E-Reading and E-Learning @ Higher Elevations

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Abstract

The present paper aims at the advancement of e-reading and e-learning among the students, English language learners, teachers and all other academicians in India. There is a tremendous change in the development of language either it is one’s native language or English as second language, the lingua franca or the official language. E-reading is particularly a self-selected one and it has a wonderful impact on the English language readers. The modern day students are visually oriented students and they prefer e-reading and e-learning method to enrich their English knowledge. NDLI, the digital library of India and NPTEL, Swayam are helpful e-resources for many English language learners, teachers and other academicians. The Government of India encourages students and teachers by admitting them in online courses especially to improve their English language skills. Google Classroom, Youtube linkages on education are becoming more and more popular and become effective in the process of English language learning. With a lot of advancement today, the English language learners are provided with independent learning also. The advancement of e-reading and e-learning enhance the students to improve their English language skills.

Key Words: E-Reading, E-learning, learners, digital, English language learners

1. Introduction

E-Reading and E-Learning play a vital role in English language learning among the students who use modern gadgets in the present day scenario. E-Reading and E-learning empower the speakers of English as a second language especially in India. Once in a day, apart from class hours, the students most probably enrich their language skills especially through their smart phone facilities. The pleasure of reading e-books has also been increased since 2017 in India. Even though printed books are available, the wall of mobile phone, its voice, colours, images, videos, and Youtube videos on Education and English language learning help the students to improve their speaking and writing skills too. Especially, for the acquisition of English language skills, reading device is not only used to know about English Language and Literature but also to know about current affairs, news, general knowledge questions and for preparing NET/SET, TRB and other online examinations.

2. E-readers

E-readers are universally available and there is no distinction between the poor and the rich. The students, teachers, office workers, elderly men and women at home, etc select
particular topic in which they are interested and pay complete attention on it. Books in
the library long for the hands of the readers where as students prefer to touch the touch
phones for reading. It is very easy for the English language learners to download the e-
content in their mobile phones. Whenever they want to read, they will enthusiastically
read and continue their reading by book marking facility availed at any time. The
language learners in English can access the internet easily and read short stories,
motivational stories, novels, poetry, etc A few mobile phone companies also supply 1.5
GB data per day to access the internet. So it is easy for the language learners to read
their liked, self-selected content. Nowadays, in schools also the Learning App
specifically to mention BYJU’s Learning App companies introduce e-learning process
by supplying tablets. This serves as innovative method of learning English.

3. The Growth of E-Reading

In the modern day scenario, the writing skills of the students in English language
learning show a lesser value as compared to the reading skills and that too, the students
prefer e-reading rather than printed books. They select voluntarily to read the content
and the growth of e-reading increases day by day. And their pleasure of reading
increases day by day. Of course, e-book is a fresh one whereas one cannot swap books
as it is not a printed copy. Whenever a student needs a particular novel or short story or
any other creative writing work, he/she can download it at anytime and anywhere.
Book marking in e-book is very easy and when the English language learner wants to
continue his reading, automatically, the e-book opens at the exact page where he has
left at last. “The rapidly changing nature of e-books and digital reading devices
demands a progressive research agenda that examines the use of new technologies in
authentic school settings. Teachers must explore the potential of digital readers, as one
device can potentially take the place of hundreds of printed books and allow for unique
transactions between the reader and the text” [2].

The e-reader can also choose the colour of font on any background colour which is
available in the handy machine. It is also easy to carry the smart phone or laptop or
tablet and all books are available in one hand at anytime. It becomes a gateway for
reading and learning English language. The government of India encourages e-reading
and e-learning by offering many online courses in English.

The students enrich English language by the facilities provided by their course teachers.
Most of the students, the English language learners in our college are from rural areas.
Though they are from rural areas, their parents encourage them to use smart phone only
for studying purpose. 10 to 15 per cent of students coming from distant villages do not
have smart phones. But those students use computer centre or they use their relative
members’ smart phone especially for submitting their online assignments. Let us see the growth of e-readers and e-learners in English language learning in the following tabular column and graph:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Study</th>
<th>Percentage of E-readers / E-learners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017-18</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018-19</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. NDLI of India-Encouraging E-Readers

The National Digital Library of India (NDLI) has hosted 31,897,417 e-books (as it is mentioned in the web portal) for the users ranging from primary to Postgraduate and PhD programme. All types of resource materials are available and it consists of more than seventy languages. Just by logging in one can download and read the sources which are needed to the readers. NDLI is a wonderful project work under MHRD, India which offers free e-books in English and all other Indian languages, that too in one web portal. So students and all other academicians are benefitted by this digital library. This digital library acts as a pocket library to each reader and learner. Technology has spread widely in India and in our education system. The perspective on teaching and learning in English has brought many changes because of the flexibility of digital libraries.

5. What is E-Learning?
“The term “e-learning” comprises a lot more than online learning, virtual learning, distributed learning, networked or web-based learning. As the letter “e” in e-learning stands for the word “electronic”, e-learning would incorporate all educational activities that are carried out by individuals or groups working online or offline, and synchronously or asynchronously via networked or standalone computers and other electronic devices” [3]. In the present day, e-learning in English language becomes more interested among the new gallants. It becomes an influential and unavoidable power in the process of learning English language. There are many e-learning tools that can be accessed through smart phones, tablets and computers by English language learners. Some of the important e-learning tools are Google Search, Webinars, Skype, Whatsapp, Facebook, Google Classroom, Youtube, etc.

6. NPTEL– SWAYAM Facilitate E-Learners

National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning, NPTEL Swayam (India), another project of MHRD, India also offers ample of online self-study courses, short term courses, etc to the students and teachers worldwide. Most of the students, teachers, and English language learners are benefitted by joining in these online courses and enrich their language skills. They enjoy reading and learning skills. They download assignments and prepare for weekly test and after that solutions for assignments are also provided by them in a detailed way. NPTEL also provides Online Certificate also. They acquire new skills and they can also add more value to their professional profile. The tutorials created by academic experts are also highly regarded and the e-content is also updated on a regular basis.

It is easy to access and mobile apps are used frequently to complete the course. An internet based discussion forum is also incorporated for enabling the academicians especially for reviewing questions and posting comments. Each course consists of forty video lectures and pdf materials, translation materials and audio books are also available. Various courses facilitate NET/SET coaching and also they make the e-learners to be qualified in the examination by providing objective type questions.

The E-learners in English language are benefitted by creative visualisation. They dissolve the mental barriers and systematic adoption of e-learning make the learners to manifest in the most positive aspects especially by the following four steps:

i) Setting the goal
ii) Creates clear picture or idea
iii) Focusing on it
iv) Giving it positive energy
7. Gyan Dharshan Supports E-Learners

Gyan Dharshan, a well known education channel is available at 24x7. This satellite channel offers a lot of programme but only on education. The emergence of this education channel made the learners to acquire knowledge on entertainment basis. The government of India supports the learners by telecasting live educational programme for their improvement on higher education especially in English Language Learning. Thus higher order skills are developed by students in the process of language learning.

8. Steps to increase the Power of E-learning

Though there are many advantages on e-learning, there are also some disadvantages. A student or teacher cannot sit in front the computer or by holding smart phone continuously for a long period of time because it will affect their eye sight. To avoid this, the following steps may be followed:

a) Starting from day one concentrate on a particular topic
b) Attention on needed things must be spontaneous that should enhance the energy
c) For every twenty minutes get relaxed by watching greenish leaves at a long distance
d) Maintain proper space between eyes and monitor or screen
e) Deep breathing will remove tension or eye pressure

The preparation of schedule is very important for e-learners especially for ensuring effective utilisation of smart phones or computers while learning English language studies.

9. Environment on E-learning Process

“Online-learning environments with their dependence on technology are very different, in several important ways from conventional educational settings. In conventional educational settings much of the responsibility for teaching and learning is in the hands of the teacher who is also the subject matter expert. In online-learning environments, the teacher who may also be the subject matter expert is no longer in complete control of all the activities. The technology for instance is usually managed and serviced by someone else. Someone else may also manage the content that is delivered by the technology, even though the teacher in charge may have developed it.” (Naidu 71) [2] E-learning courses are available at 24x7 in all the years. Comparing with the traditional classes, e-learning classes on English language can be recorded and replayed during the time of examination particularly to recollect the relevant content. Youtube linkages on education play a vital role in the process of English language learning. The students
show interest in technology and acquire language skills. Relevant to the subject, just 2-3 minute videos on Youtube channel helps the students to learn enthusiastically. They share it to the students who are studying English language in other colleges also. Here is an example in which a teacher teaches Organs of Speech (in Phonetics) to her class students and it was taken as a video content and shared the Youtube linkages (https://youtu.be/Tj_s0RtlBRg) to the students through Google Classroom. The English language learners responded to it earnestly and scored more marks in that particular subject. Live traditional classroom English language teaching can be recorded and it can be shared to enrich their English language skills. Here is another example in which the English language learners can learn the rhythm and tone of poetry from youtube uploaded by the teacher (https://youtu.be/TmEoo8g2lsQ) and creative poetry can also be uploaded and for example (https://youtu.be/RQxFNqPxBk).

The English language learners are motivated by this type of modern technology. This type of technology and e-learning environment has made individualised English language learning a reality. To parody Francis Bacon’s quotes:

E-Reading makes a modern man,
E-Learning conference a Witty man and
E-Writing a complete man

10. Conclusion

With recent developments in technology, personal interests in learning language skills are growing among the students and teachers and all other academicians too. This paper analyses the advancement of e-reading and e-learning as a teaching and learning approach for the students and all academicians in English language. As there are increased number of English language e-reading and e-learning users, education will be spread and knowledge will be augmented. E-learning tools must be properly handled only for education purpose. For every modern gadget, there is a positive and negative effect as both the edges of knife. These tools must be used by the learners only to have progression in their higher level studies. Apart from the traditional classroom teaching methods, e-learning systems on English Language learning can be utilised effectively. The Government of India takes much effort to create a large number of digital learners by offering them online courses, digital library, etc. The growth rate of English language e-learners are increasing from 2018. Thus e-reading and e-learning courses in English language learning developed substantially and are at higher elevations and also they become moderately proficient in using the available software for teaching and learning English language.
11. References
