

ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE: TEACH TO LEARN WITH FUN WITH LATEST TOOLS

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***Abstract:** Today, we are living in an era of globalization. The world has become a global village. We are drenching in a cascade of information. This is an era of Information Explosion. The ubiquitous presence of science and technology has brought in a sea change in the pedagogy of teaching English language. E-Learning has become the latest buzz word. It is really important to infuse technology into education as it creates interest in learning. We are teaching the Generation Z. the classroom environment is completely different from the traditional classroom. The traditional methods which were mainly based on lecturing and rote learning reduced English language learning to mechanical memorization and miserably failed in developing competency in English language among the learners. New technologies like mobile phones, Internet, YouTube, Skype, blogs, tweeter and many more have added stimulus to the process of English language learning. Teachers can teach the learners to become skilled at English Language by using the innovative ELT techniques like dramatics, movie clippings English songs, sports commentaries, advertisements and many more. This paper emphasizes on the scope to make English language learning easy and enjoyable through the latest technological tools. This is done first by giving a brief preview about the traditional ways of teaching English as a second language in India and then the focus is on using the latest Information and Communication technologies (ICT) tools in ELT. Thus this study discusses the availability of various tools of ICT and their incorporation in English language classes. E-learning can be used as a catalyst to enhance English language learning in classrooms. Effective use of the ICT tools can definitely usher in a paradigm shift in the teaching methodologies of teaching English as a Second Language.*

***Key words:** Pedagogy of teaching, E-Learning, Era of Information Explosion, Generation Z, ICT tools, Paradigm shift.*

English Language Teaching (ELT) has tremendously changed over the centuries. When English entered in the curriculum of the Indian students as a compulsory subject, it was a challenge for the English language teachers to teach. They taught it as a 'Knowledge' subject and not as a 'Skill' subject because the main aim was to teach the

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topics from exam point of view, to make the students pass the examinations only. So they adopted the 'Grammar-Translation Method' in which the teacher used to explain every word to students in the native language to make them understand and learn English. This method ignores takes for granted the oral proficiency of the learners but it is still popular with many teachers in modified forms. So many other methods were also used such as bilingual method, direct method, the structural approach etc. In fact, language teachers have ever been in search of a better and more effective method of teaching English language. We are teaching the Generation Z whose expectations and interests are different. Still, we cannot cling on to the traditional ways of teaching. The present century poses the learners with new choices, opportunities and challenges due to the technological evolution in all spheres of life. The motto of this era is to promote "learning to learn" i.e. imparting knowledge of the language in such a way that it enables the students to learn themselves. It becomes the utmost responsibility of the teachers to mould up accordingly to meet the demands of the day. The need of the day is to equip the learners with proficiency in the English language and this is possible only with a proper blend of modern technology that is ICT with teaching of English as a Second language. The digital revolution is challenging the traditional ways of teaching. Traditional teaching and learning paradigms can be remodeled by the integration of e-learning tools into educational practices. E-learning has a diverse range of technological tools and systems that can be utilized by the language teachers to enhance teaching and learning process. This will make learning more interesting, motivating, stimulating and meaningful to the students. Students will learn with a lot of involvement. These tools have been proved as potentially powerful enabling change in education and reformation through the combination of digital technologies and English language learning.

Internet is an interesting source of providing the latest information in the forms of news, articles, course materials, conferences and many more. The teacher can send assignments to the students through e-mails and can also conduct 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.

Schools are linked in a network and work on projects together and prepare materials online. Every school has got its own website. Many interactive software are also available on Internet, free of cost. Spelling Bee is one of the internet resources, which helps the students to spell English words correctly. Grammar Guru is another useful software which helps students to learn grammar. To enhance vocabulary, accent, pronunciation and voice modulation, **YouTube** videos can be used in an ELT classroom. The advantage of using YouTube in teaching English is that it offers authentic examples of everyday English used by people. The teacher can use it as a tool for improving the LSRW skills of the students.

Listening skills can also be enhanced through YouTube as news headlines are available on YouTube. The teacher can ask students to listen to the news and summarize

in their own words. Also, the teacher can provide the news headlines as handouts and instruct the students to put those headlines in order. The teacher can select a part of a movie appropriate to the level of the students and s/he can show those movie clippings to the students. First, s/he can mute the volume and ask the students to watch the movie attentively. Since art and expression are universal, they transcend all barriers of language; students can watch and comprehend the actions in the movie. The teacher can ask the students to frame the dialogues of the movie clippings.

Later, the teacher can ask the students to watch the movie once again with proper sound effects and s/he can ask the students to find out if they had correctly guessed the dialogues. This will improve their creativity, comprehension and speaking skills. Another activity to enhance the speaking skills is that 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 improve their creativity as well as their speaking skill. The teacher can also prepare worksheets on the movie clippings in advance and ask the students to complete those worksheets while watching movie. This can prove to be a good activity to enhance their listening, grasping and writing skills. The teacher can also ask the students to write a paragraph related to the movie as: "If I were the hero/heroine of the movie....."

Twitter is a gift of Technology. It is a social networking application that could help in improving students' English learning process to a greater extent. The teacher can use a dozen activities to engage students in classroom activities and develop a better understanding of concepts. The teacher can select any kind of a story and begin the activity with a story opener which is tweeted to the students for contribution to the story line. Spinning the yarn can be done on-line. Once all twitter network participants have contributed to the development of the story line, the teacher can analyze their works. This will help to improve creativity, structuring, and proper use of grammar.

The teacher can ask the students to select a word and tweet it around the network, instructing them to write synonyms, homonyms, homophones and antonyms of the word. Once all responses are received, the teacher can check them for accuracy and form a list of difficult words for strengthening the vocabulary of students.

The teacher can also conduct debates through Twitter. It can be done with the students on the class twitter network. The topics for debate can be "Home-made food or restaurant foods", "Today's youngsters are useless or used less" "Who motivates the youngsters—parents/teachers/friends and so on.

SMART-BOARDS

Many English language teachers may not be aware of the benefits of smart-boards. This is one of the most effective tools to teach English language. These interactive whiteboards can replace the traditional black and whiteboards since they provide ways to show students everything which can be presented on a computer. This digital screen

allows images from a computer to be displayed on a board. The information can also be modified on the board itself by using a pen or a highlighting tool. Its touch-screen allows the teacher to run the programme just by tapping on the screen. A smart screen can be used for different learning styles. In a smart board, teachers can combine video, audio and web browsing to teach students interactively. Visual learners can observe teaching on the board. Audio learners can have a discussion. Users can even draw, write or wipe out information. Smart boards help teachers to use a student-centered approach to teach language. Language teachers can use it to improve reading and comprehension skills, and to teach grammar and writing. The teacher can use smart board to enhance students' language skills in play way method. For e.g. 'Pictogram' can be played. With young learners spelling races are very popular. Word games are an excellent way of settling classes and revising vocabulary. A teacher can use anagrams or jumbled sentences for the learners or s/he can also ask the synonyms or antonyms or the lexis or collocation words. The teacher can use different colours when writing. The teacher can also display paragraphs with errors and ask the students to edit and proofread them. The teacher can highlight the mistakes using different colors of pens for different categories of errors.

MOBILE PHONES

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. S/he can ask the students to make a photo documentary using the camera function on their mobile phones. 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 and classmates. Instead of taking out a dictionary, every time a student comes across a doubt, it is better to use online dictionaries and translators, and instead of going through volumes of books for a piece of literature, they can find the books online.

Skype provides unlimited possibilities for the teachers and students to correspond with each other anywhere in the world. It provides immense opportunities for the students in an English language class to connect with classes in other countries to practice their language skills. 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 assignments or research projects.

PODCASTING

Today, the students are listening to news clips, music, and video clips via the Web. The teacher can reach to these students in another innovative way i.e. through podcasts. A podcast is a series of digital-media files which are distributed over the internet using syndication feeds for playback on portable media players and computers. Utilizing podcasts in the classroom is very easy. The teacher can download many free

ESL podcasts from the Internet to use in class. S/he can assign a podcast assignment for homework and have a discussion on the topic the next day. The teacher can also assign a news channel through which the student can learn the use of intonation and stress. Variety is the spice of life and that's exactly what these terrific podcasts give us— spoken English in an assortment of settings. Language learning can be made full of fun and excitement. Podcasts in English.com is a comprehensive English language learning podcast series with programmes for beginners, intermediates and upper intermediates. There are also podcasts for those who need to learn business English.

Listen to English aims to help the English language student improve their speaking skills and enhance their vocabulary. The format is very simple and deserves a round of applause, with a host who speaks engagingly for about five or six minutes on a particular topic.

There's something for everyone here, in a podcast series for all experience levels. We can choose from four levels of learning to match our needs – absolute beginner, beginner, intermediate and advanced. The podcasts are presented by two hosts who also act out different scenes. Once a scene has been performed it is repeated at a much slower speed.

The next section of each podcast provides some culturally relevant information. This is followed by a focus on vocabulary and phrases, and definitions of some of the words the listener has just heard. The concluding section of each podcast covers grammar. These English language podcasts are conducted at a moderate pace. To hone the fine language skills of students to perfection Splendid Speaking podcasts are available. They are designed for the advanced language learners who can speak reasonably good English. The podcasts offer a fascinating approach to learning the language. Each lesson features interviews and discussions with non-native English language speakers. The recordings also include expert feedback about their performances. The topics range from the serious to the silly and light-hearted and are conducted at normal speed. Listening to real, natural-sounding conversations is a superlative supplement to classroom and textbook learning. This familiarizes the students with the pace of the language and some of its idioms and common expressions. These English language podcasts are accompanied by transcripts and vocabulary notes.

Blogging has become popular, especially in the area 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. A teacher should respond to student posts quickly, writing a short comment related to the content or grammar aspect.

S/he should also ask questions to create interest and stimulus for writing. Students should be encouraged to post their homework on the blogs. English has turned into a universal language, a lingua franca. Its presence and value in the world has expanded

enormously. But, if language teachers teach as they had been teaching earlier, then the purpose of learning English Language may not be achieved in the present era of globalization. With changing needs of the hour, technology is developing by leaps and bounds. We require to keep pace with the latest developments. We are in the 21st century and it is the age of technological advancement. Technology is being viewed more as an integral part of the learning activity, and as a tool by which skills are transferred to learners. As far as learning is concerned, practical learning is more effective than theoretical learning. Theory and practice in second language learning can be matched together by the use of modern technology. Thus it becomes mandatory to integrate technological tools to aid English language teaching. Educational institutions should modernize their technical instruction capabilities by using new equipments and laboratories for supporting the teaching process. E-learning can be used as a catalyst to enhance English language learning in classrooms. Effective use of the ICT tools can definitely usher in a paradigm shift in the teaching methodologies of teaching English as a Second Language.

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