

The Latest Trends of Extensive Reading using Software to Develop Communication Skills

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Abstract:-Internet has become the modern trend of imparting the quality based teaching to cater the needs of the students through Multimedia, games, pictures, videos, conferences through online teaching. ICT which includes computer learning, e-learning and web based technologies has created an effective renaissance in the global learning and teaching through easy and affordable way at the click of the button. The study was conducted on a group of 150 students at different colleges to assess their knowledge and the latest trends in computer technology like CALL, computer lab, online presentations and to acquaint with the digital technology of projectors, movies, video clips etc, Extensive reading gives a wide scope to ameliorate the reading strategies using software as a tool to enhance their communication skills through emails, chat rooms and instant messages. The study mainly throws light on various aspects of learning, to use their background knowledge in selecting the right way of acquiring the knowledge and to develop a way of independent reading habits to become lifelong readers.

Key words: ICT, e-learning, digital technology, projectors, emails, chat rooms, video clips CALL etc

1. Introduction:

ICT (Information and communication Technology) has become an effective method of teaching and imparting the digital technology through e-learning, animation, audio and video clips to improve and utilize the inherent skills of the students. The students can share their knowledge, interact with different authentic texts through e-mails, chatrooms and all the available material stored in the web pages.

Multimedia Technology has created a drastic change in the mode of learning and achieved a great success in various fields of education, business, medicine etc., CALL (computer assisted language learning) has a vital role to integrate audio, video and multimedia technology to impart the value based teaching especially for the students of second language learning. Computer mediated communication plays a major role of interaction and combines multimedia technology to assess the basic requirements of the students. Nowadays, texts with printed colour graphics, animations and video clips with latest digital technology makes the reader to engross in the reading material and to have a prolonged interaction with the text and the reader.

2. Statement of the problem:

The main aim of the study reflects on the students motivation and effective ways to develop their background knowledge and make use of the Multimedia technology to have ready access to the globalized world. But most of the students especially from the rural and urban areas are unaware of the Technology and still depend on the teachers. Extensive reading should be promulgated right from the school levels and make students aware of the benefits of reading connected with the digital technology.

3. Significance of the study :

Extensive reading is generally associated with reading large amounts with the aim of getting an overall understanding of the material (Bamford and Day, 2002). [06]

This will create fluent reading and the students can grasp the words automatically and develop their vocabulary skills. Internet has provided the students to read a variety of printed materials and utilize their skills while reading on the main texts from the internet using hypertext. The selected materials stored in the internet through hypertext includes skimming, scanning the relevant information and to summarize the information which suits their taste for reading. Compared to the traditional reading strategies, computer based learning achieved a great success to comprehend the texts and to access the information. The

books selected for reading and the relevant knowledge to understand the texts will not be accessible to the students in the library. Internet gives a ready access, download the materials and read independently without the help of the teachers.

4. Data collection:

The study was conducted on 150 students across rural areas of Moinabad at three different Engineering colleges of PRRM Engineering College, K.G. Reddy college of Engineering and Technology and VIF college of Engineering and Technology. The sample of the study consisted of the students with English as the Second Language and lack reading habits and mainly depend on the ready made materials to pass the Examinations. On the other hand, some of the students have regular reading habits who opt English as the First Language.

They were randomly selected and given a task of reading Extensively from a broad choice of books. The students selected the books of their choice. The workshop was conducted for a period of one week and students were asked questions to read independently and give their suggestions. The students were exposed to computer language lab and were asked to read ebooks, magazines, biographies and comics with picture graphics, and given exercises on phonetics. Language Laboratory has given an ample scope for the students to participate in group discussions, paper presentations, role plays etc, Mock interviews, resume writing etc, and practical oriented sessions were conducted to face interviews and self confidence to seek aspiring jobs. The students were also given a chance to access internet, give suggestions on emails, participate online conferences and to interact with the native speakers and to practice the accent of eloquent speakers online.

The students were asked to watch video clips with audio connected to the system. They were given chance to speak into the microphone and hear what they spoke and animated 3d moving objects with colour flashes and to identify actions and build up the story watching on the sequence of objects. The students actively participated on extensive reading programme connected with the digital technology like reading ebooks, ejournals and animated story books and comics.

The students were exposed to a task of reading a lesson on "The last leaf" by Willaim Sidney Porter from Ist year B.Tech Epitome of Wisdom (PNo. 74- 78) to download and read online. The students actively participated to read and find out the grammatical patterns of articles, prepositions, Nouns, Adjectives etc and to frame sentences on their own. Even the glossary of difficult words were given to facilitate

the students to read without difficulty. The students tried to apply their cognitive skills to understand the texts using the same word as a noun, verb and adjective. For Example the word 'Discuss can be used as a verb and "Discussion as a noun. This way of practical teaching through online reading gave them a chance to use their inherent skills to develop the language effectively.

The objective type questions related to grammar on various aspects such as articles, prepositions, verbs etc were given to create interest and utilize their constructive ideas to grasp the printed materials.

Example :

1. I gave ----- (a, an) one rupee coin to the beggar. (Suitable Article)
2. One should not ----- (Steal, Steel) others belongings (Suitable word)
3. She is good ----- (at, in) running. (Suitable Preposition)
4. It ----- (is raining, has been raining) since 7 A.M (Suitable Tense)

The study revealed the students especially who opt English as First Language fair well in the practical tasks such as paper presentations, role plays etc., The students with English as a second language tend to make some errors in Grammar, spellings etc. Errors are common and the students interest in learning to correct their mistakes is appreciable.

At the end of the Programme, the study clearly showed that there is consistency of errors in the areas of spellings, prepositions, verbs and pronunciation of typical words.

5. Literature Review:

ICT (Information and communication technology) which includes the electronic devices such as internet, www (World Wide Web) and computers plays a significant role of imparting value and quality based education to the students. Harmer (2007) stated "computer-based instruction can also provide students with unreachable and fascinating activities which motivate them"[01] The present research on computer based reading has proved that reading online through computers will automatically enhance vocabulary, fluency and will tremendously have a lively interaction with the texts, self confidence and independent choice to read the texts. The teachers should play an active role to integrate reading activities like eBooks, magazines, and educate the students to click on the useful sites and participate online conferences to have effective communication with sufficient knowledge. Herring, 1996, p.1 quoted as "Computer-mediated communication is operationalized as any 'communication that takes places between human beings via the

instrumentality of computers”.[03]. Computer mediated communication can give a wider scope to have face to face interaction and students can participate and exchange their views and process the information. This provides a chance for the readers to know each other and communicate freely. On the other hand asynchronous communication which includes email, instant messages to correspond and develop their writing skills and use the language effectively. This will build up their confidence levels and improves all the four skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing skills (LSRWskills). CALL will supplement the learners of the second language learning to use computer and internet to effectively monitor their learning skills.

Kimball (1997) pointed out that “Internet-generated materials can be flexibly arrayed to engage students with topics and cognitive tasks relevant to students’ professional futures.”[04]. Authentic materials will establish an environment to adapt to the native language culture and to interact and engross in a different world of learning. Learners can interact with their peers through collective cooperation and scroll the websites which suit their taste and complete the tasks given to them.

CALL (computer assisted language learning) paved way to many eminent researchers and scholars to have lively interaction to read the printed materials and e-books connected to the multimedia technology with a tinge of animated audio video digital technology which is economical and cannot be shown on printed materials. E-books will be an added advantage to build up self confidence, reading habits, finding the keywords, phrases and to flood with the enormous quantity of printed material. Similarly, Matthew (1996) proposed that “reading and interaction with a book on a computer screen has the potential to be a powerful motivating force for even the most reluctant readers” (p. 380).[05] The students should be encouraged to read extensively which creates an opportunity to mould the students to become independent readers choose books on their own watching videos on the selected topics and to present paper presentations that will automatically boost their thinking abilities.

Extensive reading also has been shown to be effective in increasing reading speed and comprehension (Bell, 2001; Mason & Krashen, 1997) [06]. Students when exposed to enormous inputs of relevant information through web can automatically enhance fluent reading, able to decode the words, sentences and develop fast eyemovements at a glance with lots of eye-catching phrases and idioms. Extensive reading helps the readers to understand the texts with a click on the selected links and utilize their strategies to understand the overall information of the texts interlinked with colour graphics, 3d animations to completely analyse the relevant

information. On the other hand the students locate their selected information through search engines for additional information and engross in applying different strategies to read further in a cool and pleasant situation.

The main aim of Extensive reading is to make the students analyse, understand and make decisions on their own to become independent readers to develop fluency and communication skills. The continuous zeal to access the information and reading extensively should be inculcated in the minds of the students to promote extensive reading programme to yield positive attitudes to increase fluent reading and comprehension.

6. Limitations

The study was conducted on rural areas in and around Moinabad area, both rural and urban areas to highlight the importance of reading skills. The tendency to commit mistakes in learning process is inevitable and students can learn new things through mistakes. Teachers play a significant role to mould the students to impart value based pedagogical strategies to select the relevant information suitable to their needs. The students should analyse rationally to link the website which gives them correct information. Even links which contain information with video or audio input can distract the readers to land at through other sites leaving the original linked site. The teachers can assist the students to give the right directions to search for the right information. The information stored on webpages continuously changes and the new information is updated, erased, edited and placed according to the latest trends of technology. But the printed material is permanent and don't change. These problems on the internet reading should be assessed properly and proper guidance should be given to the students to update their knowledge.

Teachers should play an active role to train the students to use their cognitive skills and strategies required to participate in the Extensive reading programme. In most cases teachers tend to teach more rather than to create an environment to make the students to read. This trend of conventional methods of teaching should be modified in order to make the student centred to promote the extensive reading.

7. Conclusion:

The workshop conducted on Engineering students to promote Extensive reading programme with internet had revealed that extensive reading gives a wider scope of analyzing, extracting the right information and moulds the students to become independent readers. The study illuminates a clear picture that extensive reading is really

beneficial especially for the students who opt English as a second language to use the Multimedia technology like emails, chatrooms, online conferences. Reading online texts gives confidence and love towards reading to enhance their lexical and communication skills.

Compared to traditional methods of teaching like grammar, translation of sentences, reading the same texts under the strict vigilance of teachers may pose monotonous to the students. Extensive reading gives them an opportunity to think independently, choose books of their choice, browse the websites which suit their level of reading. The main purpose is to make them read in order to understand the overall gist of the selected subject content, adjust to appropriate situations to effectively utilize the relevant cognitive strategies to become life-long readers.

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