

ROLE OF E-LEARNING IN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY: INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

DOI URL: <https://doi.org/10.36713/epra3001>

e-Learning is the new updating educational trend which is globally used. Asynchronous and synchronous learning is used majorly by teachers and learners. Different modes includes virtual classroom, interactive boards, multimedia, blogs, video conferencing etc. Language labs are the unique techniques personalized for language practices, also an important part of the e-Learning. Language labs are focusing on the phonetics, pronunciation and speaking skills which are emphasized through repetitively listening the content. Video conferencing is the most trending tool which provide synchronous mode and provide run time comments and feedbacks. Video seminar, video lectures and live classes are the updated tools of e-Learning which emphasis on enhancement of pedagogy. Blogs are new trends which help in enhancing the writing skills of the learners and blogs also provide open forum so one can upgrade their knowledge. The ultimate aim of the e-Learning tools are to give emphasis on learning and imbibing the language in proper manner in spite of just passing the relevant exams. e-Learning is opening the new flexible and convenient way to the learners along with their busy schedule, so they can focus on importance of learning of language and skilled language pedagogy. e-Learning tools are helping individuals who are keen to learn languages in convenient way and also providing platform to the budding teachers as well as skilled and trained teachers to share the strategies and views for open discussion. e-Learning tools are also providing platform to those languages too which are almost extinct or about to extinct from main stream.

KEYWORDS: *e-Learning, Video conferencing, Language labs*

INTRODUCTION

Language pedagogy encompass theories and practices related to teaching second, foreign or heritage languages in a variety of institutional, cultural and political context.¹

-Hitomi Endo

e-Learning is the electronic learning which varies from synchronous and asynchronous communication to multimedia and virtual classrooms. e-Learning is now a days emerging as new pedagogy style which facilitates students as well as teachers. This learning style is flexible and can be used according to the need of the learner and teacher.

In India, e-Learning is spreading the wings in different forms like language labs, smart classrooms, virtual

classrooms, blog, multimedia etc. but the country is also having challenges whereas now a days accessibility of technique is too common practice for everyone. Language pedagogy is being facilitated by e-Learning as other subjects but beyond the traditional course work or syllabus oriented learners, only languages are having enthusiastic learners of any age groups. So e-Learning plays an important role in the language pedagogy.

e-Learning is most important part of Blended learning now a days, as it promoted the content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge in the form of TPCK (Technological, Pedagogical and content knowledge). Majorly categorization of e-Learning is based on synchronous and asynchronous mode of trainings.

Synchronous means "on the same time" which provides the immediate feedback and instant messages

such as chats, online virtual classrooms, webinars, custom E learning, e-conferencing etc. Asynchronous means “not on same time” which do not provide real time experience and learner and teacher is not present on same time on same platform such as mails, video lectures, language labs (software) etc. Queries of learner can be solved runtime in synchronous learning.

Blended learning is key concept of using e-Learning tools in the language pedagogy. As blended learning supports online learning strategies along with face to face communication strategies practiced traditionally. Nowadays, blended e-Learning is also become trending search point which deals with blending of e-Learning approaches along with traditional approaches.

ADVANTAGES OF e-LEARNING

e-Learning has many advantages, few of them are as follows-

1. e-Learning is flexible and due to flexibility it is convenient to teacher and learner.
2. Part time learners or full time workers can get help with this along with their day to day life.
3. Anyone can get access of information as everyone is having access to net.
4. Teacher is also benefitted with the flexibility, so they can do give the assignments and collect or correct as per their convenience.
5. Online courses are also enhancing its importance.
6. Web based learning promotes active and independent learning.
7. Video lectures are present which can be seen again and again, while once a lecture is missed in the class that is missed.
8. Asynchronous learning make you able to clear your doubt on runtime, which gives impact of live classroom.
9. Virtual classrooms are less expensive as it save money and time of travelling.
10. e-Learning is enhanced with social platforms and multimedia which connect peoples and give then platform to connect and express their selves.

DISADVANTAGES OF e-LEARNING

Every technology or research is having pros and cons together, it's like two sides of a coin which have advantages at one side and disadvantage at another side. Most common disadvantages are lack of trained learners and teachers. As for using e-Learning one should be techno sevi but improper knowledge of devices may lead to inconvenience and ignorance to the new trends. Security is another issue which can be a disadvantage, as virus, malware and spams are another issue which can cause leak of personal information and malfunctioning of the personal computers.

PRESENT USE OF e-LEARNING TOOLS IN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY

1. Internet

Internet is a kind of virtual world which is comprising synchronous and asynchronous learning modes of e-Learning. It is having wide range of written content like article, blogs, websites, webpages and audio-visual content like videos, conferencing, virtual classroom and live sessions. Teacher can give assignments and receive the assignment whereas it is flexible for both users.

Internet provide 24/7 platform for content knowledge and practice. Learner can enhance their knowledge through internet as world wide data is present on internet and easily

accessible for everyone. Presently the access towards the internet is very common and easy. That made the learning experience enhanced and rich in terms of information and content availability. Internet is the key of rest of e-Learning types as it provides the access to different websites and web pages.

2. Multimedia

Multimedia means “multi = many types of “media=medium” which states for many medium is being used in multimedia. Five key element of multimedia are text, audio, animation, images and video. All of these are the new trends in language pedagogy as they enhance the knowledge of learner in required forms of content.

2.1 TEXT

Texts present online are in the form of blogs, wikis, encyclopedia and webpages on different virtual address. Texts present online provide the knowledge regarding grammar portion, right way of sentence formation, even the use of different synonyms of any language. Text enhance the writing and reading skills of learner which help them to learn that language in right way.

Blogs are the most popular platform presently among everyone. As many writers are writing blogs instead of books and other hard copy publication because blogs are gathering more readers than previous platforms. Blogs are the new discussion areas which are not only helping in transfer of knowledge but also helping in language perfection. Teacher should also promote the blog writing so s/he can enhance the skills of writing the language and reading skills by reading different blogs. Blog writing can be part of class assignment so the students are bound to express themselves on common platform which can lead the discussion and provide open forum. There are free websites are present like blogger.com, blogspot.com, word press or tumblr to host the blogs. Teacher can give assignment to write blog on a topic or self composed poems etc.

2.2 ANIMATION AND VIDEO

Animation and video present online are the new audio visual tool which help in maintaining interest along with knowledge. Video is the audio visual tool which is having variety of content knowledge along with vocabulary, accent, pronunciation, voice modulations etc.

YouTube is most efficient and interactive platform with availability of numerous videos for language learning. One can learn language with you tube as many channels are providing basic and advance classes for the same. If we use term virtual classroom for the videos then it will be more justifiable. Khan academy, utkarsh classes are few of the examples, which provide vocabulary classes and emphasis on how to speak the language. Movies are also available with sub titles which help in understanding the voice modulation and use of appropriate terms for language proficiency. Online live classes are the new trend of virtual classrooms which provide live classroom experience to students, where students can ask their doubts simultaneously.

Animation movies are another option for younger students, which attract the students and help them in language learning. Animation videos enhancing the curiosity and entertainment which focus on “learning is a fun”.

2.3 AUDIO AND IMAGES

Language labs are the common practice of virtual lab where one can learn the skill of language by listening. This lab is cloud network which connect multiple systems at

same time. Some schools are using this in the form of a software while it is also present online. For phonetics, accent and pronunciation training the language labs are commonly used.

Images are also helping in content summarization and images also make the content attractive and easy to understand. Using the images of nature with article written on nature, will enhance the beauty of content and also help in emphasizing the imagination of content.

3. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a social platform which uses multimedia for communication in society. It enhance the language learning while interactions on social platforms. Teacher also can use the social media as platform for promotion of language learning.

Facebook and Whatsapp are the common social platforms which enhance the language proficiency not only reading and understanding of language but also the writing skills. These platform are the best way to express the thoughts, values and discussion on any topic.

Twitter is the another popular text trend of multimedia as social platform, which help in language skills enhancement as worldwide individuals are writing on same platform which help in inculcating the knowledge of various aspects of the same language. Twitter can be used as comparative study platform or debate platform among students. Language teacher can give word of the day or week and can ask students to write is on twitter and ask in their groups for antonym or synonym of that word. Likewise other assignments can be planned so the student is getting better learning experience without burden.

4. SMARTCLASS

Smart classrooms are most abundantly used e-Learning tool in recent years throughout India. The smart classes are not only used for content delivery but also it help in assignment checking, attendance maintenance. It is too flexible and comfortable tool for learner and teachers. Content is preloaded in the software which help the teacher by providing animated videos on relevant topics. Even smart classes are having worksheets which can be given the students directly by simple login to the software. This enhance the productivity of teacher by saving lot of time and learners are flexible and busy with assignments in productive manner. The smart class provide phonetic pronunciations along with animated videos which provide knowledge with enthusiasm. Smart classes not only operated in classes even teacher and student can login beyond class, so teacher can upload the assignment which can be followed by student any time any place.

Interactive whiteboards are the most entertaining tool of smart classroom. Mostly interactive boards used for junior classes for better attainment towards content. As color identification can be made very easy with these boards like red is written in red color while blue in blue color, which help in cognitive learning of the student. Languages are more responsible for daily routine knowledge, basic knowledge of surrounding environment and even the body structure of individual. Here these boards help a lot to language teachers by performing the activities on these boards like – for biology teaching, teacher wants to teach about the digestive system. s/he can upload the diagram of digestive system and can label along with explanations, later s/he can us the same diagram as activity object and can call student for labeling.

Another example of language teacher can be taken, like if s/he is teaching a poem related to mother, s/he can draw a mind map in which s/he can write the mother in center and can call students for writing the different functions performed by mother. That will enhance their language vocabulary and importance of function of mother will be analyzed by students. Language teacher

5. WIKIS

A wiki is collaborative website for sharing informational resources, the main feature of wikis is its editing function that allows users to add, remove and edit resources. Wikis promotes the editing by users which shows the content jointly created by users. Wikis play important role in teaching and learning because the content is always being revised and updated which promotes collaboration of participants. This promotes peer to peer interaction, which facilitates the students to be a source of information at the same time receiver of the information. Teacher can promotes the wikis as this is the platform of reading, writing and critical thinking and analysis skills.

6. PODCASTING

Podcasting is a way of distributing digital audio file over the internet, which can be downloaded on computers, laptops and mobile phones. It can be run as playback by the recipient. Teacher can send his/her audio lecture, which enhance the accent and pronunciation skills of students, as podcasting and students can receive this file as per their convenience. This is advanced way of CD and DVD which was previously used for same purpose. This is like radio broadcasting but it is having control and choice of receiver about when. Means they can use the audio file when and where they want to.

7. MOBILE PHONES

Mobile phones can be used as learning tools as they provide browsing of internet, audio- video tools and almost e-Learning tools. Different assignments can be done with the help of mobile phones such as searching about related information. Even teacher can give assignments related to their journey experience of any place. Student can use camera of the mobile phone and can make documentary or write blog along with sharing of pictures. S/he can post on social media, which lead the language skills.

8. VIDEO CONFERENCING

Video conferencing is the most popular educational trend these days as this is cost efficient. This higher version of video because it prove synchronous learning. It can be used in distance learning and open schools which can facilitate the distant students by providing virtual classroom environment. Video conferencing is also being used by the educators to conduct virtual events like conferencing and seminars where the participants are from around the globe and it's difficult to present physically. The only drawback of video conferencing is difference between the time zones. It is helpful in same time zone only.

CHALLENGES FACED BY e-LEARNING IN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY IN INDIA

India is being globalized recently with a rapid rate but still there is slow rate in facility development for language pedagogy. Our government is aware about this issue and facilitating the population with all possible aspects like easy availability of 4G connections, smart phones, even government is enhancing the rural population about the use of internet and multimedia. Challenges faced by

e-Learning in India can be categorized into cultural, social, literacy rates, gender based. Which can be on variety of number as India is a country of different region, different religion, different languages and language based areas. So this kind of variety also somewhere create an issue with imbibing the new trends so easily.

Somewhere language pedagogy is not as emphasized as other technical subjects. In most of institute, which are good with all facilities of technical subjects but these institutes are also lacking in the facility for language pedagogy.

Few of most common challenges for language pedagogy in context of e-Learning are as below- (in Indian context)

1. Lacking of language labs in most of educational institutes.
2. Lacking of online courses related to language pedagogy.
3. Diversion from e-content to the other entertainment.
4. Browsing is time consuming if not well practiced.
5. Some learners and teachers are not techno sevi.
6. In rural areas computer literacy rate is still too low.
7. Facilities for language pedagogy is not emphasized by many institutions.
8. Importance of language pedagogy is still less evaluated.
9. Mostly institutions are focused on exam qualifying strategies rather than expertization.
10. Skilled and well trained teachers in the aspects are lesser in number in comparison to the requirement.

CONCLUSION

e-Learning is the most recent and updating educational trend in education. In language pedagogy also e-Learning is having its own importance. As we know that language pedagogy is common practice around the world as English is universal language, and English pedagogy techniques are updating with time. Use of the e-Learning tools is need of the hour. It should be emphasized and not only English but also Hindi and other regional languages should equally emphasized. We need to continuously update our pedagogical practices along with globe as we have to stand with the world and to the world. So language pedagogy should emphasized with e-Learning tools. The ultimate aim of the e-Learning tool is to give emphasis on the learning of language and skilled language pedagogy.

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