Teaching English Language through ICT to the Engineering Students: A Case Study

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Abstract—In the digital era, ICT plays a significant role for universalizing education, improving the quality in academics and also making the classroom teaching interesting and effective. It extends a new dimension to teaching and learning the language. ICT is a kind of user-friendly for quick learning and understanding. The present paper aims at emphasizing the integration of ICT in English Language Teaching to accomplish objectives of academics as well as technical know-how. ICT helps the engineering graduates to make them potential and employable in the global job market. The study focuses on the challenges, problems and prospects of ICT in English Language teaching among the engineering graduates. The paper also reveals about the importance of incorporating ICT as a compulsory component in teaching and learning process in order to become self-sufficient. Language laboratories, tape-recorders, video-recorders, computers, etc are the devices of ICT to develop language skills in general and employability skills in particular. According to UNESCO, 'ICT is a scientific, technological and engineering discipline and management technique used in handling information, its application and association with social, economical and cultural matters'.

Index Terms— ICT, potential, employable

I. INTRODUCTION

In the age of digitalization, Information and Communication Technology has become one of the basic buildings blocks of modern society. It has been influencing each and every field of the society. The field of education is not even exempted from this influence. It has been influenced in every aspect of teaching and learning of a language, particularly English Language Teaching (ELT) now-a-days. For teaching an English Language, ICT has been accepted as a modern tool or methodology. The acronym ICT constitutes the various tools such as radio, TV, internet, mobile phones, computers, laptops, tablets and many other hardware and software applications have become common for formal as well as informal use. Among them, laptops, computers and mobile phones have become essential in the present education. In the present curriculum, ICT provides ample scope for the development of communication skills and employability skills to the engineering students. Hence, it has been considered that ICT should go hand in hand with engineering and technology.

In the present engineering curriculum, the language laboratories are introduced as a part of ICT. Language Laboratories are for potential job opportunities. The engineering students are involved in variety number of activities by their English faculty in TALL and CALL. TALL is a Teacher Assisted Language Learning where students participate in oral activities according to the guidelines or instructions of the teachers. It helps them to cultivate communication skills which are essential for employability. CALL is Computer-Assisted Language Lab where the students are allowed to go for self-study or learner-study which assist them not only improving their communication skills and also their way of handling electronic gadgets.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mukhopadhyay Rajdoot (2013) in his article 'English Language Teaching Professional Institutions: Problems and Prospects' published in 'Literary Perspectives' Journal stated that the approach of CALL to teaching and learning are guided by a wide array of ICT applications. Its latest manifesto is found in the virtual learning environment and web-based distance learning. The chief emphasis is focused on the learner-centered learning materials so that learners can feel easier in getting the relevant information.

Kumar .S. Choudary and Rajini Singh (2016), in their research article entitled 'ELT and ICT Interface: Challenges for the Teachers' published in The Journal of English Language Teaching (India), discussed that the current education system has fully become the technology oriented. ICT to a large extent is providing to be a panacea for all problems related to education. Use of ICT in ELT

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classroom also creates enthusiasm and motivates the teacher as well as students.

Methodology:

This is a descriptive method. The questionnaires have been administered for data collection. In this case study method, the teachers and students have been chosen as respondents. The questionnaires are separately distributed to the both groups. Intell Engineering College, Anantapur, is chose for the present study. Sometimes the investigators have gone for the personal observation in the general classrooms as well as e-classrooms.

III. ICT DEVICES IN THE COLLEGE

The most of the engineering colleges have English Language Laboratories, E-classrooms and internet. The language laboratories are the chief components in the curriculum. They are set up with the objective of imparting language skills in general and communication skills in particular. Generally the language laboratories are established with well-equipped and high-configuration computers along with internet facility. Besides this, E-classrooms with internet facility are available to the students of engineering graduates to improve their academic and non-academic skills in a quick manner. Each department in the college has a separate e-classroom for convenient and easy access of the students.

Questionnaire to the English Faculty and Engineering Graduates:

The ten faculty members of English and fifty six engineering graduates are distributed the questionnaires, besides personal interaction with the both groups. The following questions related to ICT are asked to the faculty of English.

1. Do you have knowledge about ICT? What are the different ICT components available in your working area?
2. Where do you use those components? Are they prescribed in the curriculum?
3. Are you given proper training in handling of those components? Do you have any technical assistance in the same?
4. How do you feel in teaching through ICT components?
5. Have faced any difficulty in teaching so? If so, mention the problems.
6. Finally, can you prefer traditional classroom or e-classroom better for learning?

The following questions are posed to the engineering students:

1. Do aware of ICT components? What are the ICT components used in your classrooms?
2. Do you have knowledge of operating the computers or ICT?
3. What kind of classrooms (ICT or traditional) do you prefer?
4. Mention the common problems faced in ICT or in Traditional classrooms?
5. Finally, what kind of method is pleased you?

Discussion and Results:

Based on the above questions and personal interactions with faculty of English and engineering students, the responses are drawn and discussed.

IV. RESPONSES OF THE FACULTY MEMBERS OF ENGLISH

Most of faculty members have knowledge over the usage of ICT components. Computers in the language laboratories and digital boards in e-classrooms are well-established with internet facility. The language laboratory is prescribed in the curriculum with the objective of improving the job-related skills. 70% of the faculty satisfied with this kind of teaching. Remaining staff required to have proper training over the same. They expressed that this kind of teaching is easier to the teacher to show the relevant illustrations, pictures and images instantly which help in their teaching so as to make the students learn comprehensibly. They also say that ICT kind of classroom is better than the traditional one where the time is saved. ICT shows the relevant information at hand on the digital boards or on the computers.

Responses of Engineering Students:

The students' community is the amalgamation of the rural and urban backgrounds in the classroom. So some of them have complete knowledge over ICT components where as the least number of students have no idea over them. Even though they are unable to use them, they are able to understand the lessons from ICT. They feel convenient in learning the things very fast. They want the environment with ICT in professional colleges where it provides scope for all round development of a candidate. They expressed that traditional classroom is gone concept where the limited scope for the academic progress. When they are systematically exposed to various kind of ICT, they would be benefitted a lot in their prospective career.

Findings:

1. The ICT is the best method for teaching and learning.
2. The traditional classroom gives limited scope for the academic progress in the present days.

3. Wide collections of illustrations, images and latest or updated information is possible only through this kind of method.
4. The college is well-equipped with internet, computers and digital boards which provide professional and technical kind of learning in the campus.
5. Simple teaching with advanced or updated concepts is qualitative.
6. Only some classes have possibility for ICT. All classes at a time may not be possible as it may be an expensive.

Suggestions:

1. Some of the teachers required training in handling ICT and its kind of teaching.
2. Students are also provided some sort of training in utilizing the benefits of ICT.
3. Every class must be run in ICT. Only each department has one digital class.

V. CONCLUSION

It is a modest on study of teaching English language through Information and Communication Technology in the college. Present classrooms are looking for the modernized devices in teaching and learning process. By taking considerations of the learners and teachers, the best method must be adopted into the practice.

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