

E-LEARNING AS A SUPPORT TOOL FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Ms.J.Sasirekha

*Assistant Professor, Department of Science and Humanities,
Dr. N.G.P Institute of Technology, Coimbatore*

Abstract

Use of computers and new technologies has become a crucial part of learning as well as teaching. E-learning today has been a key factor in various industries and teaching is one among them, especially teaching language. E-learning has redefined some strategies and concepts of teaching that have enabled the teaching community to perform better. Therefore e-learning courses have redefined the language teaching practices.

Introduction

Learning or technology in learning has become a buzz in the education industry and today it caters to the needs of modern-day learners. Infusing technologies in classroom learning have added to stimulus and enhanced learner's interaction within the classroom. E-Learning has a vast presence in almost every field. Language teaching is one such field where technology has taken over and improved the ways of learning.

Take for example, the English language. Teachers today use different techniques like movie-clippings, advertisements, commentaries, dramatics and more. Not only it makes the session much more interesting than the old book style teaching but also keeps the learner attentive during the class. E-learning has also changed the perspective of distance learning. The modernization lets the students be equally interactive like someone present physically.

The Teaching Style then (Past Trends)

Language teaching has evolved over the centuries. Earlier the language was taught as a subject rather than developing a skill. The methods used then ignored the development of oral proficiency of the learners. To name a few of the methods that were a part of learning processes in the past include:

- Grammar-Translation Method
- Bilingual Method
- Direct Method
- Audio-Lingual Method
- Structural Approach
- Communicative Language Training

Teachers have been in constant search of more effective and better ways of teaching language.

Current Trends in Language Teaching

Teachers today have realized that the old concept of teachers reigning a class with passive students. Today considering the need of the hour, language teachers today organize a number of conferences and seminars to create a platform where they can keep themselves updated about upcoming ideologies in the language teaching techniques and technologies, keeping themselves professionally updated and equipped with the current trends. Current trends include a proper blend of edification and e-learning tools.

E-Learning Tools and their Use in Language Teaching

A diverse range of technological tools that can be used by capable teachers to enhance learning and teaching situations. These tools make learning more interesting, interactive, meaningful and stimulating for the students. These tools are powerful as they are capable of bringing a change and reform traditional forms of learning. Internet, YouTube, Skype, Twitter, Smart-boards, Blogs and Podcasting are some of the successful tools that have changed the way language is taught.

E-Learning Benefits for Teaching

Teaching is considered one of the best jobs and with the development in technology, these have also become one of the most interesting jobs. Online teaching jobs today are gaining fame and people with an added advantage of e-courses certification are an edge above the rest. Also, if you are willing to teach, but have a regular job you can enroll yourself for an online teaching program where you will be required to give classes once or twice a week. E-learning has let no geographical barriers take away the will to teach or learn. In this era, to grab an e-learning teaching job, you should have an expertise in subject matter and networking. Analyzing the job market in this industry, today there are a number of jobs that require the knowledge of e-learning. Distance education universities, even corporates and offices conduct e-learning modules to train their employees.

Conclusion

The efforts of teachers and technology combined to improve the quality of education and learning attempts to emphasize a number of advantages. Though the use of e-learning is growing in language teaching, there are still certain drawbacks attached to it. Advancement in E-learning extends further possibilities of learning going beyond traditional way of teaching. Easy access to materials, flexible space, time and pace of study and immediate feedback are some of the advantages that make language learning a fun thing to go.

Also, introduction to online teaching adds to the enrichment of learning a foreign language. Overall the advantages are numerous. But talking about the other side, there are some drawbacks that can keep the traditional method at an edge. The creation, preparation and uploading of the material is time-consuming and requires the teachers to put in a little extra effort that is required in the traditional methods of teaching.

References

1. Bracewell, R., Breuleux, A., Laferriere, T., Benoit, J. & Abdous, M. (1998) The emerging contribution of online resources and tools to classroom learning and teaching.
2. Cameron, D. (2002). Globalization and the teaching of 'communication skills'. In D. Block and D. Cameron. (Eds.). Globalization and language teaching.
3. Cox, M.J., Preston, C., & Cox, K. (1999) What Motivates Teachers to use ICT?. Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association Conference. Brighton. September
4. Desforges, C. (1995) (British Journal of Teacher Education? BERJ?)
5. Curriculum in Higher Communication: Challenges & Opportunities.
6. Jarvis, H. (2005). Technology and change in English Language Teaching. Asia TEFL Journal, 7(4), 213-227.
7. Rank Tom, Millum Trevor, WarrenChris. Teaching English Using ICT: A Practical Guide for Secondary School Teachers
8. TEFL Articles: History of English Language Teaching.
9. Thanasoulas, D. 2002. The changing winds and shifting sands of the history of English language teaching.
10. Underhill, A. 2004, April. Trends in English language teaching today. MED Magazine, issue 18.
11. <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/articles/b> <http://www.tewtjournal.org/>