_____

LEARNING ENGLISH IN DIGITAL ERA: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SCHOOLS IN KOLHAPUR DISTRICT

_____

Dr. Anil P. Patil[1]
Dept. of English MTES' SGGK College Muktainagar, Dist-Jalgaon Contact No.
08668725903, Mail: anilppatil3@yahoo.com
Mr. Pandurang K. Patil[2]
M.A. M.Ed. M.Phil. D.S.M KBCNMU, Jalgaon (MS) Contact No. 9225958316,
pandupatil1111@gmail.com

_____

Abstract:
The present study investigates issues involved in learning English in the digital era, with special reference to the schools in Kolhapur District. In this study, the researcher collected the data by visiting a secondary school of Marathi and English Medium from Kagal and Gadhinglaj taluka in Kolhapur district. During the review of the school, the researcher found the considerable difference between Marathi and English Medium schools in Kolhapur district, in various aspects such as, using digital technology, digital infrastructure, availability of digital tools, role of English teacher towards using technology, need of training and workshop for digital literacy, assessment and evaluation, other facilities like internet, easy access to the students, etc. It is also found in the present review that there is a need of educating English language teachers in using digital tools, as well, schools must motivate and conduct the orientation of the parents to use educational digital/mobile applications for their children at home, to enhance the skills of English.

Key Words: Digital tools, digital infrastructure, digital literacy, digital awareness language skills etc.

Introduction:
        English language is known as an international language hence, widely spoken all over the world. It has been commonly classified as- a Native Language (ENL), a Second Language (ESL) and a Foreign Language (EFL), as per the need and usage. English has been a 'Lingua-Franka' for the whole world and serves as a 'link-language' among different countries. Sinclair (1985) asserts that English is 'no longer the exclusive province of the native speaker' (P.248). It is no longer the language of its native country only but has attained the status of the world language. (qtd. in Devadhe p. 3)
1. English In India Today: English Was Introduced In India By The British And After Independence More Importance Has Been Given To Education In English. Today, English

_____

Has Become A Part And Parcel In Every Field Like Education, Business, Technology, Scientific Knowledge, Etc. English Offers Many Things Like Job Opportunities, Communication, Travel, Education, Entertainment, Cultural Understanding, Cognitive Development, Or For Personal Growth, Learning English Is A Smart Choice. The Scenario Of English Has Now Changed From Foreign Language To Second Language, And Nowadays There Are Some Learners Who Adopted English As The First Language In Schools.

2. Learning English In Digital Era: By Definition, A Digital Tool Is A Software, Application, Computer Program, Or Other Electronic Device Designed To Perform A Specific Task, Improve A Function, Or Facilitate A Process Through Digital Technology. English Competency, As A Language, Can Certainly Be Developed Through The Use Of Digital Tools Like- Films, T.V. Shows, Social Media, Websites, Blogs, Online Podcasts And Online Services. Many Universities And Educational Institutions Offer Courses In English Through Platforms Like Moocs (Massive Open Online Courses). English Is Also Developed Through The Widespread Popularity Of Science And Research Through- Scientific Papers, Journals, And Discussions. Nowadays, Technological Aids Like Language Learning Apps, Online Courses, Interactive Softwares, And Even Ai-Driven Tutors Are Available To Assist Esl Learners. These Digital Tools Are Designed To Make Learning English More Accessible, Engaging, Effective And Incorporating Method. The Competency To Use English Is Also Developed With The Use Of Artificial Intelligence Which Processes Language Like Real Life Situations, Offers A Real Time Translation And Generates Human-Like Text.

Today, English Is Also The Language Of The Internet. Many Of The World's Most Popular Websites And Social Media Platforms Are In English, Making It An Important Language For Staying Connected And Informed In Today's Digital Age. As A Teacher Of English, It Is Easy To Develop The English Of The Students In The Techno-Savvy Era. There Are Many Digital Tools Available To Teach English To The Students, At Different Levels. By Using Digital Tools, Teachers Can Cater The Needs Of The Students With Different Learning Levels Like- Below Average, Average And Above Average. The Digital Tools Are Also Helpful To Develop The Language Skills Of Slow Learners. The Following Digital Tools Are Very Useful To Learn English In A Better Way Such As- Powerpoint Presentation (Ppt), Internet /Wifi, Group Chatting, Educational Websites, Online Videos And Links, Social Networking Sites, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Tagged, Myspace, Instagram, Telegram, Whats App, Etc. Teachers Can Also Use Some Digital Tools In Teaching Vocabulary Like Collocation Dictionary, Lexipedia, Snappy Words, Word Hippo, Wordnik. Com, Mobile Assisted Vocabulary And Popular Vocabulary Learning Application, Web Based Tools, Etc.

3. Review Of The Schools In Kolhapur District: There Are Many Primary And Secondary Schools Of Marathi And English Medium In Kolhapur District Of Maharashtra (India). The Researcher Visited The Secondary Schools Of Marathi And English Medium Randomly From Kagal And Gadhinglaj Tehesil In Kolhapur District To Find Awareness About The Technological Use In Teaching English.

_____

3.1 Review Of Marathi Medium School In Kolhapur District: After The Visits To The Marathi Medium Schools The Researcher Has Found And Observed Following Things.

- Some Schools Have No Ict Facilities Like Technology Enabled Or Digital Classrooms.
- In Some Of The School Technology Is Available But It Is Not In Working Condition And Seems To Be Irreparable With No Internet Facilities.
- There Are A Few Schools Where Digital Classrooms Are Available And Teachers Are Also Teaching English Using Digital Tools.
- The Students Who Learnt Through Digital Tools Are Happy And Developed Their English Skills Of Writing And Reading By Taking Active Participation.
- In Some Of The Schools, It Was Found That, Digital Classroom Teaching In Not Effective Due To Overcrowded Classes.
- In Some Of The Schools, The Newly Joined English Teachers Are Good At Handling Technology But The Senior English Teachers Need Training About How To Use The Technology.
- It Is Also Found That Some Teachers Feel That, Using Technology Is Time Consuming And Do Not Get Co-Operation Of Colleagues.
- Some Schools Have Adopted Inbuilt Subject Content Software Which Is Very Helpful To The Students To Learn The Skills Of English.
- In Some Of The Schools Of Marathi Medium Where English Is Taught Through Digital Tools Have Noticed The Desired Progress Of Students.
- Students Also Learnt How To Use Technology In A Better Way.
- In Such Schools, The Students' Skills In Learning English Appeared Improved, When Compared With The Students Of Other Schools.
- Students In Such Schools Also Improved Their Pronunciation And Reading Skills.

3 2. Review Of English Medium School In Kolhapur District: After Taking Review, The Researcher Found The Following Things.

- It Is Observed That Most Of The English Medium Schools Have A Well-Equipped Computer Lab And Audio-Visual Classrooms With Internet Facilities.
- In Many Schools, The Digital Classrooms Are Well Maintained And Used Every Day, Not Only For English But Other Subjects Too.
- There Is A Separate Period Allotted In The Time-Table For The Use Of Language Lab And Digital Classroom.
- Very Few Schools Need To Develop Their Digital Infrastructure.
- The Students Who Learn Through Digital Tools Are Happy And Develop Their Interest In English Skills Like-Writing, Reading And Communication.
- It Is Found That All English Teachers Are Able To Handle The Digital Classroom And There Is A Proper Cooperation And Coordination Among Other Colleagues.

_____

- It Is Also Found That Teaching Through Digital Tools Is More Effective Than The Rote Method Of Teaching.
- Some Schools Have Adopted Inbuilt Subject Content Software Which Is Very Helpful To The Students To Learn The Skills Of English.
- In Most Of The English Medium Schools, English Is Taught Through Digital Tools And It Is Noticed That The Desired Progress In The Students.
- Students Also Learnt How To Use Technology In A Better Way And Found That Most Of The Technology Is Handled By The Students Only. The Language Skills Of The Students Were Improved.
- Students Also Improved Their Pronunciation And Reading Skills.
- Teaching Through Digital Tools Is Really Useful In Today's Learner-Centric Educational System. Digital Tools Play An Important Role In Enhancing The Skills Of English. It Is A Need Of Time To Install Digital Infrastructure To Cater The Learning Style Of The Learners. For The Holistic Development Of The Students, Teachers Need To Take The Support Of Machine Learning Or Digital Tools In Place Of Rote Teaching Methodology. As Per The Review, It Is Found That More Importance Needs To Be Given To Digital Infrastructure In Marathi Medium School In Kolhapur District. Teachers Teaching English In Marathi Medium School Need Training And Workshops On How To Handle The Technology And Digital Tools And Various Educational Application To Teach English Effectively.

Conclusion

Thus, After Visiting The School, It Is Found That English Mediums Have Transferable Jobs While Marathi Mediums Have Problems With Consistency. Teaching Method In English Medium Schools Is Based On Outcome-Oriented Technique. While In Marathi Medium Schools, The Teachers Teach As A Protocol. Both Medium Schools Have Different Assignments, Evaluation Methods. Stakeholders Like Parents Of English Medium Schools Are Aware Of The Education And Happy When The Child Communicates In English, While The Parents Of Marathi Medium Schools Are Satisfied That At Least The Child Goes To School. English Mediums Are Preparing The Students For The 21st Century, While Marathi Medium Parents Are Content With Reading By Children. So, To Bridge The Gap Between The Students Of Marathi And English Medium Children, Marathi Medium Schools Should Develop Digital Infrastructure By Giving Training To The Teachers. English Medium Schools Should Increase The Frequency Of Teaching Through Digital Tools Considering Below Average, Average And Above Average Students And Advanced Learners. Both The Mediums Of School Have To Give The Orientation To The Parents To Motivate The Child To Use Educational Technology And Learning Through Mobile Apps. At Home Which Is Not Being Done By Any School. If The Teachers And Parents Motivate The Student To Use Digital Tools Through Mobile, The Students Will Definitely Master English Because We Can Rule Over The Word Because of the proficiency of English. However, NEP 2020 introduces multilingualism in language teaching which will affect the development of English and may not have a future. Hence, while applying the NEP 2020

_____

scenario, precautions must be taken and the global importance of English language should not be looked down upon or neglected.

References

Devadhe, Umashankar. The Teaching and Learning of Vocabulary at the Junior College Level. M.Phil. Dissertation, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune, 2016

The Role of English In Today's Digital World, English Learning Podcast

The Role of English in the Digital Age.

Citation: