The role of Technology and Blended Teaching and Learning Approach (BTLA) in acquiring English Language: A Study

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Abstract - **Now-a-days technology has an ever-changing effect on many possessions that includes English language teaching and learning. Technology is the compilation of techniques, skills, methods and processes used in the production of goods or services or in the achievement of goals. Traditional teaching has unarmed students' capacity to understand certain language. The traditional teaching model mainly emphasized on teachers' instruction, and the information provided is limited due to traditional classes. In contrast, blended teaching and learning goes further than time and space, creates more vibrant, visual, valid environment for grasping English Language. This article endeavors to analyze the use of technology and blended teaching and learning approach in acquiring English Language to carry out the problems faced by both teachers and learners. The rapid increase of technology such as multimedia has offered a better tool to explore the new teaching method. In fact, technology has played an important role in English language teaching, especially, in the non-native speaking of English situations. It also tries to make non-native speakers of English as language teachers aware of the strategies to use it in a useful approach.**

KEYWORDS: *approach, blended learning, blended teaching, benefits, replica, technology.*

I. THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN TEACHING

The teaching scenario is rapidly shifting, the technological rise of the 21st century and extensive integration of the technologies, combined with access to the internet has altered our teaching methods in just a few years. Technology can be the knowledge of techniques, processes, and the like, or it can be rooted in machines to allow for operation without detailed knowledge of their workings. It is one of the most significant drivers of both social and linguistic change. Graddol: (1997:16) states that" technology lies at the heart of the globalization process; affecting education work and culture.

II. IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH

English, uttered in many countries around the world embrace the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Australia, Ireland, New Zealand and a number of Caribbean nations. It is frequently used in work and travel, and there are at least a billion people who are learning it. This formulates English the second most spoken language, and the international language in the world.

Technology and Blended Teaching and Learning Approach

Technology has occupied a prominent place in classrooms in the present times and is of particular use to blended teachers and learners. Blended teaching or learning is a formal education technique where content is partially delivered through digital and online media. While students still focus on "brick-and-mortar" lessons, in a building with a teacher present– these are merged with technology-aided activities. The significance of the utilization of technology in education has been enhanced by the launch of technology in education. This is a strategic body that has been set up to accelerate the growth of education technology globally.

Today the teaching and learning of English language, have a lot to opt from the world of technology: Podcasts, Face book, YouTube, What's up, Radio, TV, CD Rom, Computers, Internet, Electronic Dictionary, Email, Blogs and Audio Cassettes, Power Point Presentations, Videos, DVD's or VCD's. The previous two decades have observed a revolt due to onset of technology, and has changed the dynamics of various industries and also the way people interact and work in the society. This rapid increasing and progress of information technology has provided a better prototype to explore the new

teaching models. Consequently technology plays a very vital role in English teaching.

III. DEFINITION OF BLENDED LEARNING (BL)

The word "blended learning" originated in the business world in connection with corporate training (Sharma and Barrett, 2007), then was employed in higher education (MacDonald, 2006) and lastly it appeared in language teaching and learning. It is difficult to say exactly when the term became commonplace in ELT although I suggest that it coincided with the publication of Sharma and Barrett's book Blended Learning in 2007. Although I had first heard the term in late 2003, the publication of this book cemented its place in ELT in my mind.

Blended learning is significant as it cracks the traditional barriers of teaching. Blended learning also offers flexible time frames that can be personalized to each person, offering them the capacity to learn at their own pace.

Importance of Blended Learning Approach

According to Dewar and Whittington (2004) differences have been identified as to why the corporate sector and academic sector introduced blended learning solutions. For the corporate sector the results from an online survey reported by Sparrow in Dewar and Whittington (2004: 5) list the following reasons: ability to match learning styles (80 per cent); individually tailored solutions (70 per cent); improve the learning rate (62 per cent); exploit the investments they have already made in re-usable training resources (59 per cent); shortage of time to use purely classroom events (57 per cent). They do not elaborate on the content of this list, nor provide evidence that any of the reasons given are actually valid and not purely assumptions, for example: Improving the learning rate. In many ways the effort of "blending" attains better student experiences and outcomes, and more proficient teaching and course management practices. It can engross a blend of delivery modes, teaching approaches and learning styles.

Significance of Blended Teaching Approach

Blended teaching broadly refers to the characteristic of a course having a blend of both online and face-to-face components. A blended teaching is composed as exclusively delivered online with perhaps one day a week where the class meets face-to-face or a blended course can be a traditional face-to-face course with some extensive use of online tools. However a course is 'blended,' all can allow for more flexible learning opportunities. The sense of balance between face-to-face teaching and online content depends on what the instructor involved decides.

IV. REPLICA OF BLENDED TEACHING AND LEARNING APPROACH

BTLA can come in different shapes and sizes and be personalized to fit the individual. These models can comprise:

- **Individualized blend**: The Instructor designs face-to-face and anywhere, anytime learning options that include the classroom and practical spaces. Learning is the constant and time is the changeable.

- **Self-blend**: Learner obtain online courses to supplement their tradition schools face to face course catalogue.

- **Online** – Teaching happens via an online platform, with intermittent face-to-face meetings.

- **Online lab**: Instructions takes place in a brick and mortar lab. Delivered by an online teacher and supervised onsite by paraprofessionals.

- **Alternation**: Learner rotates between online learning and face-to-face instruction. Schedules are fixed but flexible.

- **Flex**: The majority of the instruction is delivered online, with instructor providing as desired support in small-group settings.

- **Head to head**: Teacher offers primarily head to head instruction, complemented with technology in the classroom or computer lab.

Benefits of Blended Teaching Approach

o Blended Teaching Approach (BTA) offers flexibility in terms of accessibility. The e-Learning facilitates the Learner to access the materials from anywhere at any time.

o Access to global resources and materials that meet the Learners' level of knowledge and interest.

o Self-pacing for slow or quick learners reduces stress, increases satisfaction and information retention.

o E-learning allows more affective interactions between the learners and their instructors through the use of emails, discussion boards and discussion rooms.

o Learners have the ability to track their progress.

o Learners can also study through a selection of activities that apply to various learning styles.

o E-learning could improve the quality of teaching and learning as it supports the face-to-face teaching approaches.

o Teaching is less expensive to convey, more reasonable and saves time.

Benefits of Blended Learning Approach

o When technology is incorporated into lessons, learners are more likely to be interested in and enthusiastic about the subjects they are studying.

o The employment of computers to look up information and information is a marvelous lifesaver, combined with access to resources such as the internet to conduct research. This interaction with the sources keeps learners focused for longer periods

o Utilization of eLearning tools increases a student's ability to set appropriate learning goals and take charge of his or her own learning, which develops an ability that will be translatable across all subjects.

o Learners become self-driven and responsible, tracking their individual accomplishments that helps develop the ability to find the resources or get the help they need, so they can reach their goals.

o Blended learning implants a sense of 'student ownership over learning' which can be a dominant force driving the learning and this feeling of diligence helps the feeling of possession.

o The ability to quickly analyse, review and give feedback to a students work, gives the teacher the ability to tailor his teaching methods and feedback for each student, while improving time efficiency.

o Owing to the flexibility of blended learning and the internet resources allows students to learn at their own rapidity, meaning a teacher can help speed up the learning process or give more advanced resources if essential.

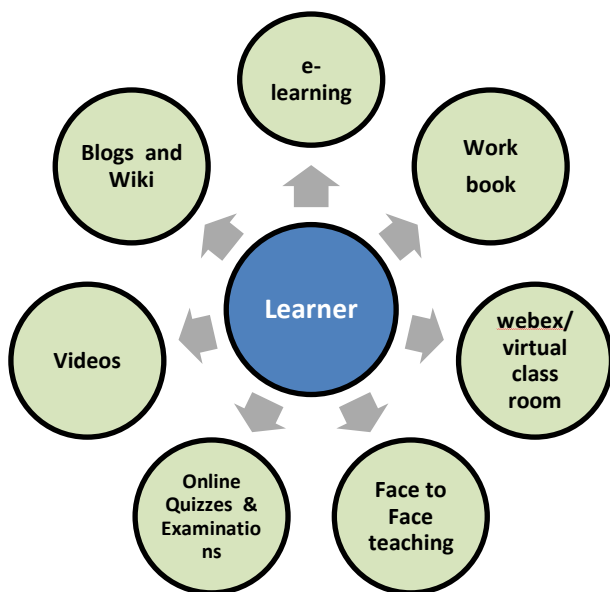o Blended learning offers a multitude of practical skills that openly translate into life skills.

Figure 1 Blended Learning Methodology

V. CONCLUSION

The aim of technology and blended teaching and learning is to offer a space in which the necessity of vice-versa. In fact, the ultimate goals of both is to promote students' motivation and learning interest, which can be a practical way to get them involved in the language learning. During the process of enhancing the English teaching, students are not too dependent on their mother tongue, but will be encouraged and guided to communicate with each other.

The procedure of English language learning will be more student-centered but less time-consuming. Hence, it promises that the teaching quality will be improved and students' applied English learning skills can be effectively nurtured.

Finally, we believe that this process can fully improve students' ideation and practical language skills, which is useful to ensure and fulfill an effective result of teaching and learning. Excluding a few problem areas, technology can be used effectively in blended teaching and learning in acquiring English language with proper computer knowledge.

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