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PARADIGM SHIFT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING USING ICT TO GEN Z LEARNERS

D. Sunitha Deva Kumari M.A., M.Phil., (Ph.D) Assistant Professor Department of English Saveetha Engineering College. sunithadevakumari@saveetha.ac.in

> V. Hemalatha M.A., M.Phil., (Ph.D) Assistant Professor Department of English Saveetha Engineering College. hemalatha@saveetha.ac.in

ABSTRACT

Use of ICT (Information and Communications Technology) in teaching and learning of English Language is a booming arena in the current scenario. English language teaching has gone through various innovations over the centuries gone by. ICT has become omnipresence in the current world as its importance is felt in almost all the fields that include health, sports, transportation, textiles, entertainment and so on. With its ever expanding need and importance in the field of Education, ICT does a magic in classroom and propels itself into the various methodology of language teaching. It paves way for a shift from 'teacher -centric' approach to 'student–centric' approach. The tools such as chalk, chart and other such properties are replaced with smart screen, projectors, and LCD screens with speakers, mikes, videos etc. This paper is an inspiration from an online course by IIT Bombay about different approaches and methodologies using ICT in teaching- learning process.

Key words: ICT, Gen Z learners, Student-Centric, Flipped classroom, Innovation, Activities

ICT has become omnipresence in the current world as its importance is felt in almost all the fields that include health, sports, transportation, textiles, entertainment and so on. With its ever expanding need and importance in the field of Education, ICT does a magic in classroom and propels itself into the various methodologies of language teaching. It paves way for a shift from 'teacher -centric' approach to 'student–centric' approach. The tools such as chalk, chart and other such properties are replaced with smart screen, projectors, and LCD screens with speakers, mikes, videos etc. An overwhelming interest among students about the usage of latest technology in classroom made them enjoy the classes which is now not mere lectures but a loads of demonstrative video lectures, pictures, live interviews, online interaction, team work using media and so on.

There are varied approaches that utilize ICT in language teaching in order to create interest in the classrooms. To name few, CALL(Computer Assisted Language Learning), MALL(Mobile Assisted Language Learning), TELL(Technology Enhanced Language Learning), Digital Libraries, Multimedia, Free and open source software, MOOCs, Virtual Classrooms, I-Pad, Padlet, Podcasts and many more. With these remarkable expansions of ICT, Learners are facilitated to Self-learning, Learning from anywhere and anytime.

Gen 'Z' learners are the new generation college students who are born after 2000. These youngsters are grown up with the latest technologies like Smart phone, LCD screens, Projectors, Smart Classrooms. Unlike the previous generation, who struggle even for a simple internet usage, Gen Z learners are facilitated with the improved versions of Apps, OS and Android applications. Teachers face the challenges to teach this generation as they have everything handy in the name of World Wide Network. Gen Z learners lack the attitude to be a passive listeners but want to actively participate using technology. These Challenges can be faced only by incorporating ICT in classroom teaching.

The recent venture by "Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay", in its online course vividly explains the importance of innovation in teaching and learning using ICT in Language classrooms. The innovation that is made in approaches and methods is accepted and followed worldwide. Flipped Classroom, Think-Pair-Share, MCQs, Quiz, Hand raiser, Peer learning, Peer assessment, assessment rubrics, Usage of Screen Cast-O-Matic, MOOC, Spoken- tutorial, Website creation and Padlet creation.

Flipped Classroom:

Flipped Classroom is a novel method of teaching beyond the classroom using LMS (Learning Management System). In this method, teaching materials and other supporting videos are uploaded in the chosen LMS before the classroom session starts. Learners are given a separate 'login id' to access the material before they come to the class. Students can sit before their computer or laptop or Android mobile phone at their feasible time and learn from the uploaded teaching materials and video lectures. This method helps the learners to come well-prepared to the classroom sessions. Learners will be asked to prepare an assignment on what they have understood and submit online. In language learning, Learners can be informed to use Digital Library to read a Novel or Journal or Article before the class starts and can be asked to prepare a "Review".

MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses):

Through MOOCs Teachers can create a list of content as per the syllabus that is supported with relevant videos, Power Point Presentation and Worksheets. This MOOC helps teacher to have an online space where they can have a record of whatever the content they have to teach. It has to be created with a login ID for students through which they can access using the given 'Username' and 'Password'. Once they login, they get the page of the particular topic with the questions to be worked on. It can be used to Create MCQs (Multiple Choice Questions) and Quizzes with the allocated time to participate in. With the time bound activity, students can enjoy their content with this sort of interesting activities, which will indirectly make them more understandable.

Website:

Creating a Web Page is another interesting way of handling the Flipped Classroom which in fact attracts the attention of the learners to involve enthusiastically. Through blogs, learners get a change to chat and share their views to other learners without any limitations. Teachers can create a website and upload all the video lectures and teaching materials in it. Learners can be given the website address to login and learn for the classroom sessions. When the teachers meet the students in face to face classroom session, teachers can only have interactive sessions about the content that they have already prepared outside the classroom.

Padlet:

Padlet is like an online electronic notice board which helps the teachers and learners to share and reflect their views in an interesting way. Padlet has the facility to insert pictures, video files, audio files and lectures. Teachers can create an account of their own and use up to four Padlet screen for free. It has a multiple and interestingly attractive back screen to make the content more colorful. Students are motivated to display their feedback and responses on the chosen topic. While teaching English, 'dialogue writing' activity can be performed using this tool.

Screencast-O-Matic:

Using this application, one can screen record the video easily. It helps to capture our screen lively and also uses the webcam to capture the presenter parallel. In addition to that, it facilitates to use narration to customize the video. It is immensely useful for the teachers whose decision is to handle Flipped classroom for the New generation youngsters. Teachers can prepare a video having their paralleled with the content on what they detail about. They can also share their screen to the learners along with the narration script beside the video. Learners can use this tool to prepare their video presentation in English and upload it in the website of their own.

Think-Pair-Share:

This is a method of handling interactive sessions among the peers. It is an activity that comes after the video or lecture sessions, in which learners are given few questions to "Think" and are invited to "pair themselves" to make a decision and "share" in an online discussion forum. Peer learning is a method of clarifying doubts among the classmates and friends regarding the content. This Peer Learning plays a major role in making the students know more about the target content. In Language classroom, students can discuss or clarify doubts about the topic that was given in Flipped class. Using this activity, students can peer-review their essays and presentation materials.

Assessment:

Assessing the performance of the students is a paramount important when it comes to incorporating ICT in Language teaching. In Flipped classrooms, students are instructed to submit their assignment online within the time limit. After the submissions of their own assignment, learners are expected to peer-review their classmates' assignments. The detailed assessment rubrics must be given on how to evaluate the assignments. This helps the learners to know how to prepare their assignments properly. Thus, assessment rubrics play a vital role in exhibiting what the learners have to exactly furnish in their answer scripts without getting deviated.

Advantages:

The New Generation learners are generally interested in self-learning. The use of ICT in classroom teaching would definitely retain their attention and maintain their involvement. Moreover, Flipped classrooms facilitate the learners with the technology they are savvy with. Since the current generation youngsters like to build a social community beyond the classroom walls, they are tethered to social network often. The following are the advantages in using ICT to the Gen Z Learners:

- Shy Learners can clarify their doubts online where they feel comfortable in asking questions without looking at each other.
- Learners are not time bound. They can learn 'anytime and anywhere'.
- Learners get their feedback immediately once they submit their assignments online.
- They assess peer assignment online which helps them to skillfully handle assessment rubrics in future.
- They are not confined within the four walls of the classroom but they go beyond it.

Limitations:

Though ICT tools are powerful in English Language Teaching and Learning, it has its limitations too.

- Learners are often deviated from the target task due to the freedom of time.
- Learners feel boredom of repeated video lectures and presentations online.
- Since it requires technological support, not all the learners can afford it.
- Learners are inactive since they don't actively participate in teaching-learning process directly.
- Learners tend to involve in plagiarism while submitting online assignments.

Role of a Teacher:

Teachers play a vital role in facilitating ICT in classrooms. Their role is major as they are the creator of the quality teaching material that the students should engage in classroom. They have to spend their time in preparing video lectures, MCQs, Quiz questions and assessment patterns. In order to do this, teachers need to be more updated with the latest technology. But this would be a onetime preparation; they can prepare the content and upload it online. With this their role cannot come to an end they need to have a follow up activities online. They are expected to monitor the performance and assessment of the learners.

Conclusion:

The Teaching Learning process has gone through various changes over the years. The current world expects the students to be highly skillful and knowledgeable rather than just academically strong. ICT -based learning provides an opportunity to students to hone their competence in an international scale. Innovation in language teaching using ICT helps the young learners to face the world with the required 21st century skills.

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