E-Learning Technologies in English Language Teaching At Tribal Area

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Abstract- Today, E-Learning technology has become a very popular tool in teaching – learning process. It is the need of modern educational system. Actually, E-learning is important in almost each and every field. It stimulates and makes learning –teaching process very interesting. Language teaching and mainly English language teaching is one such a field where E-learning technology has widely used all over the world. Most of the teachers even in tribal and semi –tribal areas use different techniques like movie-screening, movie – clippings, ICT, apps, dialogues, advertisements, commentaries, You tube lectures, dramatics and much more…It creates healthy and interesting atmosphere in the classroom than the old Traditional Teaching Methods. In this paper the researchers try to share the effects of E-learning technology in teaching English language to tribal area students of Surgana taluka from Maharastra state. The study conducted with forty undergraduate students from Arts faculty. The results revealed that E-learning could enhance student's language proficiency and it is also proved that it is helpful in teaching process at tribal area. If teachers introduce learners good learning materials and educational websites and teach them how to use them effectively, the students could improve their language by themselves

Key words: E-Learning technology, teaching, learning, English language

I. INTRODUCTION

English language learners and mainly second language learners have a lot of phobia about English language in the state of Maharashtra. In semi-urban and rural and mainly in tribal areas the learners are not able to use and write English language properly after taking 14 years of education. Fortunately, this modern technology is very much helpful to these students. E-learning or Electronic learning refers to "the use of information technology or the internet for learning activities."This advancement of technology and

the use of internet, E-learning becomes more helpful. Even some scholars believe that it has revolutionized teaching-learning process. In modern era E-learning become easy and affordable source for the learners to access and share knowledge and information. Many researchers have tried to examine the possibility and effectiveness of e-learning into different fields. English language is an international language and our learners as well as most of the population need to use it for satisfying their communicative needs. The researcher feels that the development of technology helps the learners to improve their knowledge of English language more conveniently. E-learning technology is very much beneficial for teachers to use different teaching methods based on the needs of the learners. Many researchers believe that innovative technological methods creates the interest and motivations among the learners and it enable them to access the target language, more input, and interaction opportunities. With this, they could help the teachers to manage their teaching methods in classrooms more effectively and provide

students with more authentic instructional materials. Although it may sound useful, many teachers do not use this technology in their classes in urban as well as tribal areas because of the lack of facilities, lack of time, knowledge and interest of the teachers and students.

In modern times, with the spread of smart phones and internet, students are more willing to use technology and online resources as assets to learn language. Now a day many students have dictionaries on their android systems, which can be helpful for finding the meaning (s) of the new words. It is also helpful for ESL teachers to design special tasks based on the use of different kinds of E-dictionaries. According to Golonka, Bowles, Frank, Richardson, and Freynik (2014 : 70-105), the use of electronic dictionaries is very useful since they facilitate quick search of words, and helps students find the required information very easily. In a survey by Loucky (2005 : 389-416), he found that Japanese students prefer electronic dictionaries as they are more accessible and handy. Previous studies indicated that using technology could help learners improve their language proficiency. For example it has been shown by Koyama et al (2007 : 25) that learners who use technology are better readers and perform better in reading activities. Besides in the new era the educational system try to promote the idea of teaching learners to be independent, rather than teaching them in a directive teachers centered manner; accordingly it is the teacher's responsibility to change the methods based on the needs and demands of the students. (Chhabra : 2012). Further he says, the blogs, twitters, tubes, smart boards and phones can facilitate and enhance both teachers and students' language learning as the use of this facilities are not only

provide the learners with authentic input but also they are gates to receive and share information. Moreover, As Avanaki et al mentioned, it could help students to be more independent as they "have control over the contain, learning sequence, pace of learning, time," etc. Therefore, this study aim at examining the potential of students by using technology to teach English language at undergraduate level for helping them to enhance four language skills (speaking, listening, writing, reading). At the same time, the researcher in the study is interested to find whether the integration of E-learning can enhance students learning as well as the effectiveness of their use of the language. The class was equipped with multimedia facilities such as computers, video projectors and internet and students were encourage to use these technology for learning English as a second language.

THE CONCEPT OF E-LEARNING

The internet has become one of the most important ways to make available resources for research and learning for both teachers and students to share and acquire information (Richard & Haya 2009). Technology based E-learning promotes the use of the internet and other important technologies to produce materials for learning, to teach learner and also regulate courses in an organization. (Fry, 2001). There has been extensive debate about a common definition of the term E-learning. Existing definitions according to Dublin (2003) tend to reveal the specialization and interest of the researchers. E-learning as a concept covers a range of applications, learning methods and processes (Rossi, 2009).

It is therefore difficult to find a commonly accepted definition for the term E-learning according to Oblinger & Hawkins (2005) & Dublin (2003), there is even no common definition for the term. Holmes & Gardner (2006) also made a comment on this inconsistency by saying that there may be many definitions of the term E-learning as there are academic papers on the subject. Dublin (2003) is trying to find a common meaning of the term E-leaning went on to ask the following questions :

Is E-leaning an online course work for students at a distance education? Does it mean using a virtual learning environment to support the provision of campus based education ? Does it refer to an online tool to enrich environment to support the provision of campus based education ? Does it refer to an online tool to enrich, extend and enhance collaboration ? Or It a totally online learning a part of blended learning ? (Dublin 2005) Some of the definition of the term E-learning as given by the different researchers and institutions are

reviewed below. In some definitions E-learning is more than just offering online courses.

For instance Oblinger and Hawkings (2005) noted that E-leaning has transferred from a fully online course to using technologies to deliver part or all of a course independent of permanent time and place. Also the European Commission (2001) describes, E-learning as the use of new multimedia technologies and the internet to increase leaning quality by easing access to facilities and services as well as distance exchanges and collaboration.

TYPES OF E-LEARNING

There are divers ways of classifying the types of E-learning according to Alghatani (2011), there have been some classifications based on the extent of their engagement in educations. Some classifications are also based on the timing of interaction Alghatani (2011) divided E-learning into two basic types, consisting of computer based and the internet based E-leaning. According to Alghatni (2011) the computer based E-learning comprises the use of full range of hardware and software generally that are enable for the use of information and communication technology and also each component can be used in either of two ways computer managed instruction and computer assisted learning. In computer assisted learning, to him, computers are used instead of the traditional methods by providing interactive software as a support tool within the class or as a tool for self learning outside the class. In the computer managed instruction, however computers are employed for the purpose of story and retrieving information to aid in the management of education.

The internet based learning according to Almosa (2001) is a further improvement of the computer based learning and it makes the contain available on the internet, with the readiness of links to related knowledge sources, for example email services and references which could be used by learners at any time and place as well as the availability or absence of teacher or instructors.

Zenitoun (2008) classified this by the extent of such features used in educations, mixed or blended more, assistant mode, and completely online mode. The assistance mode, supplements the traditional method as needed. Mixed or blended mode offers a sort term degree for a partly traditional method. The completely online mode which is the most complete improvement involves the exclusive use of the network for the learning. Algahtani (2011) describes the completely online mode as "Syncronous" or "asynchronous" by the application of applying optional timing of interaction.

The syncrounous timing comprises alternate online access between teachers or instructors and learners or between learners, and the asynchronous to him allows all participants to pose communication to any other participant over the internet (Algahtani 2011 ; Almosa and Almubarak, 2005). The syncrounous allows learners to discuss with the instructors and also among themselves via the internet at the same time with the use of tools such as the video conference and chat rooms.

THE USE OF E-LEARNING AT HIGHER LEVEL :

The development of multimedia and information technologies, as well as the use of internet as new technique of teaching, has made radical changes in the traditional process of teaching (Wang et al. 2007). Development in information technology according to Yang and Arjomand (1999), has generated more choices for today's education. Agendas of schools and colleges have recognized E-learning is having the prospect to transform people, knowledge, skills and performance (Henry : 2001). Also according to Love and Fry (2006) colleges, universities and other institutions of higher learning race to advance online course capability in speedily developing cyber education market. E-leaning has come to be more and more important in institutions of higher educations.

ADVANTAGES OF E-LEANING

The adoption of E-learning in education especially at undergraduate and higher level has several benefits. E-learning is considered among the best methods of English language learning. Several studies and authors have provided benefits and advantages derived from the adoption of E-leaning technologies into schools (Kleing and Ware, 2003 ; Algahtani 2011, Hameed et al, 2008 ; Marc 2000, Wentling et al, 2000 ; Nichols 2003). Some studies give advantage of E-leaning as its ability to focus on the needs of individual learners, for example Marc (2000) in his book review on E-learning strategies for delivering knowledge in digital age noted that one of the advantages of E-learning in education is its focus on the needs of individual learners as an important factor in the process of education system rather than instructors or educational institutional needs. Some of the advantages of E-learning in education are as follows.

1. It is flexible when issues of time and place are taken into consideration. Every student has the right of choosing the place and time that suits him/her. According to Smedley (2010), the adoptions of E-learning provide the institutions as well as their students or learners the much flexibility of time and place of delivering learning information.

2. E-learning enhances the efficacy of knowledge and qualification via ease of access to a huge amount of information.

3. It is able to provide opportunities for relation between learners by the use of discussion forums. E-learning motivates students to interact with each other without fear. Wagher et al (2008) note that E-learning makes available extra prospects for interactivity between students and teachers during content delivery.

4. E-learning is cost effective in the sense that there is no need for the students or learners to travel. It is also cost effective in the sense that it offers opportunities for learning for maximum number of learners with no need of many buildings.

5. E-learning always takes into consideration the individual learners differences. Some learners for instance prefer to concentrate on certain parts of the course while others are prepared to review the entire course.

6. E-learning helps compensate for scarcities of academic staff, including instructors or teachers as well as facilitators, lab technicians etc.

7. The use of E-leaning allows self-pacing for example, the asynchronous way permits each students to study at his or her own pace and speed whether slow or quick. If therefore increases satisfaction and decreases stress (Codone, 2001 ; Amer, 2007 ; Urdan and Weggen, 2000 ; Algahtani 2011 ; Marc 2002 ; Klein and Ware 2003).

The above mentioned advantages of E-learning has been summed up by Holmes & Gardner (2006) by noting that the ability of E-learning to assess the students or learners as they learn and at the same time increasing their experiences in education by way of interactivity suitable to community education, cultural diversity and globalization which eradicating boundries of place and time. To them the most vital characteristics as well as advantage of E-learning in education is that it centers on the students or learners (Holmes & Gardner 2006).

Background of the study :
As Pitler et al observed, "Technology has made it possible for teachers to use different teaching methods based on the needs of learners." Many researchers believe that innovative technological methods foster the interest and the motivation of the learners and enable them to access the target language, more input and interaction opportunities. The tribal students

have a lot of phobia about English subject though they learn it for fourteen years in their school and colleges.

METHOD AND PROCEDURE :

This qualitative action research was conducted in tribal area like Sugana, Nasik, Maharastra with the fourty samples (for 20 male, 20 female) which were taken randomly from Arts faculty 3rd year students from compulsory English course. The age group of these students was 20. The class was taken in the first term on every Saturday for two hours. The students provided different tools and multimedia facilities such as Youtube, E-dictionaries, Apps for grammar and communicative activities, films, dramas to enhance their learning. After watching various things the students were asked to share their ideas and talk about new words and pictures they came across. They were also asked to write down and share their opinions and experiences of it. Their difficulties were discussed and practiced. Though the E-dictionaries the students learn to check the exact pronunciation, the origin, the synonyms, the antonyms, part of speech and the various meanings of words etc. Actually the researcher wanted to examine their interest after providing these facilities because these tribal students have a lot of phobia about English language. It is action research "Refers to a disciplined inquiry done by a teacher with the intent that the research will inform and change his/her practices in the future." (Ferrance ; 2000)

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS :

At the end of the term nearly 23 weeks (46 hours) of use of E-technology and its activities with free internet access; open-ended questionnaire was distributed among the students asking them to give their opinions of English language learning through E-learning technology which was applied in the class for the academic term. Then, the contents o the students' answers to the open-ended questions were analyzed.

RESULTS :

The result revealed that E-learning could enhance students' language proficiency and it is very much helpful in teaching learning process. One more thing was that these students became familiar with English vocabulary, sentence structure, grammar, communication skills and they became fearless while using English. These students were encouraged to use more E-dictionaries to learn the meaning of the new words as well as for collection of new vocabulary. They used to watch dialogues to boost their speaking, listening and writing skills. They try to used it even in their houses through their mobiles.

In this way the students attracted enthusiastically to this method of learning English as they became more independent by using the E-technology. This method provided them good results in English language learning even outside the classroom. They tried to English language very smoothly in their day to day life, too. The reasons of the E-technology or innovative teaching method of learning English at tribal area classrooms helped them to achieve the following things.

1. They became more independent learner.
2. They tried to use English without any fear.
3. They became interested in audio visual aids and trying to use English language enthusiastically in their day to day life.
4. They developed their four basic language skill thoroughly.
5. They collected sufficient vocabulary with proper pronunciations and meanings.
6. They were fully motivated for learning English language.
7. Even outside the classroom they try to use English with high confidence level.
8. They tried to speak English well and taking part in classroom interactions.
9. English became favorite subject after wards.

The use of E-technology in learning English language created enjoyable atmosphere in the classroom. They learnt colloquial through films. They became familiar with access of internet. It also made them familiar with the ocean of knowledge. The findings of the study are appropriate according to Larsen Freeman & Anderson (2011 : 199-218) who mentioned that the use of technology in language teaching could be beneficial for both students and teachers. For teachers it provides "new teaching resources" as they can find authentic written & audio visual material online. They further say, it provides the students with more access to the target language as they can find many authentic materials.

This study tried to shed some light on the benefits of E-technology in teaching English language to tribal students. The experience of the students was so frustrating before this innovative practice. This study found that E-learning could enhance students' language proficiency and facilitate the teaching process which helped the students to learn happily to enrich their knowledge of English language.

CONCLUSION :

E-learning involves the use of digital tools for teaching and learning. It makes use of technological tool to enable learners study anytime and anywhere. It involves the training, delivery of knowledge and it motivates students to interact with each other, as well as exchange and respect different point of views. It eases communication skills and improves

the relationships that sustain learning. In this way the purpose of E-learning according to Ashely Brooks, is to allow people to learn for personal accomplishment or to earn a professional degree without physically attending a traditional university or academic setting. E-learning can be applied for all levels of schooling from primary school to graduate level and is versatile enough to accommodate all learning styles.

If teachers introduce to learners good learning materials and educational websites and teach them how to use them effectively, the students could improve their language by themselves. It is recommended that E-learning is very much useful for tribal area students. But they should provide good infrastructure with multimedia devices for more effective implementation for E-learning activities.

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