Emerging New Trends in 21st Century English Learning

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Abstract – As it is used in communication, internet communication tools began to use in education especially in English language learning. New trends technologies have supplemented English teaching in authencity and literacy such as reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills of students. English is the only valid language that can be understood by everyone all around the world. Students learn faster and easier than before because of the use of technology in schools. If they are trained during their school years, they have the chance of becoming experts in technology. It is proved by the researches that have been done; early beginnings are always beneficial. Learning English through the web and using new trends in education in schools make students willing to learn the language. The aim of this study is to review technology in English learning activities and internet communication tools which are being used lately by instructors and learners. The study was conducted on the base of literature survey. Also, this study looks at Web-based English language learning tools, and tries to give information about internet communication tools also it is mentioned that how the teachers or instructors make educational environment more enjoyable. It is quite clear that English has become a necessity today. We need it in different fields of life. Web based technologies and powerful internet connections provide various new possibilities and latest trends for teachers and students.

Keywords: E-Learning; Technology; English Language; New Trends in ENGLISH; Web Based Language Learning.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The use of technology in various fields has been so successful and beneficial for teachers to reach some particular goals especially in education and for those who are learning a foreign language. In every step of our lives the significance of technology is seen and enjoyed in these days. Communication was never so easy. The barrier of location for people in different parts of the world has been reduced by some of the latest technologies such as the web, internet, mobile devices such as Personal Digital Assistant (PDA's), iPhone etc. (Sarica & Cavus, 2008). Web-based technologies and powerful internet connections provide various new possibilities for the development of educational technology. English is the only valid language that can be understood by everyone all around the world. So it can be said that English has become as an ideal language for expression of feelings and using the technology. Students learn faster and easier than before because of the use of technology in educational institutions. If they are trained during their school years, they have the chance of becoming experts in technology. In the long run; early beginnings are always beneficial. The English curriculum develops the students' ability to communicate. Learning English through the web and

using new trends in education in schools make students willing to learn the language. It is quite clear that English has become a necessity today. In 1996 participation in web-based higher education courses was estimated to be 1 million students and projected to be 3 million by 2000 (Edelson, 1998). We need it in different fields of life. For instance; you are a taxi driver in Beijing and you are driving to Olympics there are a lot of people all around the world and you have to speak English so you must get help. In this situation technological equipments are available for you. Mobile phones, etc. English has become easier to learn more than ever before with the availability of many sources to help people learn very easily and enjoyable. Web based learning is one of the fastest growing areas in education. It is widely accepted that advances in information technology and new developments in learning science provide opportunities to create well-designed, learner-centered, interactive, affordable, efficient, flexible e-learning environments (Khan, 2005). For this reason, it could be suggested that; going through internet is an alternative way to study English. Web based technologies and powerful internet connections provide various new possibilities and latest trends for teachers and learners. This paper is about the

latest trends in e-learning which are mobile learning (iPod, cell phones, iPhone) blogs, e-mails, online quizzes and tests, instant messenger, and internet telephone Skype.

2.   WEB-BASED LEARNING

In recent years the terminology has been changed for web based learning; it was called as technology based or distance learning, online education, in the end it is now called e-learning and web based learning. A variety of basic language skills can be developed with the help of web-based language learning activities. It is known that; there are four basic skills in English which are listening, speaking, writing, and reading. These skills can be put on the web and made interactive in a variety of ways. One of these ways is internet communication tools such as m-learning, e- mail, blogs, chat. These tools provide integrated environment for teachers and students. Students generally feel positive about web-based learning tools, when they are:

•   well-designed, easy to learn, easy to use

•   when the tool is good as support, not as replacement of lectures

•   when the use of diverse tool features, i.e. chat, bulletin board, is relevant and tied in to the specific course structure and content (Storey et al.,2002)

Technologyisdevelopingandchangingveryfast,andifiti snotusedeffectivelyandcorrectlysomeproblems   can be occurred. Technologies which can be used in education as follows:

2.1   E-mail

E-mail is a communication tool which is being used in language learning. E-mail was in use before the internet even existed and is probably the most commonly used Internet application. By getting a single e-mail account both foreign teachers and students can join e-mail assisted language activities. For learners of English e-mail is an excellent way to communicate with their instructors because of its usefulness and easiness. With a single e-mail account, foreign teachers and students can integrate e-mail based activities into their curriculum (LeLoup, 1997). If we look at literature international key pal projects that enable students to correspond with native speakers of the target language are easily implement where participants have the necessary access, equipment, and foreign contacts (Knight, 1994; Shelly, 1996). Web-based learning is another area in which e-mail is being used. Ramazani (1994) tells of an activity called The Weekly Essay. A few days before the class meets, his students sent e-mail each other essays that they have written about a particular reading. In this way the students are better prepared for the class discussion of the essays.

Ramazani (1994) uses another e-mail activity to prepare his students for class ahead of time. He asks them to submit short, one-sentence summaries of a reading. Next he organizes these ideas on a handout that he then uses in class for both brainstorming and stimulating class discussions. Similarly, the teacher can assign a debate topic and ask the students to begin to discuss it via e-mail. When the time comes to form debate teams in class, the students will already have a satisfactory understanding of both sides of the issue and will be able to make a more informed decision about where they stand. English teachers can benefit from web sites which includese-mailaccounts(Yahoo,Hotmail,G-mailetc.) for no extra cost. So teachers can create a discussion topic and send it to students via e-mail when receiving the e-mail students start to write compositions or essays in English and then send back to teacher. This helps them to improve writing skills and vocabulary.

2.2   Blogs

We investigated blogging as a form of personal communication and expression, with a specific interesting uncovering the range of motivations driving individuals to create and maintain blogs (Nardi et al., 2004). Blogs are well suited to serve as on-line personal journals for students, particularly since they normally enable uploading and linking of files. Language learners could use a personal blog, linked to a course, as an electronic portfolio, showing development over time. By publishing the blog on the internet, the student has the possibility of writing for their classmates. Pinkman (2005) indicates that blogging becomes communicative and interactive when participants assume multiple roles in the writing process, as writers who write and post, as readers/reviewers who respond to other writers' posts, and as writer-readers who, returning to their own posts, react to criticism of their own posts. Readers in turn can comment on what they read, although blogs can be placed in secured environments as well. Self-publishing encourages ownership and responsibility on the part of students, who may be more thoughtful (in content and structure) if they know they are writing for a real audience. It can be found blog discussions from the site http://blog-assisted-language-learning.blogspot.com/ students discuss any topics to develop their writing and reading skills. But students should type only in English this is very important for their developments in terms of writing and vocabulary.

2.3   Online tests and quizzes

Tests and quizzes have been always used by teachers in the classroom, teachers have to write then print it out and copy it and then deliver the papers to students. Students are reading the questions and using pen or pencils to mark the option. This is the only and traditional way of taking a test. But online tests on the other hand, are being used lately by learners and instructors which

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enable them not use a pen or pencil first. Teachers do not have to print and deliver the papers in the classroom. Also teachers can give feedbacks to their students which are very important and they do not have to evaluate marks from exam papers. By clicking on a button students can see their exam results. Several test formats are now being used by teachers and students interactively. Test software can be used to create interactive multiple-choice, short answer, jumbled-sentence, crossword, matching, ordering, and gap filling exercises for the web. It is shown in figure 1 that, online English learning web sites providing quizzes or tests including four skills of the language. Students are clicking on the correct answers and then check their results. It is possible for teachers creating their own web pages and evaluating students' language learning.
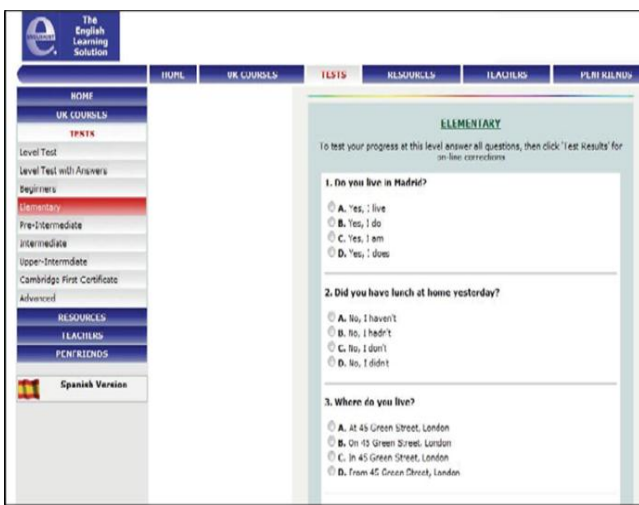

Figure 1. Online test in English

2.4   Instant Messenger

ICQ was the first general messenger service in the early 1996 (www.worldstart.com/tips/tips.php/1498). During the years a variety of messenger services such as MSN Messenger, Yahoo Messenger, etc. began to serve to people. If students are required to type in English only they can have the chance of improve their writing and reading skills through typing and reading the messages they get from their peers or instructors. Moreover, students of English have better interaction with teachers in these virtual environment, they can communicate with not only teachers but also peers and share information.

The most important aspect is live interaction between teachers and students. For example when it is talked about MSN Messenger, it provides several features beyond text, audio and video, and file transfer. Messenger is used with a Webcam and allows users to see each other in a small video window while talking. So students can talk with their peers or teachers in English in order to develop their listening and at the same time speaking skills. In figure 2 it is

shown that students and teachers can have the chance of talking each other by using their webcams.

Figure 2. Chatting with peers and teachers by using webcam.

2.5   Skype

Nowadays every messenger services have audio functions and technological equipments such as laptop computers, also have cameras on them. So students can talk with their instructors and peers far away. Skype is a new emerging technology and the potential application of it to language learning and teaching needs to be further explored (Wu, 2005). And students can speak with native speakers of language and compare their pronunciation with a native speaker. Speaking skills can be developed by using this application. Also students and teachers do not have to pay for this; they just pay for internet access.

2.6   Mobile Devices

Today's world has been changed over the years and besides technology has been changed in other words it has been developed. Mobile learning is one of those technologies which have been used for a few years. Firstly; mobile learning means that people are learning whenever and wherever they want with their mobile phones, PDA's and other technological devices if they have. Mobile learning is also defined as any service or facility that supplies learner with general electronic information and educational content that aids in acquisition of knowledge regardless of location and time (Lehner & Nosekabel, 2002). Vavoula and Sharples (2002) suggest three ways in which learning can be considered mobile as learning is mobile in terms of space, it is mobile in different areas of life, and it is mobile with respect to time. As it can be understood from these definitions that, mobile learning system is available for delivering education to learners anytime and anywhere they need it. Mobile phones are the most popular device among people.

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2.6.1   IPods

IPods are one of the mobile media devices which enable users to produce, organize, deliver, and use media also users can share texts, images, audio or video with their peers and teachers. The technology and pedagogy of using podcasting and iPod are introduced and demonstrated in this session. The activity examples are to enhance not only listening, but also vocabulary building, learning grammar and publishing students' work. An advanced feature of iPod, "Pod Text", allows even more possibilities for language learning (Shinagawa & Schneider, 2007). All skills of English can be provided with the use of iPods for example teachers can send text messages and students can read the message and answer it. Also by recording their voices they can do listening and speaking exercises at the same time. Moreover, students can listen and read authentic materials such as news in English, songs, poems, or vocabulary and translations. The activity examples are to enhance not only listening, but also vocabulary building, learning grammar and publishing students' work. IPods provides a variety of possibilities for language learners. As it can be seen from figure 3 and figure 4 that students can enter the site https://segue.middlebury.edu/view/html/site/ipod-ls/node/853364 and develop their vocabulary by using their iPods.

Figure 3. Language pack selection to download to iPods

Figure 4. Vocabulary exercises using iPods

2.6.2   PDAs

PDAs are pocket-sized computers. PDAs are extensible, with optional hardware (e.g. keyboards and wireless networks) and software (e.g. word processors, databases, bilingual dictionaries, flash-cards). PDAs costs lot, but most programs are free,

so running costs are zero (Houser et al., 2002). Projects using mobile devices in various learning environments have begun to appear Thornton and Houser (2003) developed an English idiom web site, including definitions, illustrative videos and animations, and multiple-choice quizzes, specifically for mobile technologies. In their study, students accessed these web pages using either PDAs or mobile web and video phones, and then evaluated their usability. Scores were generally positive-and similar-for both media, but PDA users rated their video quality higher than the mobile phone users, likely due to larger screen size and higher resolution. All students expressed difficulty with the listening tasks, though the authors note that neither headphones nor earphones were used in the study, and that none of the actors or writers was native English speakers. Figure 5 shows us that, first teachers upload the lesson on their web sites and then learners download the section on their pda's do the exercises.
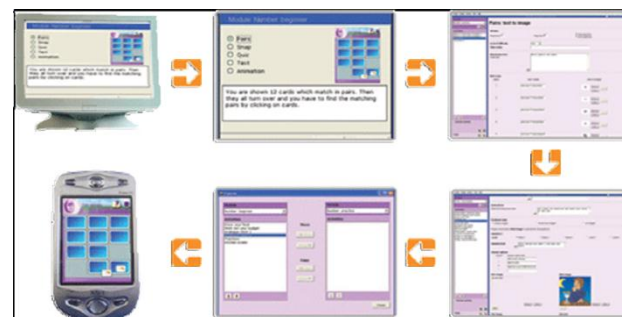

Figure 5. Downloading course materials to PDA from a web site

2.6.3   Cell Phones and iPhone

The most popular one is mobile phones, with mobile phones learners can surf on the web and they can at least learn vocabulary from the dictionary that cell phone include. Learners can search for new words or exercises in English. Furthermore, learners can send Short Message Service (SMS) to ask questions to their friends or teachers. Teachers can give feedback by using their cell phones to their students. Mobile phones use wireless internet to exchange voice messages, e-mails, small web pages that is why students or learners can use their mobile phones to learn English vocabulary, and do exercises from that small web pages. The study of Cooney and Keogh (2007) five- week pilot project took place in a school in County Meath, a rural area close to Ireland's capital city, Dublin by an m-learning system was deployed in this environment with the aim to facilitate school-based oral assessment and students' self-assessment, increase students' communicative competence and motivate students to learn Irish with fun and familiar props of a mobile phone and web-chat. The m-learning system proved useful and popular with teachers and students alike. One of the project using mobile

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phones in language learning was developed by the Stanford Learning Lab (Brown, 2001). Specifically, they developed Spanish study programs utilizing both voice and email with mobile phones. These programs included vocabulary practice, quizzes, word and phrase translations, and access to live talking tutors. Their results indicated that mobile phones were effective for quiz delivery if delivered in small chunks; they also indicated that automated voice vocabulary lessons and quizzes had great potential (Thornton & Houser, 2002). On the other hand, iPhones which is being used in education lately offers more enjoyable and interactive language learning environment for students. Learners can build vocabulary and pronunciation skills with the help of a native speaker. They can record their voices and compare their pronunciations with that of a native speaker.

Figure 6. Vocabulary exercises for Japanese learners through iPhone

3. CONCLUSION

Language education does not only occur in the classroom and should not stop after the learners leave the classroom. So, technological devices should be always used by students and teachers. In order to provide an interaction between language learners and teachers or peer to peers internet connections and mobile devices are one of the most popular and useful way in language education. The development of Web-based language teaching and learning activities continue to be an exciting and growing field. While computer programmers, instructional designers, and computational linguists steadily push the extremes of the field, language instructors can use the basic tools of internet. Also language teachers can create their own web based language activities and use the communication tools. It can be said that, researchers have enough research on web based language learning, from now on, they should begin interactive language lessons and encourage teachers to create their own web based activities. In other words, the researchers are recommended that more researches are needed in which students can enjoy and learn language effectively.

4. SUGGESTIONS AND FUTURE WORKS

Our proposed research examines the new trends in language learning especially communication tools

which are being used lately by teachers in schools. We feel that this research will help and encourage teachers to use new technologies in their curriculum. Our next experimental research will be about implementing new trends in language curriculum and we will be appreciating to share our findings with academics.

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