

# Role of Technology and Activity in Learning English

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## ABSTRACT

*The main objective of this paper is to make our teachers and Learners aware “the role of Technology and activities in learning English”. Learning does miracles when Technology clubbed with activities. As English is our second language, our students should get interest in it. English is a language where all the subjects travel and it is great challenge for English teachers to make the class room interactive. Basically Teaching must contain two major components i.e sending and receiving information. However a teacher tries his/her best to impart knowledge as he/she understood, so any communication methods that serve this purpose without destroying the objective could be considered as good method. The use of good method in Educational institutions has the potential not only to improve education but also to empower the students.*

**Key words: Technology, Activities, Challenge, Interactive, Communication, Potential, Improve And Empower.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a tool of communication. English is an effective tool which helps us to develop our knowledge and makes us to communicate our feelings, ideas and thoughts all over the world. The beauty of the English language lies in the methodology of learning and acquiring it. Present days, students need to expertise their English Language and communication skills, irrespective of their educational standards, especially communication skills which are interwoven; Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing skills. The excellent language proficiency for present day aspirants has become a necessity to meet the global competition and it is forcing them to learn the skills. Necessity of skills in our present scenario is essential. Now –a- days Students are interested to use technology and doing activities so they help them learn English skills easily without boring. Due to tremendous progress in information and communication technology, the scenario of contemporary teaching has been entirely changed, and the teacher of 21st century should shed traditional concepts, innovative techniques of classroom teaching and adopt the recent and modern teaching techniques. Jonathan “Necessity is the author of change” True to the saying, since the younger generation needs change, a new approach could be adopted to enhance the learning and teaching process of English language. Conventional ways of teaching alone cannot give the student much scope towards improvement of English language and communication skills. If the traditional, technological aspects and activities are clubbed, the results will be effective. Further it is necessary

to know the student's interest, enthusiasm and understanding of the tools applied so as to enhance their ability and capability.

**English Shift:**

Language is always changing, evolving and adapting to the needs of its users. If English had not changed since 1950, we would not have words to refer to modems, fax machines or cable T.V etc. unless language changes over time is considered dead language. The fact that English changes so much, show that it is alive because English is being changed over the time; speakers of 1500 AD would not have understood an English speaker from 500 AD or the modern day English spoken today. The first written English dates back to 450 AD. Over time it has evolved from the use of "Old English, Middle English", "Early Modern English", to present day "Modern English". These changes are a direct reflection of the era in which the English was spoken and the modern day technology available. Language will never stop changing. It is a fact like everything else in nature. The English language is a work in progress.

**Learning seems useless unless it makes us skilful:**

Globalization has changed the status of English Language. Now, English is no longer a foreign language, it is considered as a universal language. Global Revolution changed the entire scenario of English language in association. i.e. technology which further explores into Net, web, blog etc., The Education system need to take of the non-natives of English Language. Technology is an ever-increasing part of the English language classroom. Today's teachers are developing new and exciting means of integrating language in all aspects with innovative technologies. The main objective of teaching students is to train students for the purpose of practical ability; therefore, it has now become more important to teach students the English language with the help of technologies developed. With the Dawn of up-to-the-minute technology in the field of language teaching, teachers have found new tools to teach English language. Utility of qualitative time is the concept of using technology in ELT. In English, Technology includes computer technology blogs, e-learning, overhead projectors, mobile furniture, language rich classroom, etc,

Teaching English depends on the potential excellence, skills and update knowledge of English teachers. The role of English teacher in present context has remarkably changed because of various factors such as social, cultural, economical and technological developments across the globe. The subject of teaching English at this level is very wide and the difficulties the teacher faces are at large. Due to globalization the world is changing rapidly, hence a teacher has to improve and update knowledge of innovative techniques to meet the demand of changing era. English language teachers must be innovative, imaginative, and resourceful. It is necessary that they should have a thorough knowledge of the subject and adopt new techniques to change socio, economical status of the country.

**Computer assisted language learning (C.A.L.L.):**

Computer assisted language learning is a dynamic and interactive that helps us improving our language skills. Language learning software was first created in 1960, concordance started in 1969, and the artificial intelligence programme specifically designed for language learning appeared in 1976. Computer games for language

learning emerged in 1988, and the e-mail project were used by 1988. The internet knowledge resources were first reported in 1974.

Computer assisted language learning plays a vital role in teaching English at tertiary level. While computer has grown more powerful and multimedia has become more integrated, CALL. The major focus of CALL is on receptive skills. The internet is mainly a reading and listening to audio and video files. Though the limited access of CALL, it reached its full potential.

## II. MULTIMEDIA LEARNING PROCESS

Multimedia is content that uses a combination of different content forms such as

- a) Learning from the picture



I hear and I forget.  
I see and I believe.  
I do and I understand. - Confucius

- b) Blogs:

### **Classroom outside the classroom:**

Blog is derived from weblog. It is a diary or regular opinion columns posted on the internet. In blog, the writer posts diary entry which others can read and comments on it. Web blogging is for learners' autonomy. The blogs used in two main ways in English language teaching. The first, learners' can be encouraged to write and post their blogs. If learners are learning to write journals or engaged in other form of extensive writing in the classroom, is the right place to check their ability of writing. The learners' are asked to post their blogs to create wider and more meaningful audience for their writing. The experience of creating publicly available blogs may be motivating their learners and encourage to develop the new set of writing strategies. The second, the most common in the language learning, the teacher can write the main blog entries, which learners can then comment on them. Even teacher can send assignments or projects to students on the taught topics, by which students can complete the work and send back to teachers. It is very easy for the teacher to access the work through the blog and students can rectify their mistakes so the blog can encourage teachers to control teaching outside the classroom.

### **Benefits of blogs in the classroom:**

There are numerous educational benefits of blogs. They are:

- Highly motivating to students, especially those who otherwise might not become participants in classrooms?
- Excellent opportunities for students to read and write.
- Effective forums for collaboration and discussion.
- Powerful tools to enable scaffolding learning or mentoring to occur.

**Blogs with basic functions:**

## 1. Classroom Management

Class blogs can serve as a portal to foster a community of learners. As they are easy to create and update efficiently, they can be used to inform students of class requirements, post handouts, notices, and homework assignments, or act as a question and answer board.

## 2. Collaboration

Blogs provide a space where teachers and students can work to further develop writing or other skills with the advantage of an instant audience. Teachers can offer instructional tips, and students can practise and benefit from peer review. They also make online mentoring possible. For example, a class of older students can help a class of younger students develop more confidence in their writing skills. Students can also participate in cooperative learning activities that require them to relay research findings, ideas, or suggestions.

## 3. Student Portfolios

Blogs present, organize, and protect student work as digital portfolios. As older entries are archived, developing skills and progress may be analyzed more conveniently. Additionally, as students realize their efforts will be published, they are typically more motivated to produce better writing. Teachers and peers may conference with a student individually on a developing work, and expert or peer mentoring advice can be easily kept for future references and teachers..

**Emerging Social networking:**

Social networking websites are started in 2003, and it is the most popular way to network. In July 2006, for instance, social networking site My Space received more hits than Google (Gefer 2006). Other well-known social networking sites include Face book, Friendsthr, Bebo and You tube. In addition to general social networking sites, there are more specific sites, for instance, myetp allows English language teacher to network. Most social sites have group creation facilities which teachers can use to set up outside class discussion environment (Thelwall 2008) and YouTube and Flicter provide opportunities to improve communication skills as well as language learning. For example, learners can be encouraged to make a video of their presentation and post it in the public domain on YouTube and learners can use sharing sites to find and exchange resources with other learners (Godwin-Jones 2005).

**Wikis:**

A wiki is a website that provides platform for collaborative writing. It is used within a private domain as well as public domain for collaborative. The important feature of wikis is particularly used for language learning which record of all drafts is. This emphasis and focus on the writing process as well as written products. Anyone can change any page or create new page.

**I C T (Information and Communication Technology) in English teaching:**

It has been used in almost all field of life. Searching for information on the Internet, chatting and game playing (often in English) are obvious parts of the lives of many young people in the 21st century. The opportunities that

digital media provide today's language teachers with are enormous. Never before has it been so simple to bring the world into the classroom and have students use authentic materials and participate in real communicative contexts. Many teachers, however, are still afraid of bringing computers and the Internet into the classroom.

**Mobile Phone Assisted language learning:**

Mobile phones are considered as miniature computers because of its additional facilities like texting, gaming, email and recording. Mobile Phone Assisted language learning covers PDAs, iPods and wireless computing. MPALL applications consists of mini lessons of grammar points, closed ended quizzes or games testing discrete language points available through SMS, the web or downloads, the vocabulary lessons, short definitions of words with examples of use, recording lectures for better understanding, dictionary, and a communicative language learning games using actions. The most important features of Mobile Phone Assisted language learning are, social interactivity, context portability, Sensitivity, connectivity, individuality and immediacy. Due to greater opportunities of Computer Assisted Language learning, more and more language learning is likely taking place outside classroom setting.

**Digital age language learning:**

The powerful information and communication technologies available have opened up new social and educational opportunities, creating new needs and requiring the development new skills. 'The development of literacy and communication skills in new online media is critical to success in almost all walks of life.' (Shetzer and Warschauer 1999:171) Digital age language learning, this new concept focuses on the need of adopting new technologies to incorporate digital literacy skills to language curricula.

**Digital age language teachers have four important responsibilities:**

1. To know the availability of the online resources and to make language learning effectively.
2. Context based selections of the resources according to students group and develops suitable activities that will create opportunities for enhancing both language and digital skills.
3. Need to teach the skills necessary to function in the digital age, including reading and writing digital text and communicating and publishing online.
4. Digital literacy skills are done seamlessly and in an integrated manner so that the language course is a coherent whole rather than a collection of loose components.

Some important characteristics of digital age:

1. Authentic resources and activities.
2. Online books.
3. Collaboration and communication.
4. Skills of integration.
5. Just in time learning.
6. Knowledge.
7. Language, style, registers.
8. Multimedia.

9. Online tools.
10. Reading.
12. Text manipulation.
13. Web page publication.

Language skills need to be combined with digital skills in order to be useful in the 21st century. Taking in to account both present and future needs of students will result in curricula and teaching that are up to date, interesting motivating and relevant for digital age.

### **The multimedia language lab:**

Multimedia language lab is developed to respond to students different learning styles. The basic objective of language lab is to focus on sound, text images, videos, animation and interesting context that can be created and accessed from electronic devices such as computer, mp3 players, cell phones, and iPods. By using multimedia in the classroom, the students can better understand the lessons by cultivating self-thinking ability with integration of four skills. Even this is use full for the learner to learn and stimulate retention by recorded classes and presentation.

This tool can develop all four skills of language. Silverman and Hins (2009) found that both English language learners and native speakers who used videos clip to illustrate vocabulary items showed greater improvements in vocabulary knowledge then those who did not receive the multimedia instructions. Even students can improve their vocabulary by playing games and puzzles on computer.

**1. Writing:** on internet, there are many websites where one can get exposure to write article, short stories and poems. Students can write and get responses from peer group on experts for further developments.

**2. Listening:** by listening recorded talks of experts and native speakers, lectures of eminent persons and English sound track movies such as 'Pride and Prejudice' 'water lilies' 'ghost and plays of Shakespeare can enhance listening ability and improve their interest in learning and also by listening native speaker records self-correction is made. It also provides a way to correct responses and learn proper pronunciation, stress and intonation by self-control.

**3. Speaking:** Speaking skills are improved by getting instructions of soft skills and involving oneself in the talk show chart and many more group activities.

A Language laboratory has following facilities to enhance learners skills: online tutorials, teaching materials-audio recording, video recording, computer, LCD, soft skills teaching software, external web location, games and quizzes, tests, interactive teaching tips for common errors and pronunciation, functional grammar, building vocabulary power, group discussion. In this milieu it is time to shed away our post-colonial indignation and get into the right track of learning effective language skills.

### **Audio-Visual aids in teaching English:**

F.M. Noel rightly says, "Good instruction is the foundation of any educational programme. Audio-visual training aids are a component part of that foundation." Teacher takes help of some instructional aides to teach more efficiently and successfully, teaching of English. Prof. C.S. Bhandari opines, "Our aim of teaching English is to impart certain skills without making the process of teaching and learning monotonous."

1. Audio visual aids are effective tool to impart good education. These aids are divided as video, audio and audio-visual Aids-video refers as seeing, audio refers as hearing and audio-visual refers to combination of both. These aids are CD, DVD, tape recorder, e-book, graphics, pictures, charts and are used to create the requisite interest and motivate the students to learn the language. The main purpose of audio-visual aids is to enable the teachers to make his teaching effective and interesting. Good models are presented before the students to teach effectively. In this way it can be said that audio-visual aids direct sensory experience to the students.

#### **Classification of audio-visual aids**

- Bulletin board
- Flannel board/graphs
- Slides film strips
- Epidiascope
- Overhead projector
- Tape recorder/gramophone
- Radio
- T.V. / Video.

One of the most important factors of designing a perfect classroom is the good selection of furniture. We wanted to have such tables and chairs, which allow for an easy and quick rearrangement of the room for different types of learning (frontal teaching, individualized learning, pair study or group work, which makes possible to reach the desired rearrangement of the furniture within three minutes.

#### **Overhead projectors and Interactive White-boards:**

The novels, grammar, historical matters can be visualized in a large screen by the students though animated CD's Online Access etc., Small theatres can be set up in the schools to enact the plays which help the students to analyze without strain the theme, characters purpose, historical background etc., That may be pasted using a CD or pen drive etc., in the interactive whiteboards as it would be useful for references by the future students. They fit better into a learning environment, where innovative teaching and learning with multimedia tools is inevitable. They further facilitate the teachers to structure their lessons, scaffold their collaborative learning which in turn help to develop the student's cognitive skills. It enables their ICT use to be more integrated into classroom, allows text and images to be moved around the board and/or changed, and finally allows work to be saved or to be printed out.

Animated CD's of Shakespearean plays, Chaucer's portrayal of characters, historical plays like Edward II, Henry II enhances their listening skill, reading skill and also improves their span of attention. The cognitive skill is also improved as it helps them to compare their contemporary society and Political System of those.

Using wireless internet and web cameras students learn how to do online video, which enhance communication. In this way, they can share projects and lesson plans, send video emails, and they can also collaborate with each other.

**The Activity Based teaching:**

The activity-based teaching which is an off-shoot of communicative learning can be either indoor or outdoor. If learning is to be full and well-rounded, it must sometimes go beyond the walls. Experience curriculum would definitely foster creative expression in learners. To make learning rich and interesting, short activities need to be included in the learning of language. This gives more scope for listening to English conversations, developing one's own vocabulary and skill of speaking. It gives an informal atmosphere to the classroom, helping the students to come out of their inhibition and be their natural self. It is the prime duty of a teacher to co-ordinate various task-based activities giving room for collaborative learning making the session more an interactive

**Collaborative Learning:**

Collaborative Learning is also known as Collective Learning. In Collaborative learning students feel connected to their peers and that they experience the classroom as a safe, supportive community - not a place of isolation and certainly not a place where they must compete against one another. It has proved itself as a humanistic approach, Group and Pair Work which stimulates the students learn from one and another and it creates powerful bonds between them and makes learn meaningful and fun. Group work Curriculum if introduced, the student's learning process will be 100% success. Here are some group work ways.

**Group work with Assigned Roles:**

One of the key tools in assigning Group work is to ensure that in a group of six or seven students, each member has a specific role or task. In this way, students get to work both as a team, and also independently; each person's role related to the other and have a direct impact on the task being successfully completed. For example, Sylvia Plath, an American Women author, put herself an end to her life. Project can be given to analyze whether Plath's end by herself is correct or not. For this project to be done, the group has to analyze her biography, her attitude towards the society, the people around her, was she pessimistic or optimistic? Assigning roles ensures active participation of all students in the task at hand. Students learn to take responsibility, assist each other and also acquire social skills such as accepting different perspectives and sharing resources. For this strategy to be used effectively, the teacher needs to give clear, precise instructions at the start of the activity and also monitoring each group's progress and supporting any student as and when required.

1. **Leader:** Summarises the task; identifies the different sub-tasks involved and ensures that the task and the instructions have been understood by all the group members.
2. **Recorder:** Records group activities and the ideas of each group member.
3. Acts as the spokesperson for the group.
4. Time keeper scheduling.
5. Makes sure the work area is left tidy.
6. Acts as a timekeeper for timed activities.

**Conflict Manager:**



Resolves any conflict that arises during the group work. The roles can also be rotated on a regular basis to allow every child to experience different responsibilities. At the same time, keeping the groups constant during a unit could help in promoting a sense of belonging and identity.

### **The Jigsaw Method**

The Jigsaw is a powerful strategy for studying narrative material. It helps students and teachers effectively cover large amounts of study material in comparatively lesser time. It is also a useful tool, for those of you with larger student numbers, to use in your classrooms.

In this method, students are divided into groups –for example, into groups of 4 members each. The content or study material is also divided into those many parts, i.e., in this case, 4 parts; each part has to be handled by one student in the group. This group is called the 'Home Group'. The teacher should ensure that each student has sufficient material to study the concept.

Once each student has gone through the material on his/her part of the concept, 'Expert Groups' are formed, comprising students from all the groups handling the same part of the content (for example, all members of the different Home Groups who are handling part 1 become one Expert Group). They discuss the concept and share what they have learnt so that their understanding gets refined. After this, students go back to their original Home Groups and each student shares the understanding of his/her part of the concept with the other members of the group which enables the responsibility to learn part of the material and teach it to others, and to learn the material that others teach him/her. The teacher may also ask groups to give a presentation to the whole class about what they have learnt together.

### **Brainstorming:**

Brainstorming is a quick and handy way of generating ideas for later connection and reflection. During a brainstorming session, students share all the ideas that come to mind regarding the concept or topic under discussion. We can use Venn diagram, Spider Diagram, etc., to capture the ideas and facts presented by the students. Fluency and quantity are important components of brainstorming. Brainstorming can be done individually on paper or in a group, orally or on the board. It is important to set the following expectations for brainstorming. All ideas are to be accepted without criticism. No put downs, either in voice or body language, are to be allowed. Students should try to build on their own and others' ideas to i.e. listen also to what their peers say.

### **Storytelling:**

Effective storytelling is one of the key ingredients to successful lesson, especially for young learners. This is a skill that demands high energy, variations in volume, pitch tone, facial expressions, gestures and even perhaps movement around the class from the teacher. Some of the key tips to keep in mind while storytelling is:

The teacher should be as animated and dynamic as possible, for the students to listen, enjoy and understand the story.

The storytelling should be interactive —the teacher should involve the children in the process, by asking them to make suitable actions, repeat keywords, etc.

While narrating, the teacher should frequently stop and ask open-ended questions to ensure that the students have understood. At this point, teacher can also engage the children by giving them real-life examples that are similar to the context of the story.

In collaborative learning, it is through the talk, the learning occurs. Hence talking or sharing of ideas play the seminal role in this type of learning. It not only increases interest among participants but promotes critical thinking.

To highlight these creative and innovative methodologies, the teaching and learning experience of a poem can be as taken as an example.

**Skill Focus:** Listening Skill, Creative Skill, Writing Skill,

### **Sylvia Plath -The Hanging Man**

1. By the roots of my hair some god got hold of me. I sizzled in his blue volts like a desert prophet.

The nights snapped out of sight like a lizard's eyelid: A world of bald white days in a shade less socket.

A venturesome boredom pinned me in this tree. If he were I, he would do what I did.

Step 1: (a) The teacher shall read the poem. Students would listen with a purpose. This would sharpen their **listening skill** and also help them learn **the right pronunciation and intonation**.

(b) The teacher can ask the students to read silently.

(c) Make the students write down the new and difficult words (pair work).

Step 2: The teacher now elicits in detail the theme.

Step 3: To make it more clear, the teacher draws pictures or use realia or even dramatization. Drama enables them to cultivate the imagination and enhances their ability to speak clearly and articulately, to express feelings and to convey messages directly and indirectly. Expanding the scope and variety of theatre-based activity is strongly.

e.g. 'A mock teaching session' can be arranged with one student taking the role of the Sylvia Plath and others taking the role of desert prophet, lizards, etc., (Group activity).

Step 4: Feedback

(c) Recitation of poem by the students.

(d) Yes/no question.

(e) Appreciation Questions

(f) Group discussion.

### **III. CONCLUSION**

The intension of a learner in the classroom is changed day by day. Credible results can be obtained if the technology and activity way of learning are clubbed because it provides a space in which the facilitation of learning can take place .it primates students motivation and learning interest Specially coming to language learning, the theoretical approach is discouraging and that of practical getting them involved in the language learning .an 'Experience Curriculum' has to be employed so that a perfect learning process occurs. It should be like where the students really understand or make sense of what they have studied. They should also feel

engaged in or 'hooked by' by the ways they have learned. The latter can greatly enhance the former. If this happens, the learning process will be cent percentage effective

In conclusion, It is believed that this process can fully improve learners' ideation and practical language skills which is helpful and useful to ensure and fulfil an effective result of teaching and learning.

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