



THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN THE MODERN ERA

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ABSTRACT

The modern era has witnessed tremendous changes in all walks of life and technology has no exemption. Technological innovations in the twenty-first century have brought a drastic change in the lives of human beings. Because of these technological innovations, human beings have achieved a great progress in their respective fields. Due to the new technological innovations, there is a great progress in almost all the fields. In the field of education also, we can witness several changes. These drastic changes have also a great influence in teaching English. It is evident that technology has become a part of teaching and learning. Because of novelty of these technological innovations, the teaching of English has paved way for radical changes. As a result, the modern classrooms have been equipped with the latest technological equipment. Teachers as well as learners make use of these latest innovations to achieve the desired results in their teaching-learning process. The teachers of English can make use of these latest technologies to motivate, encourage and attract the modern learners in grasping the content with utmost attention and concentration. The teachers of English have to make use of the available technology in their classrooms and adopt all the possible novel techniques, methods and approaches in order to make their classrooms lively and dynamic. The learners of English should concentrate more on the content that is being taught in the classrooms by the teachers and make the teaching-learning a fruitful one. The main responsibility is on the shoulders of the teachers to use the material according to the needs and interests of the learners by using the modern technology in the English classrooms.

This paper throws a light on the impact of technological innovations on English language teaching (ELT) in the modern era. First of all, this paper explores the importance of technology in the existing world. Later, this paper also discussed the significance of latest technology in the field of education. Then this paper explores on the use of modern technology in the English language classrooms. Since there have been drastic changes in technology, the main focus of this paper is on the impact of technological innovations on ELT in the modern era. Finally, this paper gives some suggestions to the teachers of English as well as the learners of English to excel in their teaching and learning process.

Key words: English classrooms, learners, novel techniques and approaches, teachers, technological innovations.

Introduction

The twenty-first century has witnessed tremendous changes in each and every field. These changes have a great impact on the entire humanity all around the globe. Technology is the most essential tool in the development of humans' constant progress. Since technology plays a vital role in all fields, there have been many innovations and discoveries. Because of these latest innovations, the modern world has been developing in leaps and bounds. As a result of technology, there have been spectacular changes in all fields. The journey to far off places has been cut down and people can reach any place in the world within hours. Due to the invention of the aeroplanes and bullet trains, the travel time has drastically fallen down and people are travelling with all comforts. Because of the latest technology, treatment for the dreadful diseases has been given and some critical operations have also been successfully done. Technology has also brought tremendous changes in the field of communication. Now-a-days, people all over the world can communicate with others with the help of mobile phones and the internet. Even the scientists have sent satellites to the space and people can see the entire world through television just by sitting at home. Moreover, the modern technology has helped people to reach any place with the help of GPS. Even the burden of labour has been decreased after the introduction of robots in industries and factories.

With the help of the internet technology, people can book tickets and make hotel reservations all around the world. Even the corporate companies can have communication and online meetings with their branches globally and can do online business internationally. With the advent of technology, engineers have designed and built huge and longer bridges over the seas to connect major cities and countries. People are even constructing houses, apartments and huge buildings in a day or two with the help of the available modern technology. Within no time, people can send and receive messages, letters, pictures, videos, documents and so on with the help of the internet. It has also made possible to have driverless cars and solar-powered cars due to the advent of technology. The modern man has

reached the moon and is planning to construct houses to live in the space. Nowadays, just by sitting at home, people can purchase all the necessary items online without going shopping. Even social media has also become a great weapon in the contemporary world to spread news and people's opinions.

Technology in Education

With the advent of the internet technology, there have been tremendous changes in the field of education in the modern era. With the introduction of computers in the field of education, there have been drastic changes in the teaching and learning process. Digital boards and smart boards have replaced the traditional chalk and board concept. Moreover, the concept of e-books has replaced the normal textbooks and even the e-libraries have replaced the normal libraries. Moreover, with the introduction of mobile phones in education, the concept of learning has entirely changed. The modern learners have an easy access to the internet and they are able to use mobile phones or smartphone to retrieve the required information. While using mobile phones, the learners have more autonomy and they can learn things on their own at the time of their own convenience. The learners also make use of some apps that are useful for their learning. The use of the modern technology by the teachers in their classrooms has drastically reduced their burden. Also, it has provided the opportunity for the teachers to make use of computers and overhead projectors to give PowerPoint presentations in their classrooms. Moreover, the teachers can use the internet to extract some useful material for their teaching purposes. Teachers should encourage their learners to use their mobile phones in and outside their classrooms so that they will improve their learning skills enormously. Therefore, the teachers should always make use of the modern technology and encourage the learners to use the available technology to improve their teaching and learning skills. According to Gunuc (2016), "Technology brings real-life situations into classrooms and motivates the students to learn quickly". As Dooly (2015:19) states, "Technology is an integral part of today's society, and therefore raising students' competence in using technology,

teaches them skills that they will need in the future". Furthermore, Rao, P. S. (2018a) states, "Teachers also use technology in their teaching to make the teaching and learning process easier and more convenient. In this process, teachers can interact with students and give them useful information in a short time". This indicates the power and importance of technology in the field of education in the modern era.

Technology in English Language Teaching

The dawn of internet has brought several advantages for both the teachers and the learners of English. The old-fashioned and traditional concepts such as lecture method and teacher-centeredness have entirely been replaced by interactive method, collaborative learning approach and learner-centered approach. The teachers of English have been using the state-of-the-art technology in the classrooms in order to motivate and satisfy the needs and interests of the learners. Moreover, the teachers use the available technology in various ways so that the learners can understand the concept in an easy way. To achieve their goals and objectives, the teachers of English adopt different strategies in their teaching using all the possible techniques.

The teachers of English have been using digital boards or interactive boards while teaching English in the classrooms. As digital boards are user-friendly and save the time of the teachers, most of the teachers are using them to teach English. Moreover, the teachers are also using computers or laptops to give PowerPoint presentations. Also, the teachers are using the available resources on the internet to teach the specific teaching points to the learners to understand and grasp the subject thoroughly. While teaching English, the teachers always download some pictures related to the topic and use them whenever and wherever they are needed. The teachers also show some videos related to the topic so that the learners try to concentrate more on the subject taught. When the teaching goes on by using the latest technology, the learners pay more attention on the topic. Since the learners have a new experience by using the technology in the classrooms and it encourages them to learn

more and more, it really reduces the burden of the teachers. Therefore, the use of Technology in the English classrooms is really a boon for not only the teachers of English but also the learners of English. Let us discuss the benefits of technology in English Language Teaching.

The benefits of Technology in English Language Teaching

It is a well-known fact that technology is very useful for the teachers as well as the learners to develop their teaching and learning skills of English. Without technology, it will become a great problem for the teachers to motivate or influence the learners to learn the language skills. It is only with the advent of the internet, CALL and ICTs, the burden of the teachers has been significantly reduced. Moreover, the learners also participate in the learning activities very actively with proper encouragement and motivation. The following are the benefits of technology in ELT:

- Technology reduces the burden of the teachers in teaching the content.
- It supports teachers to demonstrate the topics with proper illustrations and explanations.
- It encourages the learners to work individually on the given tasks.
- It promotes the learners' analytical power.
- It increases the learners' motivation, encouragement, learning environment and social interactions.
- It provides the teachers and learners with comprehensive input and output.
- It helps learners feel more confident on what they learn.
- It provides learners' autonomy.
- It enhances the learners' learning skills.
- It promotes the learners to perform their tasks with a lot of encouragement and interest.
- It supports the learners in getting the right information in a short span of time.

- It provides interaction between learners and teachers.
- It supports teachers to retrieve the relevant information from the internet.
- It develops the learners to work on their own.
- It helps learners develop thinking skills.
- It helps teachers improve their knowledge through professional development.
- It increases learners' motivation to learn a foreign language effectively.
- It makes teaching and learning becomes more student-centeredness.
- It promotes the learners to learn the language in a learner-friendly environment.
- It enhances the knowledge of the teachers as well as their teaching skills.
- It develops the learners to work with their peers collaboratively.
- It provides the opportunity for the learners to work anywhere and anytime.
- It encourages the learners to work on their own with their mobile devices.
- It supports the teachers to make use of the available data and information retrieved from the internet.
- It brings in the whole world into the classroom.
- It encourages the teachers and learners to read e-books and e-journals.
- It encourages the learners to learn the language skills through CALL and ICTs.

Hence, it is understood that technology is of immense use for the teachers as well as the learners of English.

The Impact of Technological Innovations on English Language Teaching (ELT)

In the present globalized and modern era, information and communication technologies have been emerging colossally all around the globe.

Technology has significantly changed the entire face of the whole world. Furthermore, technology drives both teachers and learners of English to think differently, innovatively and creatively. As technology goes on changing from time to time, it also entirely changes the prospects and learning habits of the learners. The present generation of learners is not satisfied with the traditional way of teaching and the old-fashioned methods of teaching and they are not at all satisfying their needs and unable to meet their expectations. Therefore, technology plays a dominant role in the teaching field and ELT is not an exception. Since technology has a great impact on teaching English, now-a-days a majority of the teachers of English as well as the learners depend more on technology for their teaching and learning purposes. There are many technological devices that are used frequently by the teachers and learners of English.



Fig: Innovative Technology in ELT

The Internet

The internet has brought tremendous changes in the field of education, especially in ELT. Due to the advent of the internet, the teaching and learning of English have become more accessible for both the teachers as well as the learners. The teachers of English have been using the online materials to prepare their lessons and also use pictures and videos while they teach in the classrooms. The teachers have also been using e-books and e-journals to update their knowledge and they also learn the latest trends that are more useful for them to adopt the latest techniques, methods and approaches in ELT. In this context, it is apt to quote Rao, P. S. (2019a) who states, "With the dawn

of the internet technology, there are e-books and the traditional textbooks have become outdated. E-books reach the readers very fast and they are always available online and many among them are free to access. They allow real-time updates so these are very useful both to the teachers as well as the learners to use them with the use of internet". The teachers also use the internet to download some important teaching points that are related to their topics. Similarly, the internet is also more useful for the learners to access the material, learn new vocabulary, grammatical structures, learn the language skills and so on to learn English on their own. By using the mobile phones, the learners use mobile apps so that they will learn English independently anywhere and anytime. Using the internet, both the teachers and the learners send emails, files, folders, reports, assignments. The teachers can send assignments to the learners and the learners can send back the completed assignments to their teachers. Even the teachers send reports to the parents and the school authorities about the constant progress of the learners. Moreover, the teachers can interact with the teachers all around the world and clarify their doubts. Thus, the internet has been very useful for both the teachers and the learners of English.

Computers

With the invention of computers in the twentieth century, it has reduced the work done by human beings. The versatility, power and speed of computers have been dramatically increasing since the invention of computers. Using computers in ELT, the teachers of English are able to teach the learners in an entirely different way. The teachers can search for novel approaches and methods of teaching English using computers. It is possible for the teachers to stimulate and enhance the interests of the learners, increase their level of learning, galvanize their reasoning power, self-controlled instruction, and their efficacy of learning, increase their presentation promptness of presentation and integration of information. Computers are useful to develop and observe the learners knowledge and also to systematize the work done by the learners. The teachers of English use computers to give PowerPoint Presentations in the classroom in order

to involve the learners more on the topic that is taught in the classroom. The teachers of English also use computers to show some pictures and videos to the students and also to get new information and the required data from the internet. Also, the teachers make it possible to clarify the doubts of the students instantly. Computers have reduced the burden of teachers because they can use computers to prepare their lessons, explain the unknown things, give assignments to the learners, enter the data of the learners and send reports to the higher authorities and parents. The learners can use computers to do the homework given by their teachers, write assignments and so on. As computers are very useful in the teaching and learning, the teachers and learners of ELT aptly make use of them.

Mobile phones

The introduction of mobile phones in the field of education has brought radical changes in teaching and learning in the twenty-first century. The learners of English are more interested in using the mobile phones since they are portable and they can carry with them wherever they go. In this regard, Miller (2014) says, "Smartphones are being adopted unprecedentedly by youth and they are potentially the tools for future study technologies". Then Yamaguchi (2005: 57) asserts, "Mobile phone is superior to a computer in portability and some students don't have their own computer". In this connection, Rao, P. S. (2019b) also says, "Mobile phones have brought a great impact upon EFL/ESL learning due to its more convenience of usage and it is otherwise an effective alternative of the conventional teaching". According to the project report conducted by American Life Project and Pew Internet in the USA, they state in their report that 89% of American adults are presently maintaining mobile phones and nearly 47% of the American adults have their own smart phones. Since mobile phones are more convenient for the learners to use them anywhere and anytime, they use them in and outside the classrooms to learn the language skills. Mobile phones also influence a lot even in teaching English also. The modern teachers as well as the learners of English have been using mobile phones for various purposes. It is more appropriate to quote

Rao, P. S. (2018b) who states, "The twenty-first century teachers and learners are more interested in online teaching and learning, virtual teaching and virtual learning and mobile learning due to the fast changes in technology. Therefore, the learners are more interested in learning the subjects with the help of their teachers by learning them on their own using the available portable mobile devices." As the learners can use them on their own, it enhances their knowledge and they can work independently. As a result, the learners develop autonomy in learning the new things. It not only enhances the knowledge of the learners, but also reduces the burden of the teachers. The learners also use mobile phones to do their assignments, send and receive emails and homework. Since mobile phones are useful for the learners in many ways, they play a dominant role in teaching and learning the English language.

Mobile Apps

Mobile apps are very useful for the learners in learning the language in a learner-friendly environment. According to the reports developed around 2010 report that mobile apps are both educational and engaging for children as they are very young at the level of pre-school. In a survey held by the US Department of Education in partnership with PBS Kids discovered that the kids of the age group of three to seven have enormously improved up to 31% of their vocabulary while playing Martha Speak mobile app. Mobile apps also provide an opportunity for the teachers to improve their students' productivity and create new learning environments for them. Furthermore, Rao, P. S. (2019c) stresses, "These mobile apps are useful for the learners in improving the English language skills such as LSRW and to understand the concepts instantly. Therefore, learning English through these mobile apps makes the learner to develop independent learning in a congenial atmosphere." As there are several mobile apps that help the learners improve their language skills immensely, the learners of English use these mobile apps to enhance their not only language skills but also comprehension, vocabulary and grammar. Furthermore, the learners also use mobile apps to consult dictionaries, encyclopedias, thesauruses,

short stories, comics, jokes, riddles and so on. As a result, the learners of English can work independently in the absence of their teachers. Using mobile apps, the learners of English can improve their English independently and learn whatever they wish to develop the language skills of English. Therefore, mobile apps have a great impact on the learners of English in developing the overall skills of the English language. So, the teachers of English should always encourage the learners to use the mobile apps in and outside the classrooms in order to improve their English.

Podcasts

The portmanteau of the words iPod and broadcasting is called podcasting. The name podcasting is given to the publishing of audio which is generally an mp3 file from the internet that is easily downloaded and listened to on any portable mp3 player or on a PC. In the twenty-first century, podcasts have become more popular and they have also become alternative for radios. The learners can listen to them wherever and whenever they want and they can also listen to multiple number of times. These podcasts have become more famous in educational circles, especially in ELT. These podcasts not only provide some additional listening input for the learners but also make the learners to become involved themselves in recording and producing them. There are different types of ELT podcasts such as authentic podcasts, teacher podcasts, student podcasts and educator podcasts that are more useful for the learners. Authentic podcasts are more suitable for the learners of higher level. Teacher podcasts are naturally produced by teachers for their own classes. Teacher podcasts are generally intended to help the learners learn by producing listening content which is not found or available elsewhere. Student podcasts are usually produced by students, but sometimes with the help of their teachers. Students can listen to these podcasts and they really experience the culture and also listen to the lives and interests of other students from all over the globe. Educator podcasts are useful for teachers for their professional development. Podcasts really motivate the learners in developing the English language and they are more beneficial for the students to improve their language skills.

Weblogs

In the recent years, Weblogs have become more popular as language learning tools. They are very much useful in learning the English language. A weblog or a blog is a recurrently updated website which often resembles an online journal. A blog is one of the easiest and quickest ways of publishing the language learning on the World Wide Web. Blogs can be used to display photos and some language learners use them with audio and video. There are several blogs such as the Tutor Blog, the Class Blog and the Learner Blog. The Tutor Blog is completely under the control of a teacher and the teacher uses this blog to post the course information, syllabus, assignments, homework and so on. Sometimes, the teacher can write about his or her life, share reflections about the local culture, target culture and language to stimulate in-class and online discussion. In the teacher blog, the students are merely limited to write comments to the teacher's posts, whereas, the Class Blog is shared with both students and their teacher. It is normally used as a collaborative discussion. Here students are motivated to reflect in more depth, in writing, on themes touched upon in class. In the Class Blog, the students are given more independence and involvement than that with the Tutor Blog. The Learner Blog requires more effort and time for the teacher to moderate and setup, but it is the most rewarding one. The Learner Blog always involves each and every student by giving them an individual blog. This blog becomes the student's independent online space so that the students are encouraged to write about their interests and post their comments on other student's blogs. These blogs are useful for the students to provide them an extra reading practise, to encourage shy students to participate in writing the blogs, to stimulate out-of-class discussion, to encourage process writing approach and to help build a closer relationship between students in class. Therefore, the teachers of English should make use of the blogs to improve the students' writing ability and creativity.

Skype

Skype is used as a powerful tool of communication which allows the users to make

audio and video calls through the internet. It is abundantly used in ELT for various purposes such as conference calls with a maximum of 6 users who are online at a time to conduct interviews online, this facility is really has been a great advantage. Skype has also a chat function which is used for various purposes. The main advantage of Skype is that the user, while calling a person, can send text to another person. The chat function indeed helps the learners to smooth out online, allowing them to briefly acknowledge one other or explain a situation, instead of disconnecting a call. This feature is certainly very much useful for EFL/ESL learners who find speaking is more difficult than writing. Skype is also useful for Screen sharing as the users can share their entire screen or a portion of their screen with the others on the call. This facility is especially more useful to give presentations where one user uses the presentation in full-screen mode whereas the others share their screen. The English language teachers can use this Screen Sharing option to give slide presentations to their students in their classrooms.

Skype is also used for marketing ESL/EFL programmes. Since marketing is maintaining relationships, especially in education, Skype is particularly used to recruit international students. By creating a Skype account, students can call and clarify their doubts with the ESL/ESL staff, just like a normal phone call. Skype is also useful for marketing in conducting pre-arrival orientation tutorials with students. This facility is available not only on a one-to-one basis but also with groups. Skype has become a tremendous technological tool for ESL/EFL educators who often use more sophisticated learning technologies. In the English classrooms, Skype is abundantly used to provide a variety of authentic learning experiences to the learners of English that includes an interview with a native speaker or an author, or an international collaborative project with other classrooms.

Since there have been numerous benefits of technology in the field of ELT, the teachers should always make use of the state-of-the-art technology to make their teaching a successful one to yield better results. There is no doubt that the learners will always learn the language in an entirely different way by using the technology in the

classrooms. As the concept of teaching and learning has taken a new dimension in the contemporary world, the teacher should try to motivate and influence the learners to learn the English language by using the available technology. The learners should follow the teachers and learn English with more enthusiasm and interest. With the help of technology, the learners get more information and gain more knowledge of the English language and learning takes place in a pleasant way. Therefore, the teachers and the learners should make use of the technology profusely so that the aim of the teaching and learning of English will be fulfilled.

Conclusion

In this paper, an attempt has been made to explore the impact of technological innovations on English language teaching (ELT) in the modern era. First of all, this paper has explained the importance of technology in the existing world. Furthermore, this paper has also discussed the significance of latest technology in the field of education. After that, this paper has also brought out the use of modern technology in the English language classrooms. Later, this paper has mainly focused on the impact of technological innovations on ELT in the modern era. Finally, this paper has also given some useful suggestions to the teachers of English as well as the learners of English to excel in their teaching and learning process.

It is a well-known fact that technology plays a dominant role in ELT and there are many technological innovations that are available in the modern era. With the advent of the internet, the teaching and learning have become more convenient for both the teachers and learners of English. The teachers have been using technology to teach English in a novel way by using the existing modern technology such as the internet, computers, laptops, mobile phones, mobile apps, Podcasts, Weblogs, Skype and so on in order to create interest among the learners and make their learning. The teachers of English should always use the available technology in the classrooms to involve the learners towards learning English. The teachers should use the technology properly to teach English in a novel way and in a learner-centered way so that the

learners actively participate in the activities that take place in the classrooms. The learners also should utilize the available technology properly to learn the English language in an organized manner. With the use of mobile phones, the learners should learn the language not only in the classroom but also out of the class at their own convenience. Moreover, the learners should use the available latest mobile apps that are useful for the development of their language skills efficiently. Also, the learners have to learn the new things both from their teachers and their peers to enhance their learning skills. In this regard, Rao P. S. (2018a) asserts, "The application of these technologies in a systematic way helps both the teachers and the learners improve and update their skills". As there are several advantages of the technology, it has a great impact on the teaching and learning of English in the existing world.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author, Dr. Parupalli Srinivas Rao, has a vast experience of teaching English at various levels. He has been specialized in ELT and has authored 10 books and published several research papers related to ELT in various international journals. He has attended several national and international ELT conferences and also presented some papers in them. He has also attended many webinars organized by renowned British based international ELT training institutions such as *Cambridge English, Oxford University Press, Macmillan English, Pearson ELT, English First, IATEFL, British Council and American based Ed Web (USA)*.

He has been on the Editorial board for **twenty** well-reputed international journals. He has also done several prestigious projects including a project done for the *National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE)*, Government of India and another one for King Faisal University, Saudi Arabia. He has attended several in-service training programs in ELT. He has taught English in India, the Republic of Maldives and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for 27 years. At present, he is working as Lecturer in English at English Language Centre, King Faisal University, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He is very much interested in research activities and preparing study material for Undergraduate and Master’s Degree courses. He is

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