

Exploring the Synergy Between English Language Teaching and Design Thinking

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ABSTRACT

English language teaching (ELT) was disrupted by digital platforms during the COVID-19 epidemic. A real-world learning environment for language acquisition is provided by Canva, an experience management system. A collaborative platform called Canva offers tools, business letters, proposals, reports, resumes, and presentations. The paper aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020's goals for lifelong learning and high-quality education as well as SDG-4's recommendations for sustainable development. There are changes in the teaching and learning process. In the ELT Classes, Canva is used as a digital teaching tool. The study was a pilot study carried out in an Odisha state private university, and the results are presented in this paper. Students may drag and drop templates, video clips, audios, photos, game presentations, animations, graphics, and other Canva features to learn English while having fun. The challenges of language learning can be addressed through digital solutions. This study aims to use these platforms as pedagogical aids for language acquisition. Additionally, it intends to offer a framework for creating innovative, interactive, and engaging classes that will help learners improve their language proficiency and self-confidence

Keywords: ELT, Design, Canva, Digital, Pedagogy

INTRODUCTION

“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all,” declared by the Global Education Development Agenda and represented in Goal 4 (SDG4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, was adopted in India in 2015. To fulfil all of the goals and objectives (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the entire educational system must be restructured to support and promote learning. One of the key guidelines of the education system, according to the National Education Policy (2020), is “the use of technology in education and learning, the removal of linguistic

barriers, the development of access, the planning and management of education.” It provides a framework for change and modernizes education through the use of technology without affecting Indian traditions and heritage. Industry 4.0 has brought rapid and disruptive changes in the whole education system. The use of new tools and technology in teaching and learning has always been challenging. Multi-pedagogical and alternative approaches are being applied by educators, teachers that involve various digital media and technologies to encourage the learners’ participation (Prajna, 2021). Teachers need a repertoire of pedagogical skills to meet the challenges of diverse learning situations, thereby critically influencing the quality of

curriculum delivery in classrooms towards a larger social transformation.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To use the digital platform as a pedagogic tool for language learning
2. To provide a problem-solving framework for design thinking and ELT

METHODOLOGY

This paper undertakes a pilot study with hundred research participants (50 Faculty & 50 Students) from a multi-sector private university in Odisha to assess the impact of design features in ELT curriculum and find out the usability of the Canva for Education. Qualitative data was gathered through a webinar on Design for Impact. It also includes transcripts from chat and discussions, transcript of video recording of the webinar and feedforward Google form.

ELT AND DIGITAL PEDAGOGY

Teachers, instructors, facilitators and educators must aim to make education more experiential, holistic, integrated, inquiry-driven, discovery-oriented, learner-focused, discussion-based, adaptable, enjoyable (NEP, 2020). A digital pedagogy is the need of the hour. The phrase “digital pedagogy” was coined by combining technological skills, teaching and learning methods, and an understanding of the curriculum development approaches that are appropriate for the learners. Digital pedagogy is effective in supporting, enhancing, and revolutionising the teaching and learning process, providing learners with enriched, diverse, anytime anywhere learning opportunities for learners. It also provides a foundation for learners to engage in constructive learning, in which they dynamically develop and use knowledge in meaningful, intentional, and

significant ways. Digital pedagogy, according to smart classrooms (2008), increases the opportunity for authentic, contextual assessments that assist learning in a digital environment. It helps teachers to stay in tune with the recent trends in teaching and learning. Personalized approaches, intellectual rigour and engagement, global contexts, supportive and collaborative classroom environments, and a clear alignment of curriculum, assessment, and reporting are all qualities that help learners achieve better learning outcomes. It creates a stimulating environment for teaching and learning with ICT technologies to provide 21st-century learners with high-quality, enriched learning experiences. It refers to the use of ICT tools, techniques, and gadgets such as social media, digital media, augmented reality, virtual reality, online games and applications, mobile devices and other technologies evolving from industry 4.0. Trokeloshvili and Jost (1997) believes that showing student text on a student home page encourages students to write and publish, as well as removing mental barriers. Belisle (1996) argued that networked collaboration like using e-mail and sharing files help learners create, analyze, and produce information and ideas more easily and efficiently.

HOW CAN CANVA SUPPORT THE PEDAGOGY, THINKING AND LEARNING?

Design thinking and incorporating design curricula in the ELT context is a new problem-solving approach. The design thinking approach outlines four stages, i.e., empathize with the customer or audience, define the problem, ideate solutions and prototype and test. The real value lies in the interactivity and authenticity of the experience. In this paper, Canva is used as a learning tool. It discusses the concept of design thinking and considers how teachers can implement it in

teaching and learning. Design thinking is a concept that is gaining more and more attention in English classes. This problem-solving approach not only helps learn English, but also transforms the classroom into a space that prepares students to face the important challenges of the world. Design Thinking is a valuable tool for exploring complex and difficult problems, and it is currently being adopted and used to drive innovation by a variety of disciplines and professions outside of design (Bauer and Eagen, 2008; Kolb 1984; Martin 2009; Leavy, 2010). Canva, is used as a learning tool for English language acquisition through content-based learning and higher order thinking. This design-based ELT approach has the potential to promote grammatical understanding through increased collaborative writing practice, systematic thinking, schematization and presentation. In the age disruption, where the importance of human factors is often overlooked in rapid technological change, design thinking is a way to understand, evaluate and test the user experience in a truly empathetic way.

Setting collaborative and cooperative activities, changing roles, promoting student self-management, supporting metacognition, fostering multiple perspectives, and scaffolding learning are some of the pedagogical roles for teachers in a technology-supported classroom, according to

McLaughlin and Oliver (1999). The paper begins two research questions:

- What design features can be used in the English language teaching and learning?
- What is the problem-solving framework in the ELT context?

PILOT STUDY, FINDINGS AND STUDENT VOICES

Design Thinking ELT curriculum has been delivered and, both students and faculty have completed pilot surveys. Findings suggest that participants largely understood navigation design and content design, besides other design-based processes for presentation and collaboration. Data suggested that use of structured design templates, collaboration, and constant practice on Canva might pave the way for more systematic and higher-order thinking in English language teaching and learning. Structured thinking in the process, will lead to original text and language production in the target language.

The pilot study showed how to design for impact in the ELT class. 70.4% of the respondents said design templates helped to generate new ideas, adopt new approaches, acquire new skills and exercise thinking. 88% respondents feel that storyboarding can be used in web and project management.

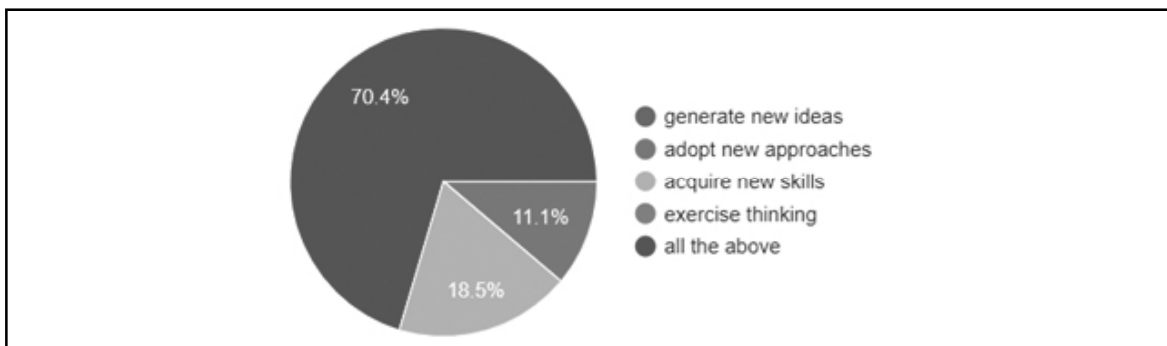


Figure 2: Responses on Design Templates

A review of the pilot study indicates that design thinking activities are a powerful tool for engaging students and developing their creativity and communication skills. Presentations are communication tools that can be used as demonstrations, lectures, speeches, reports, and more. It serves a variety of purposes and makes presentations a powerful tool for persuasion and education.

“Canva allows us to share our designs with thousands of people before we pay for them, which makes it very easy for people to change the designs and provide feedback as needed.

Canva automatically saves all our designs. This is an advantage because we can access the designs and past designs from anywhere. “

”It is an excellent way to create my stories and make perfect plan in my thoughts”

“I can use the tool to design lessons for language class”

“Exploring creative skills in presentation”

“It will help me to enhance the outlook of my blog, social page and student project”

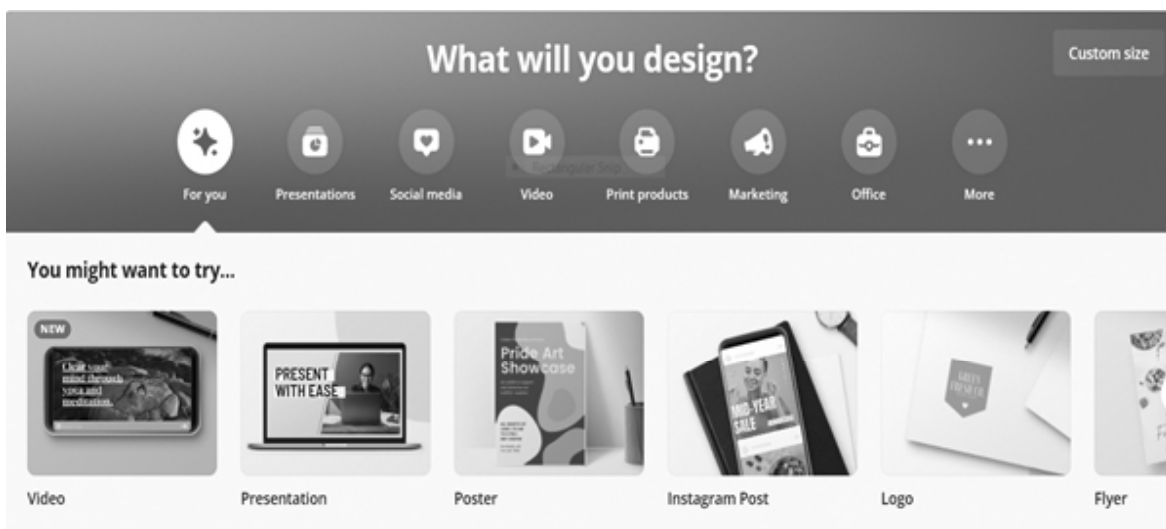


Figure 1: Canva as a design and learning tool

Participants express how mind map is a beneficial tool in ELT education.

“Mind maps are learning tools that allow users to create and share visual representations such as lectures, notes, and surveys. In fact, mind mapping is useful for a variety of educational tasks and can be easily customized to meet the needs”.

“It’s a visual tool that helps in effective problem solving and assessing challenging situations by collating thoughts and ideas. Pictorial

representation leaves a lasting impact on one’s brain. In education field it can be utilized by students and teachers to enhance the learning experience. It can be used by teachers during their lectures by white boarding concepts pictorially and similarly by students while capturing the notes. I, in particular, liked the template shown during the pilot i.e. of a SWOT analysis translated into a Profile Analysis to benefit students. Mind map reflects the analysis of understanding of the candidate about a subject taught”.

“Mind mapping is a beneficial learning tool to help students brainstorm any topic and think creatively”.

“Helps everyone in education to think deeply about that particular topic and also helps to remember concepts with trick”.

“For those seeking alternative and more effective

methods, mind mapping is the right tool”.

“It is very important to enhance creativity and critical thinking”.

“It helps in planning and organising our ideas, information and thinking before we start writing a research paper or article or may be when we get stuck in any project”.

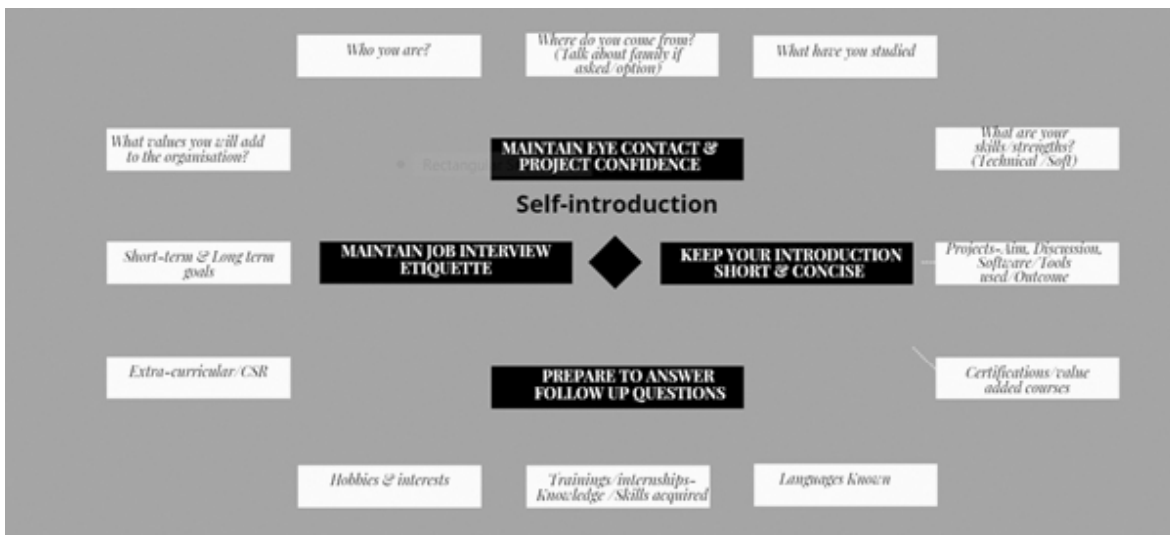


Figure 3: Self-analysis using Canva template

Mind map does provide a platform for shaping one’s ideas into pictorial representations thereby converting the ideas into more informative and easily expressible forms.

Storyboards are helpful when experience sharing, project description, storytelling and more. Students can share their innovation stories using the storyboarding templates. It can include the early stages, initial successes, rise to project objects, stumbling blocks, reinvention and success. It’s an effective way to see the visual and technical requirements to execute the project. The storyboard involves various stages:

- Define the goal
- Brainstorm ideas for execution
- Identify the timeline
- Draw the scenes of the storyboard
- Add description
- Proofread and feedback

The students can draw the scenes of the storyboard using Canva templates. Students can create their own stories and share in public forums.

Step 4: Draw the scenes of the storyboard.



Figure 4: Scenes of the storyboard from Canva

“Storyboarding and other skills like mind mapping and thinking out of the box these will help in our daily life in most of the situations not only in education purpose but also in solving problems”.

Student Portfolios

Students get to know more on digital templates, one-minute video resumes, resume formatting and content. Canva designs guide the students through actionable tips and tricks to ensure they communicate the right message to prospective employers and recruiters.



Figure 5: Digital resume design

The participants of the study find the tool very beneficial for them.

“This tool can help me build my own CV in a refined and presentable form to make it attractive and being a dweller of biological sciences, I can use it to design my research outputs to connect to a larger audience”

“Enhance the quality of future technical presentations and prepare a short digital CV.

The paper outlines the takeaways of the participants. The participants gained new knowledge and ideas on the use of Canva, story boarding, mind mapping, brain storming, design thinking, innovative thinking and learning, new methods of learning, presentation designs.

“Various tools can not only help the new approaches for problem-solving but also enrich the mind and creativity. The total approach is so beautiful that you’d love to work with these various tools and benefit yourself with new ideas, designs and new opportunities. These tools are a must in the present day education. Work which otherwise is monotonous becomes so friendly and attractive that you love to do untiringly. The Canva tool was a new exciting learning”

Thus, the paper proposes a framework to enable, enhance and transform the students and teachers.

Figure 6: A problem-solving framework

The framework has the potential to promote collaborative learning, authentic learning, constructive learning, experiential, holistic, integrated, inquiry-driven, discovery-oriented, learner-centered, discussion-based, flexible and enjoyable learning. The participants believe that the framework enhances their knowledge, skills and attitude. Digital pedagogy transforms the teaching and learning process which leads to

improved outcomes in language acquisition and innovation.

CONCLUSION

This paper has given a new direction to enable, enhance and transform English language teaching and learning. It aims to reinvigorate pedagogy, improve classroom management, change the mind-set, animate slide presentation, get organized, maximise the use of digital tools, design ideas, learn desktop recording and video-making for archiving lessons or creating self-paced courses. Teachers can create experiences even if they don’t have any design experience. Canva gives the ease to use, with exceptional functionalities and ability to use it from anywhere. Flexible design templates automatically create the correct layout for innovation and communication. The tools can be exploited to present new ideas, new findings as well as to present ideas in different templates suiting to different occasions. The focus is on the teacher’s role in promoting active student engagement with the content and with each other in the ELT class.

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