Research Paper English

ICTs in Teaching and Learning of English

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays the role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), especially internet in the education sector plays an important role, especially in the process of empowering the technology into the educational activities. Education sector can be the most effective sector to anticipate and eliminate the negative impact of ICT. Technology (internet) in another side can be the most effective way to increase the student's knowledge. Being aware of the significant role of ICT (internet) in our life, especially in the educational activities, education authorities should be wise enough in implementing the strategies to empower ICT in supporting the teaching and learning process in the classroom. ICT is not just the bloom of the educational activities, but also it will be the secondary option to improve the effective and meaningful educational process. The utilization of ICT in education has recently started to appeal the potential and significant progress in language learning. It has become a major issue in education world and has been used from preschool through to university that could facilitate students and teacher in teaching and learning process. The principal objective of this paper is to study the importance of different types of ICT/Media Technologies and to analyze the role of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in English Teaching and Learning.

KEYWORDS Education, English, ICT, Teaching, Learning.

Introduction:-

Importance of education in almost all walks of life has increased with the support of information and communication technologies (ICT). During the past 20 years, the use of ICT has fundamentally changed the working of education. In the current environment-conscious world, the importance of education and acceptability of ICT as a social necessity has been increasing. Social acceptability of information and communication tools is necessary to improve the mobility in the society and increase the pitch for equity and social justice. Education as a qualitative development is not confined within the classroom structure. The modern tools of ICT such as eLearning and online practice of learning and getting information are much sought after by the students as well as by the institutions. India is developing as a knowledge economy and it cannot function without the support of ICT. The gap between demand and supply of higher education has necessitated the governments and institutions to formulate the policies for the better use of ICT. And, in order to bridge the gap, it is necessary to evolve the cooperation between the public and private sectors. The education ICT policy should identify specific ways in which the application of ICT will enhance the educational capacity and the capability of higher education institutions.

The objectives of this study are:

1) The principal objective of this paper is to analyze the role of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in English teaching and learning.
2) To understand the importance of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in English Teaching and learning.
3) To study the importance of different types of ICT/Media Technologies.
4) To heighten awareness of the issue of equity and access to ICTs in our classrooms.

Research Methodology:

The study is descriptive in nature and therefore the information presented is based on secondary data. Secondary information has been collected from various documents such as books, newsletters, reports, magazines, journals, daily newspaper, WWW, as well as from existing literature after examining the practical reference of the data.

ICTs in Teaching and Learning of English:-

With the present infrastructure, class size, availability of teachers, quality of teachers, training of teachers, etc., it is difficult to achieve all the objectives. Further, most of the teachers use Lecture Method which does not have potentiality of achieving majority of above mentioned objectives. The objectives are multi-dimensional in nature, so for their achievement multiple methods should be used in an integrated fashion. At present ICT may be of some use. It is a well known fact that not a single teacher is capable of giving up to date and complete information in his own subject. The ICT can fill this gap because it can provide access to different sources of information. It will provide correct information as comprehensive as possible in different formats with different examples. ICT provides online interaction facility. Students and teachers can exchange their ideas and views, and get clarification on any topic from different experts, practitioners, etc. It helps learners to broaden the information base. ICT provides variety in the presentation of content which helps learners in concentration, better understanding, and long retention of information which is not possible otherwise. The learners can get opportunity to work on any live project with learners and experts from other countries. The super highway and cyber space also help in qualitative improvement of Teaching – Learning Process. ICT provides flexibility to learners which are denied by the traditional process and method. Flexibility is a must for mastery learning and quality learning.

Current Applications of ICTs in Teaching and Learning of English:-

Education has always changed in order to improve the process of teaching and learning. Changes are not to be seen as negative but a positive path towards improvement. As a teacher it implies that we will have to redefine our role, our teaching and our classes. It requires learning how to teach a foreign language (English) trough such ICT tools. Technology dominates our student's lives: Cell phones, iPods, video cameras, text messages, internet, video conferences, blogs, charts, laptops, social networks, emails etc. So it is always better to integrate Information Technology in Teaching and Learning of English.

What do ICTs bring to English Classroom?

1. Motivation
2. Collaboration
3. Participation
4. Enthusiasm
5. Dynamism
6. Authenticity
7. Creativity
8. Sharing knowledge and information
9. Socialization
10. Better attention to class diversity

Advantages of Integrating ICTs in our Teaching:-

1. Students participate, collaborate more. They are more active
2. Students work is of better quality
3. It involves a deep reflection on our teaching and the improvement of our teaching
4. It promotes autonomous learning
5. It increase creativity
6. It help the use of authentic material
7. It creates learning communities
8. It promotes corporative learning
9. It helps students to cope with their different learning rhythms and styles

Different Types of ICT/Media Technologies:-

We can study ICTs them in terms of the technologies, i.e. the delivery systems or in terms of their content. Let us look at the different types of ICTs/Media Technologies first. Delivery systems: Based upon their characteristics, media technologies can be grouped into two categories, namely synchronous and asynchronous (See Table 1.1). Synchronous media require all participants to be together at the same time even though in different locations. Asynchronous ICTs allow for participants in the learning process to be at "different times" and "different places"

Table 1 Types of Media/ICT Technologies used in Education

Synchronous Media	Asynchronous Media
Audio-graphics Audio conferencing, as in a telephone conference Broadcast radio and television Teleconferencing Computer conferencing such as chat and Internet telephony	Audio and video tapes and CDs E mail Computer file transfers Virtual conferences Multimedia products, off line Web based learning formats

Strengths and Weaknesses of ICT:-

Like all innovations that we have come to accept, ICTs also have strengths and weaknesses. We should list these because it is important to know what they are especially if we are to plan and use them effectively.

Some of the strengths of the ICTs include:-

Individualization of learning:

This means that people learn as individuals and not as a homogenous group. ICTs allow each individual to relate to the medium and its content.

Interactivity:

Interactivity is the way in which a person can relate to the content, go forward and backward in the content, start at any point depending upon prior knowledge instead of always in a sequential way.

Low per unit cost:

Per person, ICTs reduce the cost of education from very high to very low.

Distance and climate insensitive:

It does not matter where you are, or how the weather is, you can still access and learn from ICTs.

Can serve multiple teaching functions and diverse audiences:

ICTs, especially the computer and Internet based can be useful in drill and practice; to help diagnose and solve problems, for accessing information and knowledge about various related themes.

High speed delivery, wide reaches at low cost:

There is instant delivery of information.

Uniform quality:

If content is well produced and is of good quality, the same quality can be delivered to the Rich and the poor, the urban and the rural equally and at the same low cost.

Although ICT offers a whole lot of benefits there are some risks of using ICT in education which have to be mitigated through proper mechanisms. They are:

1. It may create a digital divide within class as students who are more familiar with ICT will reap more benefits and learn faster than those who are not as technology savvy.
2. It may shift the attention from the primary goal of the learning process to developing ICT skills, which is the secondary goal.
3. It can affect the bonding process between the teacher and the student as ICT becomes a communication tool rather than face to face conversation and thus the transactional distance is increased.
4. Also since not all teachers are experts with ICT they may be lax in updating the course content online which can slow down the learning among students.
5. The potential of plagiarism is high as student can copy information rather than learning and developing their own skills.
6. There is a need for training all stakeholders in ICT.
7. The cost of hardware and software can be very high.

Conclusion:-

The use of ICT in education not only improves classroom teaching learning process, but also provides the facility of e-learning. ICT has enhanced distance learning. The teaching community is able to reach remote areas and learners are able to access qualitative learning environment from anywhere and at anytime. It is important that teachers or trainers should be made to adopt technology in their teaching styles to provide pedagogical and educational gains to the learners.

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