

Network-based English Language Teaching: Software Applications

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to bring effective ways of learning through computer-aided leaning of English by means of network software in a digital language laboratory which would help learners hone the various types of skills like listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The article analyses the advantages of English for specific purposes teaching of the third year students majoring in “Computer Science and Engineering” at Vardhaman College of Engineering, Hyderabad by means of the network-based computer teaching package. This paper analyzes the content and framework of the network-based computer teaching package to yield one of the key approaches used to develop this tool and focuses on the implementation. The conclusions made are based on the results obtained over a two-year period (2013-2015) of the network-based computer teaching package use.

Key words: *Communication Skills, ELT, LMS, Network-based Computer*

Introduction

Today, English is a symbol of people’s professional growth for quality in life and education which pave the way to participate in national and international scope. Its colonial origins now forgotten or irrelevant, its initial role in independence India, tailored to high education now felt to be insufficiently inclusive socially and linguistically, the current state of English stem from its overwhelming presence on the world stage and the reflection of this in the national arena. The use of electronic educational resources is one of the dominant trends in

the development of modern educational practice in universities and hence, is directly referred to second language learning. The pedagogical experience being gained currently brings out clearly the didactic potential of modern technology in the intensification of second language teaching.

Skills Development Software

Sonic Visualize Graph (See Figure 1) and digital dual track audio recorder allow learners to analyze their voice as well as graph for accurate pronunciation. In Laboratory activities, it is possible to teach

the difference between every pronunciation using language software. The words are listed according to similar or different sounds where learners can repeat to practice of similar and dissimilar sounds makes the listening clear. It is also important to learn word stress for vivid pronunciation because one word is pronounced differently to mean differently for example, the word **conduct** as a noun the stress is on the first syllable whereas the same word mean different if the stress is on the second syllable as a verb **conduct**. This can be learnt on the digital machines using multimedia software.



Fig. 1 Syllables breakup practice with Sonic Visualiser Graph

In English, pronunciation plays a significant part. If a learner can find incorrect

pronunciation then one also can observe recorded pronunciation and improve it. At this stage learner is given sentence practice exercise as such.

For example, say or listen from your friend the following sentence and find the sentence incorrectly spoken.

'Bob is on the phone'

After listening to the sentence learner find that it was pronounced as /'Bɒbizænð ə 'fə un / and is able to learn correct intonation.

Today technology allows, enables and manages the learning. So it's the time thinking about redesigning, bringing a paradigm shift and redefining the English language laboratories to mark instrumental approach in learning effectively. Roles of teachers, students and technology need to be redefined and readjusted. Most importantly, the teachers must be at least able to match technology with their teaching philosophy, methodology, pedagogical objectives and learners. *Flinnt* is an example of MOOC¹ of the English mobile application. It's an Android app used by teachers and students. It can put massive learning content in one application.

¹ A massive open online course (MOOC) is a free online learning course, to which an unlimited number of students can sign up. Starting in the US, MOOCs have emerged as a major new phenomenon over recent years, and their popularity has spread across the world. Ref. britishcouncil.org



It is an app runs through web based platform to help teachers and learners to communicate and share all kinds of resources among teachers and learners. These files can be links to internet based resources, Documents like PDF, PPT, doc file, excel, audio, video files. Prensky (2001a, 2001b; 2003) differentiates between digital natives and digital immigrants.

“Digital immigrants are those who did not grow up in the digital era (i.e., born prior to 1980), while digital natives are those who have grown up using technologies such as the internet, computers, and smart phones”.

The learners and the teachers are part of learning by educational technology. It is worth noticing that wide varieties of resource are available for effective learning process. Traditional ways of presenting lesson can be complemented by using online tools such as digital voice recorders, digital cameras where teacher can also assess the

learners’ fluency and accuracy of English language during learner’s presentation skills. Online exercises, quizzes, activities can be sent to individual or group of learners synchronously and can be retrieved files once exercise is done to evaluate the work. As an English teacher I have often wondered how technology accelerate leaning but the way students’ enthusiasm for experiencing electronic media as massive impact on leaning. They are highly motivated by tasks connected with internet. It is found that internet has the potential to redefine the scope of the language teaching and learning. It is without doubt that internet promotes and facilitates highly effective and motivating new learning experiences with abundant content. It provides the best tools to catch students’ interest, and it is easier to develop language skills when students are active. They have an opportunity to interact with the people and simulations virtually through internet-enabled mass communication which is a ruling trend in today’s youth.

Survey and Discussion

A survey is made on use and implementing technology enabled learning and teaching English.

Students (50)	Learning Interest				
	Mobile Apps	Software	Digital Class	Webinars	Online Exams
Computer Science & Engineering	42	38	45	32	40
Electrical and Electronics Engineering	38	29	37	28	25
Electrical Engineering	15	18	48	29	16
Information Technology	46	39	47	37	47
Master of Business Administration	45	35	36	39	36

This survey presents findings from the investigation into the effectiveness of practical ESL pedagogical implementation in graduate and post graduate college. The data researcher recollected first, from interviews with college students in Vardhaman College of Engineering, which aimed at identifying practical usage believed to be functional and practical implementation actually possible, and second, from questionnaires with ESL students, which focused on language improvement in the ESL curriculum. The data were analyzed to determine what specific preparation of module is necessary in teaching at undergraduate and post graduate level.

Scope of the Study

The study was geographically limited to Vardhaman College of Engineering, Hyderabad. However, the thoughts are being homogenous with many students of various educational institutes. The college for the

research was Undergraduates and Post Graduate students chosen through simple random sampling, drawn from five (5) Engineering disciplines randomly selected.

Discussion

Language learning software was first created around 1970s, and the artificial intelligence programme specifically designed for language learning appeared in 1980s. Computer games for language learning emerged in 1988 but it was not reachable to second language learners, e-mails were used by 1990. Thus the internet knowledge resources were first reported in 1990 onwards. It is found that learners' showed interest in learning through digital media as worth noticing their reasons at large. Language through digital networking is not new, however, affluent of various modes have come into alive as Mobile Apps, Software, Digital Class, Webinars and Online Exams per se.

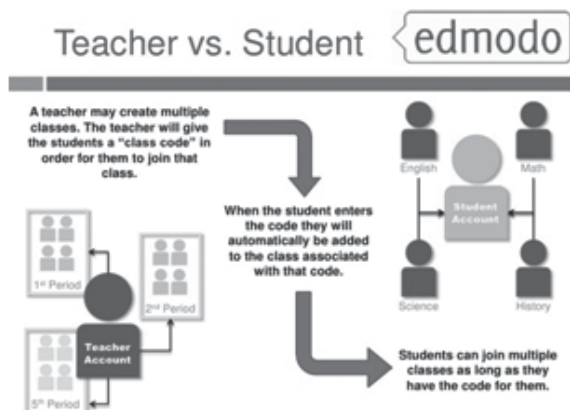
LMS



The simple, fast, and mobile
Learning Management System

Learning Management System promotes flexible learning access for all age group learners. We have been using Byndr as LMS in our institution for 2 years now, found to be worth using with on-campus students. Owing to supply beyond my classroom materials and assignments my original teaching plan sometimes does change, nevertheless, since I have been giving this course over a number of years I have tried using LMS to focus upon the differences and innovative ideas to improve communication skills of my students. As I mentioned use of Byndr, at most, my experiences on the use of internet in the English classroom will be effective and imbedded by LMS paves the way for faster learning.

Moreover, Edmodo offers a wide array of possibilities for efficient learning. Edmodo is a tool which is used by the teachers to examine language skills should be developed. This knowledge of use of Edmodo allows planning homework assignments, model projects, virtual submission, graphical representation, and storing and retiring data for many days. Students use



the LMS when they need to share quickly and get feedback on their work is useful when it comes to understanding and revising lectures and getting ideas for assignments. There are not much awareness programs and activities to facilities students and teachers on the use of LMS.

With the advent of a new system, there will be some problems that ensue among the users. This study found that some colleges are using LMS for uploading materials and courses and instruction, but many teachers restrict themselves to uploading course materials to the course web site and never use the interactive features such as chat, discussion forum, email, and/or virtual interaction.

There is yet some difficulty while missing online presence in the difficult moment. Applying these learning resources many a time require reciprocation and feedback session, in which material found on the internet, is put forward to the group and the students browse and come up with some kind of review points which may be

occasionally debated or discussed in depth. In this research it is found that this missing connectivity is moot point for many teachers and students to use it constantly to scaffold a setting upon which the learners are invited into and to take part in learning virtually. Since the sources and references are multiple in this learning environment, an important part of the learning process is devoted to training the students in different kind of language skills, and also with regards to continuous assessment of learning . This is to emphasize upon one of several methods of possible ways of teaching and learning through the internet as a resource for the language classroom, within the framework of an LMS. In my research, many teachers' concern is to build how the virtual reinforcement might open up for activities that without internet because it might be more difficult to achieve desired results, in the regard, it would recommend to facilitate a cloud platform.

Conclusion

The discussion in the preceding leads us to the conclusion that teachers and learners of ESL may need to rethink critically that blending of the methods and at times divergent perceptions on certain method of language teacher has to be tailored made approach. It is also mandatory to see teaching materials should be more effective for learners. Accuracy and fluency of language learners should therefore be emphasized discovering what the interest of the many students need to be believed for favorable features of their career as well as what environment demands. As such, the

findings discussed above have far-reaching implications primarily for language teachers as well as for authorities in different educational settings, particularly in an Indian context.

Further, emphasis of the teachers on target language knowledge, teacher education programs should invest more on improving teachers' English proficiency if they would like to contribute to the process of training effective teachers. As learners are the main target of language available from the teachers, their richer knowledge of and better proficiency in the language can help learners to overcome their difficulties in communicative skills. Moreover, attending to students' needs will not only mean that teachers should seek to meet the learners' needs with regards to ability and level of learning however, it is evident that creative way of timely teaching with context and content suit the learners is more important than imitative way of textbooks and methods.

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