A Critical Study On English Language Teaching In Virtual Learning Environment

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ABSTRACT : Technology has occupied vital role in making teaching and learning effectively in 21st Century. It has brought multiple series of innovations in educational experiences. Digital natives want to learn the language whereever they can and whenever they want. In order to adapt the changing scenario, facilitators are also building digital literacy skills to nurture their own competencies. Immersion of Virtual Language Environment (VLE) can be considered as one of the best effective tools in English Language Teaching and Learning. Especially, to inculcate as well as strengthen the opportunities to achieve the objectives of language learning. The aim of this paper is to explain few significant VLE allied tools; their advantages and disadvantages in teaching and learning English language.

Key words: Technology, VLE (Virtual Learning Environment), E-learning, Teaching, Learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

Numerous mechanical advancements in education training have come up during twenty first century. Current patterns in type of On-line courses, e-learning innovations, long range informal communication apparatuses and other arising advancements are being famous among the youthful age and further prompts innovation upheld instructive development with full access of data correspondence innovation.Recent program curriculum also promotes technology integration in most of the aspects involved in the teaching and learning process of English language as a second language. The reason behind is the tools demands interest and focus on real-life experiences. There are a variety of digital tools and technologies are available for making various teaching designs and better academic experience.In addition, language facilitators should incorporate technology into current learning environments outside of formal traditional classes. Inquisitiveness towards the language would help the learners to improve knowledgewith a provision in variety of learning environments. Visual language classes are one of the best ways to do so. One of these classroomsis a Google Classroom, can be easily used in all steps of teaching and learning the language for the expectation of better academic performance.

Virtual Learning Environment (VLE)

Clyde, William and Delohery, Andrew (2005) has mentioned in their study a VLE is an online (web) site, where various tools are provided to the facilitator and the student to facilitate learning. VLEs usually work all over the World Wide Web, so users are usually only connected to the Internet to access VLE, although access will be restricted to students registered by the promoter.

Different ways of Virtual Learning:

❖ The instructions, which are offered by the installation of software on a confined computer or server not by manual, are mentioned as Computer Based. The material, which can be suit to the learners need would be customized by this.

❖ On-line based learningcan be relateclosely byproviding computer-based instructions, whereas, in the mentioned, software provides instructions, which can bedistributed to the learner through the medium of Web and the information would get stored in a specified server.

❖ On-linedistant facilitator is one of theway of Virtual Learning in which Instructionsare provided by thefacilitator, who is at variant place wherein the learner cannot experience the physical presence of facilitator. All things being equal, the educator collaborates with the learner who is learning through the medium of Internet.

❖ A combination of conventional instruction through face-to-face delivered by a facilitator and the computer-base or distant facilitator on-line teaching is called Blended Learning. At this point the instruction arrives from two sources; one is from conventional classroom through facilitator and the other is in the forms of virtual learning.

❖ Providing instruction through on-line and the same is instructed by a personcalled "facilitator" is termed as facilitated virtual learning. Here the dew assistant does not give specific instructions to the student;facilitator can greatly assist the learning process of the learner by supplementingeither additional information or guidance. During this process the facilitator can make a contact or communicationto the learner who is at remote place via the electronic media or can make use of web sources.

VLEprovidesbunch of instruction tools which are intended to upgradelearners' experience in a different way by introducingPersonal Computers and the e resources in the process of learning.Educational program planning like dividingsyllabi into various components, which can be assigned and evaluated is one of the major elements of VLE includes. E- support for both facilitator and learner by providing access through electronic communication like e-mail conversations, whatsappchat etc. Internet links to beyond the curriculum resources. A specific Identification will be provided to the facilitator and learner to make use of these virtual learning and teaching platforms. At this juncture a learner can access the material where as the facilitator will have more options to provide the material whatever he/she can generate, can make changes in the curriculum content and can also guidelearner's performance. WebCT,COSE ,Lotus LearningSpace, Blackboard and are few profitable VLE tools, which are available in the market.

Virtual classrooms using the tools like Microsoft teams and Google classrooms are the exceptional examples of the best remote learning environment suits for the learner. Chin, paul(2004) has specified in one of his studies, that access to the on-line learning through the medium of web or internet can be done through set of instructions formed by a particular software. It also requires an executable file in the particular device. Learner can also participate in the activities which are provided through this medium unlike in tradition classroom, but the facilitator and the learner need to login at the scheduled time.Discussed study environments offer the advantages of virtual learning experience in an advanced way to the facilitator as well as to the learner.Google Classroom can be specified asone of the notedmodel of these virtual learningEnvironment.

Advantages in the use VLE:
(i) Information can be delivered and accessed at the convenienceof facilitator and learner
(ii) Encourages peer support among the learners
(iii) Group work can be assigned and assessed by the facilitator easily
(iv)Learner can make Self-assessment on his/her performance, which would lead to enhancement in learning process
(v) Formative / summative assessment can be done by spending less time on it.
(vi)Facilitator and learner communication happens effectively
Study conducted by Filcher, C (2000) tutorials is the various advantages of using VLE in teaching and learning process. Though it is similar to face-to-face teaching it fosters the learning process.
Virtual Learning Environments provides a set of tools to convey the principles of key elements in teaching and learning, but theseelements are delivered through online in a 'virtual' environment. Therefore the use of computer technology does not involve in complete new approach to use it and can utilize the same methods but applied in a different way. Nevertheless the same idea and thought should likewise be applied to online teaching instructions as the facilitator does in traditional teaching. Comparing withconventional face-to-face teaching methods, variouschallenges in language teaching can be solved to a certain degree with the help of VLE, includes:
(a) Increased learner numbers
(b) Increasing assessment marking
(c) Widening participation
(d) Limited teaching resources
The real life benefits are more when compared to the traditional method of teaching. So the VLEs have become more popular and deeply inserted in many organizations. By using these VLEs they can maintain good opportunities and communication links too.

Google Classroom as one tool

Google Classroom is one of the free web service developed by Google for facilitators and learners. It intends to help in simplifying in creation and distribution of content also grading assignments through the medium of internet. According to Cheung, Matthew KO Lee(2011) the objective of the mentioned is to rationalize the process of sharing the content through files between facilitators and learners. Google Classroom has overfifty million users. Facilitators can make use of google classroom as a common place to post materials, assignments, quiz in the specified classroom, whereas the learner can submit the assignments, solve the quizzes shared through google form or quiz or can re use the post at the convenience of the learner. Learners can also use the resources to make proper communication with their facilitators to

enquire on certain doubts which are related to the discussedcurriculum and assigned task. Learners can make collaboration with their peer groups on various activities, assignments, tasks,quizzes and ideas on projects. As the distractions like games and promotions of certain products are not a part of Google classroom, there are fewer chances for the learner to deviate from the assigned topic. Mills and Chandra (2011) have made a clear point in their study that facilitators have noticed remarkable strengthensin the learning bondamong the students, who are leading to a stronger learning community. The study also specified that potential success in other areas related to the school environments should be considered.

Advantages and challenges in use of Google Classroom:

Google suite offers various tools among which Google classroom is one the tool have been used by few of the learners who are related to academic communities; has received and popularized among academia. Though it has been used in the higher education not many are acquainted with this.Fifteen percent of students say so. Another eighty-five percent of students surveyed the impact of Google Classroom, which has been used by the majority of learnersstated that the same facility can be adopted in the nearest future. Very less in number of learners used it in the classroom during lectures and also after the scheduled hours at classroom.

In recent times of the research quality section, learners found a various features which would found to be helpful in the effective use of the platform. In this aspect, learners haveexpressed their views on how Google Classroom made it easy to get everything whatever is necessary for the lesson: "We could find every information we needed was in one place and we were able to deliver tasks and contribute to discussions in this way. "

"It was also available for a variety of purposes (laptop, phone, iPad / tablet)." Learners also specify that they can make use of GCR(Google Classroom), which has changed usual classroom environment in a significant way. Learners like to make the learning environment more comfortable as it enables them to discuss more effectively with the material provided in the classroom, also encourages them to focus on the learning experience. Learners appreciated the specified learning tool which has created an opportunity to them to enable the work or can access the material any time at any point:"Google Classroom is enabled to work on building materials at any time." Mentioned tool also allows them to feel comfortable: "The ability to express ideas when we can do it in class." Few students have also expressed that they can have freedom to get their job done at their comfortable time, because all the learners cannot perform the task at the scheduled time, few of them can take extra time to solve the work or assigned job.By considering the opinions of students, it can be useful at a certain level, who would have the interest in learning moving beyond the traditional methods.

Issues in Accessibility

The accessible issues were also clear. Learners have expressed few apprehensions about the usage of Google Classroom. Those are related to 'streaming' or 'feed' streaming, messages, conversations and the activity related issues. Whenever the facilitator is streaming the messages it appears on the top, whereas it continues for a long period of time learners are unable to check the previous messages because those goes down as the addition continues. Sometimes it's been difficult for them to search the required messages under the chat window. Also they made a point that their the time taken to search the information creates quite disturbance. The same point has added in the study of saforan (2007)

Disadvantages in the usage of VLE

Since VLEs offer much functionality, it is easy to become overwhelmed by them and what they can offer in terms of teaching and learning support. Therefore, the most important starting point is to consider how the technology can help to support the teaching and if not how your teaching can fit into the technology. By considering the following points, the integration of VLEs into teaching will be more successful:
(a) Use VLEs with a clear picture in mind.
(b) Make a perfect plan to use VLE which could support the teaching pedagogy.
(c) Have a clear idea while using technology and then introduce it to the learners.
(d) Provide some time to the learners to get accustom to it.
(e) Create awareness to the learners to understand the advantages of using it.

2. CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that considering the opinions of few facilitators and the learners perspectives Virtual Learning Environment is a mode of platform in teaching and learning English effectively to a certain extent. It can also provides unlimited opportunities to the learners to express themselves at their possible times and way. For example, they may work out and can review the material what they have read though they miss traditional classes. There is a possibility of every student to make use the Google classroom without fear of participating. Ultimately, the Google classroom is a visual learning environment that provides many opportunities for students to improve their performance on the other hand it can also work as one of the best self assessment tool.

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