EXPERIMENTING ICT IN TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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Abstract

A gale of change is blowing in the pedagogy of English Language Teaching (ELT) ICT has initiated new possibilities into the classroom. The role of the teacher, the nature and context of learning, as well as the function and relative importance of course content have all been challenged and redefined.

This research paper aims at sharing practical experiments with ICT in teaching English language and literature. It deals with the pragmatic aspects of using ICT with the student community of Business Management and Humanities. The extensive use of web 2.0 components, internet, blogs, *e*-groups, SMSs, emails, socializing portals, *e*-dictionaries, *e*-encyclopedia, power point presentations, webcasting, and audio-video, as teaching tools have been made in the classroom. The student community was motivated to make use of cyber cafes and GPRS mobiles to interact with the teacher. The paper is divided in two parts. The First part of the paper deals with the experiments carried out to develop Business English skills. The second part is dedicated to teaching literature while the third part deals with general inferences of these experiments, its limitations and opportunities.

Keywords: ICT, ELT, English Language, Literature in English, experiment, teaching through technology

We live in an era of information explosion. Once there was famine of information, today we are drowned in the deluge of information. A gale of change is blowing in the pedagogy of Teaching English Language and Literature (TELL). Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a catalyst agent. ICT has initiated new possibilities into the classroom. The marriage between education and Internet technology has made a deep impact on perspectives about teaching and learning. Technology, today, has revolutionized in such a way that the methodology use by educators to teach a foreign or secondary language has changed. In fact, the relationships between teachers and students have undergone a phenomenal change. (Barad, 2009). The role of the teacher, the nature and context of learning, as well as the function and relative importance of course content have all been challenged and redefined. Therefore, technophobic teachers have no place in this new world order.

Technology or multimedia is not a teaching method or theory, but rather it is a tool that aids educators by improving access to different types of media already in use. Technology is used to simulate real-life situations and helps learners to have control over the learning process (O'Leary, 1998). Therefore, there must be complementary relationship between SLA research and CALL practice to create a successful language learning environment (Carol, 1996). Krashen (2007) claims that using computers for Free Voluntary Surfing will encourage students to wander through the Internet and read what interests them. Krashen also claims that it will result in higher levels of literacy. Computer assisted language learning provides new opportunities for learners to engage in active communication that facilitates the development of second language competence (Peterson, 2005). Multimedia-assisted language learning and Internet-based instruction contribute to EFL students' cross cultural competence (Kim, 2005).

Computer-Enhanced Language Learning will enable learners to pool their knowledge in effective ways and enhance peer correction and language repair work. Computers enable learners to work at their own pace. (Hoven, 1999). This research paper aims at sharing practical experiments with ICT in *Teaching English Language and Literature*. The paper deals with pragmatic aspects of using ICT with the student

community of Business Management and Humanities. The extensive use of web 2.0 components, internet, blogs, *e*-groups, SMSs, emails, socializing portals, *e*-dictionaries, *e*-encyclopedia, PowerPoint presentations, webcasting, and audio-video were experimented with inside the classroom as teaching tools. The student community was motivated to make use of cyber cafes and GPRS mobiles to interact with the teacher.

The research paper deals with very pertinent questions
- How far is ICT useful to student community?
- What is the role of ICT in teaching English language and literature?
- What kind of methods can be used to overcome students' problems?
- Can it empower student community? Can it improve their proficiency of learning?

To begin with, the students should be able to comprehend fully what has been taught to him/her and then should be able to reproduce it, not only in exam but in day to day life also. If the students fail to do so, he is neither empowered nor has his proficiency level improved. The experiments shared in this paper have successfully worked with the student community.

What I have not attempted in this paper is the relationship between theory and application. Michael Levy (1997) writes in *Computer-Assisted Language Learning* that he is motivated by a desire to better understand the relationship between theory and application; however the approach taken in the paper is more application based than theorizing.

First and foremost, let us review English teaching in the class of commerce and business management. Here, ICT is of great use. As compared to the class of literature, language classes of commerce and management students are more receptive and responsive in using technology. This receptivity of commerce & management students helps the teacher to go beyond horizons in experimenting innovative practices in the classroom. I implemented some innovativeness in teaching text (novel), share market, questionnaire, report writing, letters to editors, business letters and more through web resources, web portals, online surveys, emails, and SMSs.

The teachers of English in colleges other than those teaching literatures in English are like fish out of water. These teachers are stuffed with literary theories as they pursue careers in commerce or science or engineering colleges, they may feel like aliens on the earth. Similar were my feelings when I joined Commerce and BBA College in 1996. Thanks to technology that it saved me from being alienated or feeling like a fish out of water. Slowly and steadily within three years of my service, I developed some innovative methods to teach business English as well as literary text to management/business students.

Experiment 1
It was Sherlock Holmes's 'The Hound of the Baskervilles'. That text haunted students as well as teachers of Saurashtra University. But in my class, we enjoyed it. While teaching – 'Sherlock Holmes's *The Hound of the Baskerville',* I prepared an OHP transparency of the pencil sketches published during its first publication in a magazine from that time. At that time I did not have laptop or LCD projector to make it more effective. However, I used Google image search to aid the presentation. I found innumerable sketches that depicted various scenes of the novel. The text was very difficult. The language was relatively tough, thereby making it difficult for commerce students to understand. The proof of its difficulty lies in the fact that Saurashtra University removed it from its syllabus the very next year because of several complaints received from its teachers. If my students and I enjoyed this text, it was only because of the graphics provided in the novel. Internet helped me in getting these sketches. Later on we viewed the movie *The Hound of the Baskerville* (Lanfield, 1939) in the classroom. Movies always seem to help in remembering things which are difficult to envision otherwise. It was not easy to retrieve an English-based movie in the small town where I taught. Web portals like Youtube.com and video.google.com helped me a lot. The effect was that most of my students fared well in the textual questions in examination, whereas, the students of other colleges complained that the paper was difficult.

Web resources used in this experiment
- http://image.google.com;

- http://video.google.com;
- www.youtube.com

Method
- Use of OHP projector with printed transparencies of sketched of images related to important scene from the novel.
- CD/DVD player with TV for viewing movie downloaded from web portals.

Experiment 2

Secondly, it was questionnaire and report writing. These are purely commercial and management topics. Guide books have several stereotype examples. Neither was I happy teaching it nor were my students doing well. I resorted to websites. Luckily, I found cross-tabsurveys.com and monkeygizmo.com for the latest questionnaire. Surveygizmo.com & moodle survey were used for report writing. I registered my email id with cross-tabsurveys.com. Regularly they sent me the latest questionnaire to survey customer satisfaction in the field of mobiles, telecom service providers, DTH, television soap operas, socio-economic condition of people working in various fields. I took these examples in the classroom. As they all were current topics, it interested students more than those given in books. The latest examples in books are also at least a year old, whereas examples from the internet were as live as something happening at-the-moment. Today's teacher should not be up-to-date, but up-to-the moment, because things are changing very fast. As I saw that students were very much interested in such questionnaires, I asked them to register with the same website. All of us received new questionnaires for online surveys. We participated in the survey collectively and then prepared a 'report' of the results. 'Report Writing' is taught as an independent topic. If it is associated with the questionnaire and the outcome of the survey is written as a report, it makes it a lot easier to understand both of these topics. As I saw that most of the students have started going to cyber café and are working sincerely, I created an e-Group for all of the students. I used Yahoo Groups to organize my e-Group.

Through this group we circulated reports made on the basis of the questionnaires. I received good responses and emails started flowing in good numbers. On several occasions, I chatted with students to guide them. The discussions become livelier in the classroom. Students discussed emails received by one another. I concluded that students had acquired capabilities to prepare rather good questionnaires and reports. Thus, online questionnaires and reports shared through e-groups have helped me teach these topics effectively. The results were amazing. Their language use displayed remarkable improvement. Previously, they had made mistakes in writing questions. However, that has now changed. One of the most common mistakes made was the use of verbs before subjects in interrogative sentences. This placement of verbs before subjects was, and is, problematic because of the L1 effect. In the 'Gujarati' language, the subject is followed by verb, even in interrogative sentences. While drafting the report, the students seemed to shift from using simple past tense to present continuous tense. Report writing through emails on discussion forums within the groups made them conscious of using the correct form of tense. Thus they acquired skills in writing questions and reports in simple past tense. The students' overall performance improved, which encouraged me to try new things.

Web resources
- www.cross-tabsurvey.com,
- www.monkeygizmo.com,
- www.surveygizmo.com,
- Moodle survey (www.dilipbarad.com/tell)

Method

Synchronous and asynchronous mode with the help of emails, Yahoo e-groups and chat applets (Yahoo Messenger, Skype and Google Talk.)

Experiment 3

Thirdly, the most difficult part of commercial English is the Share Market Report. The situation was that many students knew more about share marketing than me. It is always humbling to teach those who know better than you. The first thing I did was to invest hard cash in the share market, then I started reading business magazines and newspapers. But still the share market played hide and seek with me. I found that I confused myself and my students in the share market class. Students were none too pleased. My reading and investment gave me good knowledge of the share market, but still I was not able to deliver well. My way of judging my teaching was by reading the faces of my students at the end of each class. If there was a mark of satisfaction, I would conclude that I had done well. In the share marketing class, I missed this satisfaction on the faces of the students. I resorted to the internet. Internet, like Alladin's Gin, was ready to help me. I found websites like www.moneycontrol.com and www.moneybhai.com. These websites gave me an idea to play the game of portfolio management and thus the idea to teach share marketing. Moneybhai.com is a Free Online Virtual Stock Market Trading Game portal owned and operated by moneycontrol.com, which is also run by TV18 group.

I asked students to register with this website and start playing the portfolio management game online. We played this game for 8 weeks and then the winner was awarded a prize. This website gave very good services free of cost. Every day it sent emails showing the status of portfolios. All the students received emails with their standing in the market. They had to forward these emails to me. I organized their emails and made tables of their daily profit and loss. This was discussed in the classroom. I got such a magnificent success with this experiment that even today some of the students have continued playing the game and they keep notifying me of their progress. Better than that, some of them made their career in it by joining companies like indiabulls, sharekhan, and stock holding. These students write in their emails that it was this online game that helped them generate interest in share marketing and secure a job in a similar field. I am not satisfied with this experiment because they received jobs in this field, but rather, I am satisfied with the way technology has clicked in the classroom and provided a space of real learning to take place. They acquired careers in this field because they were well versed in business English. This soft-skill helped them score well in BULATS (www.bulats.org). Thus, one of the hardest nuts to crack, the Goliath of business English – share market report – was conquered with the help of knight called ICT.

Web resources
- [www.moneycontrol.com,](http://www.moneycontrol.com)
- [www.moneybhai.com,](http://www.moneybhai.com)
- Yahoo e-Groups.

Method
Asynchronous by e-groups and synchronous through chat applet.

Experiment 4 & 5
Other topics, such as letters to editors, modern forms of communication, and advertisement, were also taught and learned effectively through ICT. For instance, while teaching modern forms of communication, I used to make live demos of sending and receiving emails from the classroom. Our e-Groups helped a lot in order to better understand this topic.

Instead of writing artificial letters on imaginary topics, we experimented with writing 'real time' letters. This was not done through hard copy letters, but email was used as a medium to send business letters. I asked students to bring their 'actual' inquiries or complaints. The students had several inquiries to be made to companies regarding their products and several complaints regarding their services. We discussed these topics in the class. More often the grievances were related to after-sales services in electronics items and mobile phone billings. At the end of the day, emails were drafted collectively and sent from the classroom with the help of the GPRS internet connection. When we received a reply from companies, we discussed those emailed letters in class. The companies normally set their emails to auto-reply. Most of the auto-replies were drafted in three small paragraphs with an ideal beginning, middle and end. It helped me a lot in teaching not only the structure of a business letter but also the type of language

used in business letters. The use of courteousness in tone and the typical vocabulary of business letters were better learned through this method. This practice helped students to acquire business letter writing skills. There is always a difference in letters printed in books and letters that are actually written in a business environment. We were able to understand this difference which helped students to learn this skill far better than before.

To teach 'letters to the editors', I adopted an innovativeness in sending real SMS/emails to the editor of The Times of India news daily. First we discussed some topics of common interest which were daily news items. Then, the views of the students were summarized. Students discussed in groups and the group leader presented the "gist" of their discussion. The main points of the discussions were sent through SMS/email directly from the classroom. When our letters to the editor were published in the newspaper, it was a moment of great satisfaction. And it happened several times. We furthered this practice in discussing business magazines and wrote to them as well. The entire practice interested students because it was sent through SMS and email. If I would have told them to write a letter and send it through the post offices (snail mail), it would have not generated the same interest, and it would take weeks to get it printed in a newspaper/magazine. This practice encouraged many of students to SMS their views to news channels, newspapers and magazines. When they were printed, we celebrated it with a live discussion about it. The best result I received through this practice was the fact that some of the students are freelance journalists with leading newspapers and news channels. They give credit to this method of learning language for journalism for getting job in the field of journalism. While experimenting such diverse things, I did not realize that I was unconsciously teaching ESP (English for Special Purpose) to the students. By and large, they learned English for journalism, English for Business letter, English for SMSs, English for literature etc.

Web resources
- www.eg4u.com/en/business-english/communication/business-letter
- www.eslgo,com/classes/business/classes-mehtod,
- SMS texts, Emails.

Method
MS Office Word for editing, Encarta e-dictionary and thesaurus for drafting SMS and Email, SMS test & email to the editors of newspapers and magazines.

ICT has helped a lot in improving teaching skills. But that is not as important as the fact that it has helped students improve their proficiency in learning literary text, questionnaire, report writing, letters to editors, emailing, SMSing and share market reporting. As an end result, they felt empowered in business English. Due to a lack of reliable testing tools, it is difficult to measure how far these experiments have helped students to improve their business English skills. However from their placement and progress we may infer that these Web 2.0 tools have helped them to improve their language proficiency.

Part 2
Shifting from the classroom of commerce and management to literature, I would begin by saying that foreign literature could never be taught effectively without ICT.

Our teacher used to teach without ICT, but only to those who were powerful in expression and had a great command over vocabulary. One must be good at giving convincing logical, philosophical arguments to succeed in teaching literature. Those lacking such skills may fail to deliver. The actual problem is not with teachers or students; it lies within the basic pattern of occidental and oriental thinking. The Western (Occidental) collective consciousness is different from that of the Eastern (Oriental). Their origin of literature is deeply rooted in Greek culture, myth and legends, Indian subcontinent in Vedas, Ramayana, Mahabharata and Puranas. The Western critical insight became more argumentative and relied on logic, whereas Eastern ideas mostly resided on faith. Coming in to the 20th century, we see a deep chasm in Western and Eastern thinking. Darwin, Freud, Marx, and the World Wars had changed the way the Western world was looking at things. To a greater extent, it shattered their faith in their belief system.

Because of such reasons, our teachers as well as students, at times, grapple in darkness to understand their literary concepts and –isms. I faced several such problems as a student as well as a teacher. Here, ICT was of incredible help to me in reaching out to students and helping them to learn easily.

Experiment 6
Collective Reading
The comprehension hypothesis (Krashen, 2004) claims that language acquisition does not occur when learners focus on form. It happens only when they engage with the messages they are conveying and understanding. The hypothesis states that the process of comprehension and acquisition are closely related. Thus, collective reading leads towards better comprehension of literary concepts and in turn it helps in better acquisition and understanding of literature. The students rarely read the things prescribed in the curriculum. Let us come out of the illusion that students will go to libraries and read. Even when websites are referred to in a classroom, approximately 10% of the students will actually visit and read the website. The problem in not reading web-resources nor the lack of eagerness to learn, but a lack of infrastructure in obtaining easy access to the internet. I have made one point very clear in the beginning that business students are more receptive to technology than literature students. Somehow, literature students find it awkward to spend time on technology and learn e-skills. So the best way to enhance reading skills and to empower literature students in the subject knowledge is to have the practice of 'collective reading'. This can be done through word or power point file projected on the screen and read collectively. It can also be done by refereeing to web sites in the classroom or even by using CDs, e-encyclopedia, e-dictionaries, and e-thesaurus, etc. The learning of literature becomes very lively and interesting if all the students are learning the same thing at the same time. This not only develops reading skills, but it also gives a very good understanding of the subject. It also helps in developing cognitive reading skills. The interpretation of a literary text is a key component in the study of literature. The collective reading also provides some space for individual interpretation. To give an example that came in handy, along with websites, is Microsoft's Encarta Encyclopedia.

After using it for one year, I have come to conclusion that all the teachers of English literature should make extensive use of such an encyclopedia is the classroom. Encarta made teaching and learning very easy because of its rich resources which include multimedia and images. Similarly, while teaching any concept of literature or any creative work these e-resources helped to retrieve any sort of ready reference. The literature class then becomes live as all the students are gaining similar information at the same time. Similarly, live internet connection while teaching literature also has an added advantage. For instance, while teaching modern critical theories like post modernism, post colonialism, deconstruction, post structuralism etc, search engines like bing.com, and google.com are incredibly helpful. Even if we wanted to discuss the latest in the field of literature, we could click and find websites like www.contemporarywriters.com and get up-to-the-moment information to share with students. All difficult –isms of the 20th century are well explained in Encarta and at www.reference.com. Thus, collective reading of websites, online references, e-encyclopedia, PowerPoint and Word files helped in learning:

(i)   Myths and mythology of Greek and Roman,
(ii)   Poems and plays,
(iii)   Literary theories and
(iv)   Modern –isms.

Web resources
- www.google.com
- www.bing.com
- www.reference.com,
- www.contemporarywriters.com,
- www.gutenberg.org,
- Microsoft Encarta,
- Encarta dictionary and thesaurus,

Method:
Projection of word, power point files, websites, dictionary, thesaurus etc. through LCD on large screen.

Experiment 7
Teaching Plays / novels through movies with the help of power point
Using PowerPoint for presentation is, now, no longer a new experiment. Even children studying in schools are good at it. The more important aspect is how effectively we can make use of it in a literature classroom. We have a good resource of VCDs/DVDs/Audio books which are related to the text (novel/play) we have in our syllabus. We used to give VCD/DVD to students to view it. Not always the movie, play or audio book is interesting to view/listen. Very long plays and listening to audio books are at times boring. Viewing plays for more than three hours or listening novels three hours daily for several weeks is not healthy practice in using ICT tools in literature classroom. So, not all students were watching movies or plays. I thought of an innovative idea.

I prepared a PowerPoint presentation of important scenes in the movie and play and discussed its importance in the classroom. Instead of watching a whole play at once, we can cut the play into bits and pieces. We read a section of the text and some was viewed. We additionally used video and sound editing software. These edited video and audio clips were very effectively used in a PowerPoint presentation. We also used video libraries from web resources. Web resources mentioned below are full of rich resources for videos useful in teaching English Language and Literature. The result was unbelievable. The teacher has to struggle with preparing all of these slides, which is not easy task. But the learning of novels/plays becomes not only interesting but it really reaches out to the students.

Web resources
- www.youtube.com
- http://video.google.com
- www.keepvid.com
- www.yappr.com
- Audio books

E-resources
video and sound editing software.

Method
PowerPoint presentation with audio and video clips.

Experiment 8
Teaching Poetry
Apart from novels and plays; in the teaching of Poetry ICT tools can be a great help. Teaching poetry is not every teacher's cup of tea. It definitely is not mine! Of all the genres of literature, it is the most difficult. The real beauty and meaning of poetry lies in its recitation. Not all teachers are good at reciting. And even someone that is good at reciting may face problems with various poems, ballads, epics, lyrics, sonnets, etc. So again, Alladin's Gin came to my help. I found websites like www.librivox.org which has a very good collection of poems in audio version, recited by the native speakers. It is web portal where anybody can upload their recitation and it is free to download. As we search for a particular poem, we attain several recitations. We can freely download all of them and choose the best one for our classroom. Teachers and students can also upload their own versions of literary works and recitation to the site. Thus, it motivated students to sing poems, record it and upload to the site. Then they invite their friends and relatives to listen it. The entire exercise becomes interesting. We use sound editing software like Audacity for recording and editing recited poems. This program is a freeware and easily downloadable. It's easiness in operation helped our students to work efficiently on it. Students enjoyed working with these tools and what made me happy was that the students were and still are learning literature through technology.

Web resources
- www.librivox.com,
- www.podcast.com.

e-resources
- Sound editing software – Audacity.
- audio books.

Method
- Audio poems downloaded from librivox.com
- Poems recorded in Audacity, converted into mp3 format for mobile phones and shared among students for listening

Experiment 9
Teaching Critical Theories and Criticism
Critical theories and criticisms are not an easy path to tread on. The philosophical base of these theories makes it more difficult to understand the concept. Similarly, there is also difficulty in teaching applied criticism. The best approach to improve proficiency of students in criticism is through 'applied criticism'. So there are two things at stake, one, learning theories and second, apply those theories in practical criticism of a literary work. In traditional classroom, critical theories are taught in a lecture method and then some texts are given in photocopies to apply those critical theories. The first part of teaching theories is okay but the second part can be made more interesting with some web resources. We tried it with contemporary writers. After learning critical theories, students were asked to read recently published novels. At one point we made compulsory that the writer should have his website or web space where a reader could interact with him/her. That was not a difficult task. Most of the contemporary writers had a very good presence on web space. For this experiment we took three novels (*Five point Someone, Three Mistakes of my Life and One Night @ Call Centre*) of Chetan Bhagat. Students read the novels, read the blog on which readers had given various comments on the text, and then they were asked to give their comments on the blog (www.chetanbhagat.com). The writer, Chetan Bhagat, used to read these comments and attempted to vindicate his stand. The students learned to understand the text from various points of view, including the writers. They also applied several critical theories on the text. The peer comments were also very interesting. The response was satisfactory. At the end of the experiment, what I found was that students' are attracted to blogging and websites because of the glamour attached to it. But this exercise helped them in developing their critical insight. They realized that a work of art has innumerable dimensions and it can be variously interpreted. This was enough for me to teach them various critical theories. Their receptivity has grown manifold.

Web resources
- Writer's blog,
- www.chetanbhagat.com,
- www.wikieducator.org/Literary_criticism

Method
- Blended learning
- Learning theories in traditional method and
- Applying criticism on the blogs of the writer
- Reviewing comments of readers and peers.

Experiment 10
Synergism of WikIEducator and Moodle
To teach literature through web 2.0 tools, I have prepared a unit of literary theories and criticism on 'Aristotle *Poetics'* and other critics on WikiEducator (www.wikieducator.org/Literary_criticism). This is open space, free platform for open editing, preparing content and easy for student to access. The link of

this unit is shared with students through e-group and classroom interaction. In this unit, at the end of topic, self-assessment questions (SAQs) are given. Here, I have synergized WikiEducator with Moodle. I gave the link from WikiEducator to my moodle site (www.dilipbarad.com/tell). For SAQs, students are directed to moodle, where in multiple choice questions, SCORM, cloze, match the items, true or false etc kind of questions are asked to test their progress. They go through the exercise, see their progress graph within a second and return back to WikiEducator to continue with the unit. WikiEducator and Moodle both give incredible opportunities to explore web resources. The teacher can give links to various useful websites for further readings. Students get ready made bibliographies to refer to which is very important in the study of literature. At the click of a mouse, thousands of articles and books are before their eyes. This sort of synergism helps students to improve their reading skills, increase their subject knowledge and instant assessment of their progress. If students can check their progress before moving to next stage of learning, it helps them a lot. Classroom examinations are not very effective as there is time-gap between the test and its result. A lot of time has passed by the time the teacher has manually checked all of the answer books and then gives the individual feedback; whereas, on Moodle, within seconds, places the assessment before the eyes of the students with feedback and the right answers. The liberty with which students and teachers can work in this environment gives ample space for teaching and learning. This synergism can help in both the language and the literature learning.

Web resources
- www.dilipbarad.com/tell (Moodle interface)
- www.wikieducator.org/user:Dilipbarad (WikiEducator)
- www.wikieducator.org/Literary_criticism

Method
- Reading on Wikieducator
- Self-Assessment on Moodle

Part 3
Inference
Let me lead you to the conclusion after giving my inference on these experiments. The question may come to mind; what are the benefits of all these experiments?

Well, there is a limit to everyone's memory. No one can remember all the information in the world. With such e-resources and the internet very handy in the class room, I, as a teacher of language and literature feel confident. As my memory is not over-burdened with facts and figures, I am mentally free to give more time for discussion and explanation. I feel that ICT has improved my proficiency in explaining subtle mysteries of literature. As a result, my students are also empowered to understand language and literature in a better way than they used to do in the traditional lecture method. I am not saying that traditional lecture method is out of date and it should be replaced, but the outreach in that method is limited to a few students. To believe that all the students are physically sitting before us and enjoying our oratory and are 'listening' in real sense is nothing but an idiot's idea. LCD projection aids to their better sensory perception. They are listening, they are reading and they are also seeing the material. It is well known to one and all that there are various kinds of learners, viz., auditory, visual and kinesthetic. Teaching with the help of ICT tools helps address various needs of the learners.

An individual cannot be divided in the water tight compartments of these learning styles. In an individual there is a mingling of all these types of learners. Some part of oneself is visual; the other is auditory and kinesthetic. When a teacher uses ICT tools in the classroom, it helps a lot as three senses work together to increase student's proficiency. This leads to student's expression power, as they themselves have seen and listened to poems, pictures, graphics, text etc, they can express themselves quite well in examination. In traditional lecture method only one sensory perception – listening – is functioning. At the same time we can concentrate more on the number of students on the point of discussion. Psychologically speaking it has had a better impact to empower and improve their proficiency level.

Last but not the least, these experiments led us towards ATL, deriving a term form ATM – any time money, Any Time Learning. The students will be freed from the shackles and learn things of their interest, any time and from anywhere. They may be travelling and listening to mp3 recordings and still participate in this type of learning. If they are ill or because of social preoccupations are not able to attend classes, there is no need to worry because they can access the website and catch up with the missed class. The true spirit of democracy lies in freedom. These experiments lead towards a democratic freedom in teaching and learning.

I will conclude with a short overview on the threats in this ICT enabled teaching-learning system. First and foremost, the teacher should not be technophobic. He/she should be well versed in the art of using techno-gadgets, internet, e-resources etc. A teacher who is adamant 'not to change' is one of the biggest hurdles in this type of system. Secondly, the place where he works should have proper infrastructure. The world still has such places where a constant supply of electric power is a dream. Even in the most advanced part of the world, hi-speed internet connectivity is not possible. Third, students' eagerness and willingness to be a part of this system; if they are ready to learn a little bit of internet surfing and emailing, it can come as an added advantage to the success of an ICT enabled teaching system. The students therefore should be more adaptive and responsive to this method. Lastly, ICT can never replace a teacher. A man is a better teacher than a machine. Neither text nor technology can replace a teacher. A good teacher will always be good, whether he uses ICT or not. But if he uses it, it could improve the proficiency level of his students and empower them with better understanding of language and literature.

As always, there are limitations to these experiments. What worked successfully in my environment may not work with an equal success rate in another environment. It is possible that several teachers and researchers have conducted such experiments. Their results may vary but one should not stop experimenting. Though there is the danger of repeating the same experiments time and again, and henceforth, to avoid repetition, bibliographic records of such experiments should be maintained. We should keep in mind what Michael Levy (1997) said by quoting R.W. Last in *Computer-Assisted Language Learning "A sense of whole is imperative … practitioners and researchers of CALL have not really assimilated the work that has been done."* To assimilate the work that has been done one has to experiment keeping the following findings of Liu Min, Moore Zena, Graham Leah, & Lee Shinwoong (2002) in view. They have done a path breaking study: *A Look at the Research on Computer-Based Technology Use in Second Language Learning: Review of Literature from 1990-2000*, wherein they examined research articles published in the decade – 1990 to 2000. Their findings are equally true for my experiments. Thus, I end my paper with the findings of Lie et el (2002):
- Research needs to have a solid foundation in theories;
- Software needs to be based upon relevant pedagogical and design principles for them to be effective;
- Studies need to use well-established and reliable measures;
- Research focus should go beyond anxiety, attitudes, vocabulary acquisition, language production;
- More research needs to be conducted in the less explored skills areas such as speaking, listening, and culture.

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