

IMPACTS OF ICT IN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Abstract

Although there are so many acronyms bearing ICT, the word ICT popularly refers to Information and Communication Technology. ICT therefore, is an advancement in information and communication technology. The dynamism in teaching and learning has embraced ICT into the teaching field. One can proudly speak about the good impacts the involvement of ICT in teaching and learning a language has brought. Teaching and learning no doubt, is a continuous act which continues to look for perfection, innovation and improvement. ICT has been fully integrated into teaching and learning as a much more improved strategy, system or technique of teaching especially language classes. It is also a known fact that teaching and learning had been sustained by previous approaches and systems before the involvement of ICT in teaching. There were many problems with these methods and strategies of teaching language classes which ICT as a system of teaching has come to address. It is therefore, the view of this paper to highlight some of these methods, strategies or techniques of teaching a language class without ICT and as well as the application of ICT in teaching the same language classes.

The philosophy of any educational system is dynamism and change. Teaching and learning therefore, have been having great changes which one does not observe so consciously. In a language class, so many methods, systems, techniques and strategies have been used to give perfection to the teaching of a given language. Most of these

methods or approaches did not yield the needed results or achieve the desired objectives, hence the need for innovation and application of new strategies and methods to perfect the teaching of a language.

Good systems or techniques in teaching a language are needed considering the systematic nature of a language which goes beyond common discourse and ordinary sound. The nature of a language desires a good method or strategy to be applied in teaching it, hence the need for the application of ICT in teaching a language class.

ICT: This means information and communication technology. It is a great advancement in the Information and Communication world. It has brought the world into a little village. This means of information and communication, is the fastest, effective and cheaper means of dissemination of information and communication in the world. The word ICT is incomplete without mentioning the computer and the globalization of the entire world into a village (the internet world).

Computer: This is an electronic device or programmable device that accepts data, stores data, processes data and gives out information in a predefined instruction. The computer is there to accept what is being logged in and it is ready to log out in the same manner. Dolphe (2002:2) maintained that “computer is an electronic machine that has made data storage and processing possible for human beings. It is that machine that makes most information available for human consumption with ease”. It is also

worthy to express that the computer has various component parts such as the monitor, the Central Processing Unit (CPU), the keyboard, the mouse, etc.

Internet Service: This is a major component part of ICT which has made the accessibility of information very possible. The application of ICT in teaching a language follows a carefully planned method of teaching and learning. The usage of ICT in teaching a language could be viewed under the following:

- i. The Power Point
- ii. The E-Learning
- iii. The Blended Learning, etc

Teaching: One cannot finish talking about the introduction of this paper without mentioning or saying a word about the term “teaching”. Teaching is a system, an organized one indeed. It is the way of transmitting knowledge into another with a view to bringing up a positive change. Okafor (2003: 40) stated that “Teaching is a systematized way of impacting knowledge into someone who doesn’t know much. The aim is to bring a desirable positive change. It also aims at developing and changing the whole person”. Teaching/learning adopts a method or strategy through which it uses to realize the desired objectives by the end of developing the teaching and learning content. It is the view of this paper to examine the methods or techniques of teaching a language without ICT and some teaching strategies with ICT. It will be at this point that one can make a good argument about the impacts of ICT in a language teaching and learning. iv.

Some Teaching Strategies of a Language without ICT Picture Reading

This is a teaching strategy of a language. This is encouraged by the absence of electrical gadgets used in teaching a language class. The picture reading comprises of images

and words associated to them. Okenwa (1997:54) stated that “picture reading is a technique in teaching a language which enables the learners to associate the words with the pictures which enables memorization to be achieved in reading”.

Dramatization

This is a technique or a strategy where the learners are expected to dramatize in the class to internalize the teaching and learning of the day. The class is divided into groups to accommodate the learners to participate in the dramatization of the lesson or topic in the class. Anukam (1999: 36) maintained that

Drama is doing and when learners act or are involved in the class activities, there is greater mastery and attention of those activities. By the process of dramatization, vague impressions are brought into sharp focus, puzzling impressions are understood, fragmentary ones are completed and alarming ones are faced so that fear is overcome.

Use of Songs:

This is also a language teaching strategy. Anukam (1999:44) stated that: *Songs and music are useful resources in language teaching. They can be applied in teaching any aspect of a language. Singing is an aid to pronunciation lesson. It gives the learner a great deal of repetition of sound patterns which are contained in the words of the songs. It also fixes the words and patterns in the mind of the learners.*

Language Teaching Strategies Through ICT

Power Point: The power point presentation cannot be over stressed. This is a technique or strategy that makes presentation easy by directly using a computer screen or data projector. The words or what to be presented is published in a digital format via electronic mail over the internet, prepared in the computer power point, in a CD or in a flash drive. In this, the ICT provides the language

teacher relatively safe environment to deliver his teaching as long as he controls that self confidence with the equipment and the media

v. **Electronic Learning:** This form of learning is mostly associated with higher education. Smith (2006:160) stated that E-learning is associated with higher education and corporate training. E-learning encompasses learning at all levels, both formal and non formal, that use an information network – the internet. This could cover Local Area Network (LAN) or Wider Area Network (WAN) whether wholly or in part for course delivery interaction and or facilitation.

vi. **Open and Distance Learning:** This is another language teaching and learning strategy. This form of teaching is characterized by the separation of the teacher and the learner. Dolphe (2002:68) explained that:

Open and distance learning is a technique of providing learning opportunity that is characterized by the separation of the teacher and the learner in time or place or both time and place. It involves the use of a variety of media including print and electronic: two-way communication that allows learners and teachers or tutors to interact. The possibility of occasional face-to-face meeting is allowed.

Impacts of ICT in a Language Teaching and Learning

vii. **Motivation:** The usage of ICT brings high motivation. The eagerness to learn and be taught through this method of teaching motivates the learners. Anyanwu (1999:58) maintained that “motivation is that instinct that propels individuals into action. There are two forms of motivations - the intrinsic

and extrinsic; the former quickens individuals into action than the later”.

viii. **Storage of Instructional Materials:** Instructional materials and other teaching aids are in safe condition. Instructional materials that could get lost in storage can be logged into the computer. The storage and retrieval of these instructional materials can be stored in computer by creating file for them which makes storage very easy. The retrieval of such materials could be done by both the teachers and the learners.

Application of High Technology into Teaching and Learning: Before this time, radio cassette and TV were used for a language class but the computer and the internet service in ICT are more advanced technology applied in the teaching and learning of a language. This therefore exposes the teachers and the learners to the world of advanced technology and science.

x. **Easy Access to Learning Materials:** ICT in teaching and learning is a fertile ground where teachers and learners explore to get solutions to their educational problems. The computer and the internet are being explored every second for a solution of one academic problem or the other. Izuka (2004:34) stated that “learning is made easy through the internet. Solutions to problems are ninety percent provided in the internet service which enable both the teachers and learners obtain solutions to their numerous teaching and learning problems”.

Meaningful Learning: It is clear to note that ICT makes teaching and learning more meaningful. The use of the computer and the internet add value to learning. It also enables both the teachers and the learners the ability

to explore the internet for more solutions to academic problems.

- xii. **Real Life Learning:** The focus is on the teaching of a language. This method provides the enabling environment for the learners to have real contact with the language and thereby mastering some aspects of the language like grammar, phonetics and phonology, etc.
- xiii. **Computer Knowledge:** The need to teach and to learn through the internet and ICT of course lead to the knowledge of how to manipulate and control the computer. A teacher or a learner that does not know the computer will be forced to become computer literate.

Conclusion

The act of teaching and learning has followed systematic approaches, strategies and techniques. It is because of the need to achieve the best in our education that strategies, methods and techniques of teaching and learning change from time to time. ICT in teaching was not there before, but today, it is used in teaching and learning. This approach is encouraged to be used in teaching because of its great impacts. The use of ICT in language classes goes a long way in arousing the interest of learners and thereby enhancing their ability to comprehend and master the rudiments of the language. ICT as a technique or a method of teaching and learning, leads to storage of some instructional materials which could be retrieved from the computer at times. The impacts of ICT in teaching, no doubt, improve teaching and learning.

Recommendations

This paper recommends the teaching of a language through ICT. ICT motivates both the teachers and learners. Computer training services should therefore be provided to both teachers and learners by all the tiers of government in Nigeria. Computer sets should be made accessible to teachers and learners.

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