

IMPACT OF ICT ON 21ST CENTURY ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING SKILLS: A CRITICAL OVERVIEW

Without any shadow of doubts, ICT has a profound and prominent impact on English language teaching skills, personalized learning experiences, enhancing engagement and accessibility. Catering to the individual learners' needs, ICT allows for diverse teaching methods and provides access to a wide range of materials. Besides, ICT tools also accelerate real-life communication environment, interactive learning, as well as development of 21st century skills. Among the most important applications of ICT in the 21st century-multimedia, online platforms, interactive software and multimedia facilitate learning more engaging, motivating and dynamic for the students to learn.

Taking into the viewpoint the factors of accessibility and inclusivity, there is no doubt that ICT enlarges access to learning resources and opportunities, also enable the learners from various backgrounds as well as with diverse learning styles to participate effectively. ICT also fosters interaction with authentic materials and real-world scenario, enhancing practical language skills. It also facilitate among the students critical thinking, problem-solving ability, collaboration and creativity which are the key-concerns for success in the contemporary scenario.

In addition to it, ICT also plays a significant role in the individual instruction which also serves a key aspect to some specific learning needs and paces. It also provides all the teachers with tools to enhance lesson planning, assessment, presentation and feedback. ICT also facilitates to a vast amount of learning materials, comprising grammar guides, language learning websites and online dictionaries. ICT also enables communication with native speakers through video conferencing, language exchange programmes coupled with video conferencing.

It is also a fact that ICT also helps the learners for more flexible and autonomous learning which also enables the students to learn at their own pace as well as according to their own terms. Through all these factors, ICT makes learning process in an easy way and to learn the things with enjoyment and engagement through interactive games, social media platforms and quizzes.

It is a fact that in the 21st century, some ICT tools including online platforms, virtual classrooms offer dynamics and engaging contents, interactive apps are constantly making language learning adaptable and more interactive. These tools are allowing individualized instruction which cater to different learning styles and paces. Further, we come across that ICT plays a vital role to provide access to a vast assemblage of authentic language resources which include videos, audio clips, and online articles giving the students an exposure to real world language use.

In addition to it, ICT also facilitates collaborative learning through virtual whiteboards, learning through online forums as well as project-based learning projects. But, it is also a fact that access to technology and internet can cause a digital divide leading to hindrance of equitable access to quality education. Moreover, the ICT tools are very helpful in analyzing texts, draw conclusions, and evaluate information and fostering critical thinking skills. For the crucial success in the 21st century, the integration in English language teaching equips students with essential literacy skills.

Besides all these advantages, there are also numerous challenges and considerations which are faced by the English learners. The first and the foremost is the high cost of infrastructure which requires big investment. It is because implementing ICT integration in schools is very costly and expensive. The teachers to impart the knowledge of ICT integration should be efficient in handling the technology and integrating it into their day to day practices. To develop a balance while dealing with ICT traditional teaching methods and excessive dependence on technology at the expense of face-to –face interaction and social skills development.

There is no doubt that ICT offers numerous opportunities to enhance English language teaching and learning in the 21st century. By embracing technology strategically and addressing potential challenges, educators can leverage ICT to create more engaging, effective, and equitable learning experiences for all students.

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