the teaching and learning of the English language worldwide.

These abilities are widely acknowledged as essential competencies for individuals in the 21st century and have had a significant influence on the worldwide education industry. 21st-

century Skills encompass the fundamental attributes that humans require to effectively traverse the contemporary environment, which is marked by global interconnectivity, technological advancements, and cooperative advancement. The highlighted attributes include originality, adaptability, and the proficient use of capable human resources.

•**4Cs:** Critical Thinking, Innovation & Creativity, Teamwork, and Communication

•**FLIPS:** Both accountability and leadership, Flexibility and Adaptability, Self-direction and initiative, and interpersonal and intercultural communication

•**IMT:** Information literacy, media literacy, and technology literacy

FINDINGS

English has evolved into a global language, and in recent decades, its significance and prevalence have significantly risen. Nevertheless, language instructors persist in employing the same instructional methods as they have in the past. In that case, pupils may need help to fulfill the demands of acquiring English proficiency in the present global context. Prior to this, the learners were not given any opportunities to engage in creative, productive, or constructive activities that would assist them in developing the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Technology progresses on a daily basis as the needs of the current moment evolve. The 21st century is marked by swift technological progress. The widespread availability of these technologies has greatly influenced the teaching of English, making it a contemporary trend to use them for English language training.

Conclusion

Technological advancements have been prevalent in the language classroom throughout several fields of study. English educators should wholeheartedly adopt technology innovations and skillfully employ them as a means to augment their teaching and learning methodologies. The innovative teaching style has been widely adopted and praised by educators, students, and parents alike. The

students demonstrate increased interest and excitement in their pursuit of knowledge through this innovative method. The instruction has shifted its attention from the teacher to the pupil. The main goal of employing modern technology is to actively engage students in language learning and motivate them to develop practical and realistic English language skills. This can be accomplished by creating an educational setting that encourages openness and accessibility of subjects and information through the use of modern technological resources. Within this particular framework, students are actively encouraged and provided with guidance to participate in interpersonal interactions. Regarding future advancement, it is indisputable that multimedia will be vital in the student-centered approach to teaching English in accordance with modern standards. Hence, performing a thorough evaluation of students' English language proficiency will augment the caliber of teaching and students' capacity to employ contemporary educational ideas, leading to enhanced overall communication proficiency. Hence, the present approach to education, devoid of digitalization, is arduous to grasp, unattainable to comprehend, and inscrutable to discern.

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