

P RAGMATIC APPROACH TO EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE USING INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

OYEDAPO, ADEREMI D.^{1*}; AGIM, CHIZOBA R.²; ONAH,
JONATHAN U.³; OYEDAPO, BRIDGET N.⁴,

^{1,3}Computer Science Dept., Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu, Enugu State.

²English Department, Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu, Enugu State. ⁴Art Education Dept., University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State

Corresponding Author: adoyedapo@gmail.com

DOI Link: <https://doi.org/10.70382/bejerp.v9i8.019>

ABSTRACT

English language has become a global medium for communication, education, and business, making its effective teaching and learning essential. This paper explores the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into English language education as a pragmatic approach to enhancing learners' proficiency. ICT provides flexible, interactive, and multimedia-based learning environments that motivate learners and sustain their interest. The study highlights major ICT appliances and applications such as Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), digital language laboratory systems, and various language learning aids including dictionaries, encyclopedias, and writing applications. It emphasizes the development of essential ICT skills, such as computer operation, typing, internet browsing, creativity, and digital

Introduction

English language is generally known as a global language or international language use by majority of people in the world today (Jayanthi and Kumar, 2016). It can as well be seen as a tool that is generally used for learning, business transaction and also for communication in a global community. Most text book and other literature materials are writing in English language. These are some of the reasons while English Language is indispensable in our educational system. In Nigeria for example, English language has been made a core subject in both primary and secondary

sharing that support both teaching and self-paced learning of English. Furthermore, the paper discusses strategies for deploying ICT in classroom environments through interactive whiteboards, multimedia systems, and internet facilities. The findings suggest that ICT integration not only strengthens learners' speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills but also facilitates collaboration with native speakers, expands access to diverse resources, and improves overall learning outcomes. This work concludes that adopting ICT tools alongside traditional methods offers a more efficient, effective, and engaging pathway for mastering English language in today's digital era.

Key Words: ICT, English Language Education, Pragmatic approach, Effective teaching and Smart learning.

Education to the extent that a credit pass in it is required before any student can be considered for admission to study any course in our institutions of higher learning. Therefore, teaching and learning English language comprehensively has become very imperative worldwide today.

According to Akhtar (2014), better educational governance cannot be imagined without the use of Information Communications tools. In other word a better way of learning English language will involve the integration of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) with traditional learning methodology. ICT enabled English Language classes will enhance the teaching and learning process by providing a very flexible, interactive and rich platform that would motivate learners and sustain their interest in the learning experience (Berger & Frey, 2016; Rachamalla, 2021). Different language institutions all over the globe have already realized the importance of ICT in teaching-learning process (Alkamel and Chouthaiwale, 2018). It makes repetitive tasks to be more interesting and encourages multimedia formats contents. Multimedia features in ICT make it a suitable tool for teaching and learning. The use of multimedia while learning English could help in creating a long-lasting impact on the learners. It will afford learners the opportunity to self-paced learning of the language.

This paper therefore, focuses on a passionate, pragmatic and practical method of teaching and learning English language efficiently and effectively by making use the modern-day technology called ICT. The paper will specifically help both the teacher and the learner to:

- Discover ICT appliances and applications for teaching and learning English language
- Develop ICT skills in using the appliances and applications for learning English language
- Deploy ICT appliance and application into learning environment

Discovering ICT Appliance and Application for Teaching and Learning English Language

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a broad term, which encompasses information technology and communication technology. Information technology includes radio, television, computer, computer network, internet and so on while communication technology comprises internet facilities such as electronic mail, teleconferences and mobile technology. Ngwu (2019) defines ICT as a diverse set of technological tools and resources used to communicate and to create, disseminate, store and manage information. The resources can be in form of appliances which is generally referred to as hardware such as computers devices, interactive whiteboard, projector, multimedia public address system and mobile devices. It can also take the form of applications software (simply put applications) that run on hardware devices to perform user's tasks. It is the application software that makes computer system and some other mobile devices general purpose devices. Since our focus in this paper is to discuss effective ways of learning English language using ICT, there is need to concentrate on application for teaching and learning English language such as:

- i) Mobile Assisted Language Learning,
- ii) Digital Language Lab System and
- iii) Language Learning Aids Application.

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL)

Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) involves using smartphones (and/or other mobile devices), to learn a second language. This approach is beneficial for language learners for many reasons. The average language learner has a mobile phone which they take to wherever they go. This enables them to study anytime, anywhere. Assuming their language learning applications and activities are enjoyable, they will be motivated to continue studying outside the classroom (Edusoft, 2023).

There are several smartphone applications that can be used to learn English language. Some were created specifically for such a purpose while others are generally good applications that can be used to teach any subject. Besides, social media apps can also be adopted and adapted for learning language since all of them support multiple media formats.

When using MALL, especially with mobile phones, teachers are expected to create several short lessons rather than long ones. Learners are used to comprehending small amounts of information quickly on their phones. In addition, only a short amount of text can be displayed at once on a phone's small screen. It's advisable, therefore, to break up lessons into micro-lessons which will make up a slide. This method of using micro-lessons will also benefit students with short attention spans.

A few examples of applications software specifically developed for teaching and learning of English language are as follow:

FluentU: FluentU is a language learning program that teaches English through authentic videos that native speakers would watch and make necessary correction. FluentU offers also a wide range of learning tools such as flashcards, interactive subtitles, transcripts, and quizzes. All these features will help learners to hear how native English speakers actually talk so that they can soon sound native themselves.

Rocket Languages: Rocket Languages focuses on teaching learners conversational English with lots of interactive exercises. It has more than 100 hours of lessons covering both language and culture. The progress of learners understanding of the language can be tracked. This software even has a special speech recognition program that helps learners to master the pronunciation of more than 3,000 English phrases. This software can be used on a computer system or on a mobile device with the app.

Transparent Language: Transparent Language is a professional language learning software program used by learners of all ages and levels. One of the good things about Transparent Language is that the program will suggest a starting point based on the level of the learners, but one can choose how quickly or slowly one desire to learn. Transparent Language offers a wide range of options for the learners, making it one of the best programs for people learning English language on their own. Every category of users is certain to find something useful on this program, no matter what their learning goals are.

Mango Languages: Mango Languages contains a mixture of reading and listening activities in an all-in-one interface. It also uses a conversation-based methodology to reinforce grammar, pronunciation, and more. In addition, there is a personalized review system that adapts to the need of the learners.

eEnglish Learning lessons: The eEnglish Learning lessons are among the most affordable and the most specific of these programs. eEnglish application focus on teaching "Pronunciation". It helps in learning and improving more than 52 sounds from the English language. Although this program may not be recommended for learners that are interested in learning other skills besides pronunciation, it is extremely thorough in teaching the skill.

eEnglish helps learners work on saying full words and sentences correctly, including where to put the stress, how their mouth should look, timing and rhythm, and intonation (the "music" of the word).

Complete English Web Suite: The Complete English Web Suite focuses on teaching individual words of the language as well as its general rules. With a high focus on grammar and vocabulary, the program teaches how to read and write better. Learners also have access to multiple-choice quizzes, interactive texts and mini lessons. The web

suite does allow users to progress at their own pace, but this is more of an academic course and may be a bit more rigid in structure than other programs.

Instant Immersion 1-2-3 English: 1-2-3 English is a language learning program that teaches the basics of the language through multimedia and English immersion. The goal of this program is to help learners hold basic conversations with native English speakers. Each lesson covers a general topic, like food, colors, body parts or shopping. One of the interesting things about this application is that it teaches quite a bit about culture. This is done through the use of helpful videos and audio clips and even a bonus DVD featuring native English speakers.

Preply: Preply allows users to choose from a range of different English tutors, who they can practice conversation with and ask any questions they might have about learning the language. Learners can narrow down their search results for teachers by the other languages they speak, or the specialties they have. This includes options like conversational English, business English, and more. Preply is great for the one-on-one experience of working with a tutor, but one should have some basic English knowledge before one start.

Innovative Language: Innovative Language provides learners with audio and video lessons that are accessible on a variety of devices. The lessons also come with extra learning tools such as audio clips and feature various hosts, teachers and more. Innovative Language offers several courses for all levels and learning styles.

Duolingo: Duolingo is an application program that can teach university-level material in an interactive, free course. Duolingo uses a game-like format that rewards the learner to sustain their interest. The lessons focus on reading, writing, and listening. They are automatically graded, giving the user an idea of where they stand with each skill. The Duolingo program is great for all learners and helps them remember the material with constant reinforcement.

Hello English: Hello English is used by millions of English learners to master English speaking. The program helps in building user's grammar and vocabulary knowledge as well as practice speaking English. They get access to 475 lessons that can be downloaded for offline use. It also contains features like dictionary, games and chats with real English teachers.

Rosetta Stone: Rosetta Stone is probably one of the best-known language learning programs, although it is also one of the expensive. Rosetta Stone will immerse learners in English from the start and have them pick up speed to learn the language as quickly as possible. Rosetta Stone helps the users in learning patterns instead of memorizing words and rules. The software wants learners not only to learn a new language, but to think in it. Rosetta Stone also has an online community and live tutoring available that

allows one to play games, speak with other learners and even practice with native speakers.

Digital Language Lab Software

Digital language lab software improves language skills like listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. These four skills usually play an important role in the acquisition of language learning. Language lab software equally promotes the mastery of grammars, phonetics, comprehension and many more knowledge-based contents in language learning through personal interaction with computer system. It is user-friendly software which can be easily learned (Spears Language Lab, 2020). English language lab software provides a vast content for the learning of English language skills. It helps students to learn the English language and enhances their skills and knowledge. Language lab software is designed in different category for primary school pupils, secondary school students and for those in higher institution.

Benefits of Digital Language System

The best way to improve any language is to speak and write that language and one can gradually improve their skills. Language lab software facilitates more engagement in the classroom. The objective of the software is to make students confident and better speakers. The following are some of the benefits of language lab software:

- It is two-way interactive communication
- It makes provision for group discussions
- It has ability to read any Text
- It helps in learning pronunciation
- It has facilities for monitoring students from any part of the world.
- It gives students independent access to learning resources
- It provides assignments for self-learning
- It can broadcast any message
- It supports unlimited access to learning materials
- It provides the flexibility in learning the languages.
- It makes learning accessible anywhere and at any time
- It improves students' concentration/attention to their courses.

Language learning aids Application

There are many applications software that can be referred to as English language learning aids but, in this paper, attention will be paid to three of them which are:

- English Dictionary app
- Encyclopedia app and

- Excellent writing app

English Dictionary apps: are applications that give the user access to different types of dictionaries. Just like normal hardcopy dictionaries, the app is designed to be used by English learners to find definition of any English word, learn spelling, study grammar, and practice pronunciation in more friendly manners that will sustain the interest of the user. Most Dictionary applications work offline, and allow words to be saved to make vocabulary list. Most dictionaries come with the software application in a CD for installation or available online for download.

Encyclopedia such as Encarta, Farlex and so on is User-friendly, comprehensive, and authoritative learning resources that give free access to more than 330,000 articles, over 77,000 audio pronunciations, and 24,000 images. It contains information about every aspect of life. It is a good learning aid for writing composition on any topic in any field of study. Below are some of the features of Encyclopedia:

- * Easy Search for articles on any topic
- * Educate by seeing images including vivid photos, diagrams, and illustrations.
- * Encourage to save unlimited bookmarks for quick access to your favorite articles.
- * Express search key words in native voice -it looks up for a word just by saying it. (With supported devices)
- * Enlist suggestions of what you likely want to type as you type.
- * Exploit simple advanced searches, including "Starts with," "Ends with," "Contains," and "Wildcard."
- * Effect substitute on font – change/adjust font size, font colour, font style etc.
- * Employ sound system Listen to 70,000+ audio pronunciations for both American and British speakers.
- * Empower Sharing of favorite articles via social networks, email, and text. (With supported devices)

Excellent Writing aids are applications that helps in writing a mistake free sentence and ensure coherence in what has been typed. A good example of such application is Grammarly. Grammarly enables one to compose bold, clear, mistake-free writing by identifying mistake in a write up and suggest ways of correcting such mistakes. Grammarly's suggestions are comprehensive and capable of aiding effective communication. It can be linked with other application such as social media app, word processing, email and so on, in such a way that it remains active and helpful irrespective of the application that is being used.

Developing ICT Skills for Learning English Language

There are many digital skills that will improve the teaching and learning of English language which language teachers and learners should have. These skills can be

developed by learning how to use the required technology or by practicing using them on daily basis. These skills include the following:

Computer operation skill: Ability to operate any type of digital computer is a very important skill needed in using ICT for teaching and learning. It should be noted that smart phone and many other digital devices are also view as computer. Every language teacher should be able to use common application software such as Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel effectively and perform common task like copying item form one location to other without any external help. Learning to use many features on mobile device like voice recognition, audio reading text and others is a way to develop computer operation skill

Typing Skills: Handwriting manuscript are no longer common in today's world, many people prefer typing their story, letter, essay, ideas and other composition directly into the computer in other to save it in the cloud where it can be accessed at any time and from anywhere in the world. Typing skill is the ability of the English language learner to master the keyboard and be able to type fast. Typing speed is measure in words per minutes. The speed is inversely proportion to the time spend on a task. One can develop typing skill by using typing tutor such as Typing Master, Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing etc. and by regular practicing.

Internet Browsing skill: is the ability to access any website or open any web page. It also includes ability to use search engine effectively to find any type of information. Internet browsing skill is very importance in language learning because many of the features in most application we use for language learning today require internet to function effectively. Also new ideas, new concept or anything strange can be clarified by browsing the Internet. It is advisable to have more than one Internet browser application on your device.

Creative skill: This is ability to adapt the benefit of digital devices to classroom situation. For example, short video of how to pronounce some sound can be shown in the class. Three-dimensional object can as well be created and use for illustration in the class instead of drawing on chalkboard etc. a language learner without creative skill will not see the relevant of mobile device/application in learning languages especially English.

Sharing skill: ability to share video, audio, document, images/photo and application with various available devices. This skill enhance collaboration with other students including native speakers of English language and foster the understanding of the language.

Deploying ICT Appliance and Application into Learning Environment

Digital Technologies have succeeded in making significant impact in our present society. Our relationship with one another, the way we do work, the way we spend our time and the tools we work with, have all been transformed by modern technology (Kispeter,

2018; Docent, 2019). In fact, digital technology has become integrated into our personal and professional lives as individuals, organizations, business associates and governments. A few decades ago, digitization affected only a handful of occupations, but now the majority of workers use the Internet as part of their jobs in most countries and digital literacy is predicted to become critically important for the vast majority of workers in the future (Berger and Frey, 2016). Education sector, most especially language education is expected to shoulder the major responsibility of adapting and adopting digital technology in teaching and learning because most of the students are in the group of digital natives irrespective of digital divide experienced in developing nations (Oyedapo, 2020). It is only among the teachers that digital migrant can be found. Deploying ICT Appliance and Application into Learning Environment will in no doubt digitalize our class room and make learning environment very suitable for digital natives. The deployment will require intensive training for teachers and installation of ICT gadgets yet it worths doing to promote understanding of English language (Sharma, Gandhar, Sharma & Seema, 2011). The installation may also require two phases which are:

- i) Acquisition of the Appliance: this phase includes purchase and setting up of the required equipment.
- ii) Activation of Access to the needed application: access to Internet for example will need subscription before it can be activated. In most cases organizations goes for annual subscription while individual may prefer monthly subscription.

The following are ICT devices that need to be available in language learning classroom environment:

- **Interactive Whiteboard:** Interactive whiteboard, such as smart boards, clever boards eBeams etc., is the whiteboard that uses overhead projector and computer system to provide platform for writing and at the same time serve as projector screen for displaying the content of a computer system. It usually allows students at remote locations to connect to the board itself thereby giving them the opportunity to become active participants in lessons.
- **Multimedia Public Address System:** This is necessary to amplify the teacher's voice. It is also used to replay past lessons and to record the ongoing lessons. It can be connected to interactive board directly using cable/wired connection or wireless connection.
- **Internet Facility:** Remote connection to a class, access to unlimited learning resources and effective collaboration with other students are made possible by internet facilities. Internet access should be seen as a necessity in every modern classroom environment.

Advantages of using ICT in teaching and learning English Language

Using ICT in teaching and learning English Language can rapidly enhance the development of speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. It ensures interactive, flexible and dynamic learning styles (Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011). In specific term, the following are the advantages of using ICT in teaching and learning English language:

- Easy collaboration with native speakers
- Enhance communication like native speakers
- Ensure concentration on necessary scheme of work
- Enlarge collection of nice resources
- Effective connection to normal classroom from remote places
- Exclusive compilation of notable resources
- Expand comprehension of numberless concept

Summary

Pragmatic approach to teaching and learning of English Language presents a better way of learning English language that involves the integration of ICT with traditional learning methodology. The paper focuses on a passionate and practical approach of using modern-day technology called ICT in the classroom. It is an eye opener for the teachers, students, school management and all the stakeholders in educational sector to discover various ways by which ICT appliances such as computer system, mobile devices, interactive board with Internet facilities can be used for effective and efficient teaching and learning of English language. Applications software that are specifically developed for learning English language are many. A few examples of such application are: FluentU, Rocket language, eEnglish Learning lessons, Complete English Web Suite, 1-2-3 English, Innovative language etc. English Lab Software is another application that is very useful for both teachers and students in teaching and learning of English language. The application helps the learner to develop language skills (e.g. listening, speaking, reading and writing skills). Besides, application like dictionary, cyclopedia and grammerly are referred to as English language learning aid in the paper.

Development of ICT skills relevant to learning English language were also discussed in this paper. Typing skill, computer operation skill, internet browsing skill and sharing skill are the emphasized skills necessary for learning English language. Typing tutor, such as Mavis Beacon teaches typing, Typing Master etc., is a good application software that can be used to develop typing skill. Generally, ICT skills are developed through regular learning and usage of the device.

Conclusion

The integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into the teaching and learning of English language provides a more dynamic, flexible, and result-oriented

approach compared to traditional methods alone. ICT appliances and applications such as Mobile Assisted Language Learning, digital language laboratories, and language learning aids not only make lessons interactive but also enhance learners' engagement, motivation, and comprehension. The development of ICT skills such as computer operation, typing, browsing, and digital collaboration is equally vital in ensuring that both teachers and learners can maximize the benefits of these tools. Deploying ICT in language classrooms further creates opportunities for remote learning, real-time collaboration with native speakers, and access to vast educational resources. Ultimately, ICT has the potential to bridge learning gaps, improve the four core language skills - listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It also promote independent, self-paced learning. Therefore, embracing ICT in English language education is not just an option but a necessity for preparing learners to thrive in an increasingly digital and interconnected world.

Recommendations

Based on the discussions in this paper, the following recommendations are made:

1. Teachers of English language should actively integrate ICT tools into their lesson delivery by adopting multimedia platforms, language learning applications, and interactive digital resources to make learning more engaging and effective.
2. Students should be encouraged to develop ICT skills such as typing, browsing, and digital collaboration in order to benefit maximally from online and offline language learning platforms.
3. Educational institutions should invest in ICT infrastructure such as interactive whiteboards, internet facilities, multimedia systems, and digital language labs to provide a conducive learning environment.
4. ICT-based methods of teaching should be embedded in English language curricula at all levels to ensure structured use of digital tools in learning.
5. Government and educational authorities should provide adequate funding, training programs, and policies that promote the sustainable use of ICT in English language education.
6. Scholars should continue to explore emerging ICT innovations and evaluate their effectiveness in improving English language proficiency across different learner groups.

References

- Akhtar, S. (2014) Use of ICT in Teaching, Learning and Governance in Colleges, *Techno LEARN: An International Journal of Educational Technology* 4(2), 49-53.
- Alkamel, M. A. and Chouthaiwale S. S. (2018) The Use of ICT Tools in English Language Teaching and Learning: A Literature Review, *Veda's Journal of English Language and Literature-JOELL*, 5(2), 29 - 33

- Berger, T. and Frey, C. B. (2016). 'Did the Computer Revolution shift the fortunes of U.S. cities? Technology shocks and the geography of new jobs.' *Regional Science and Urban Economics*, 57, 38-45
- Docent, (2019), Framework of Digital Creative Teaching Competences, accessed on 30/10/2019 from https://docent-project.eu/sites/default/files/2019-03/o1-framework_of_digital_creative-teaching_competences_-_v1.2.pdf
- Edusoft (2023), Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), Retrieve from <https://edusoftlearning.com/mall-mobile-assisted-language-learning/>
- Ghasemi, B. & Hashemi M. (2011), ICT: New wave in English language learning/teaching, *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 15(1), 3098-3102
- Jayanthi, N. S and Kumar, R. V. (2016) Use of ICT in English Language Teaching and Learning, Veda's Journal of English Language and Literature - JOELL 3(2), 34 - 38
- Kispeter, E. (2018), 'What digital skills do adults need to succeed in the workplace now and in the next 10 years?', *Digital Skills and Inclusion Research Working Group Evidence Brief*, accessed on 30/10/2019 from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/807831/What_digital_skills_do_adults_need_to_succeed_in_the_workplace_now_and_in_the_next_10_years.pdf
- Ngwu, O. G. (2019), *ICT integrated education: strategy for transforming teaching and learning*. In C. J. Obunadile, S. Saidu, & C. K. Inyamah, (Eds.) Education and Information Communication Technology, Onisha, Nigeria, West and Solomon Publishing Coy Ltd,
- Oyedapo, A. D. (2020), A critical examination of creative skills as necessary digital skills required by competent science teacher for effective implementation of curriculum, The Science Teacher Today, Journal of the School of Science, Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu 9(1), 117-125
- Rachamalla, S. A. (2021), Usage of 'ICT' in English language teaching, International Journal of Innovative Research in Science and Engineering 7(11), 22 - 25
- Sharma, A., Gandhar, K. Sharma, S. & Seema (2011), Role of ICT in the Process of Teaching and Learning, Journal of Education and Practice, 2(5)
- Spears Language Lab (2020), Language Lab software Retrieve from <https://www.languagelabsystem.com/>