

# Teaching Reading and Writing in Digital Age

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**Abstract-** Teaching and learning in digital age is a kind of adventurous task with innovation, enthusiasm and curiosity. Because internet is the key component in this scientific era that has brought drastic changes in each and every sphere of the life. Numerous advancement and degradation happen, too due to this advancement. We all witnessed of this advancement where numbers of people have enjoyed the journey from page to pager, from pager to wiber with the use of language skills (LSRW).

**Keywords-** *technology, e-resources, screenagers, integration, and well instruction based teaching*

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper is mainly going to present classroom teaching experiences and conscious observation while teaching language/soft skills and communication skills to engineering students and the researcher has found that at UG level it is very obvious to have some idea about the use of language but when it comes to use it at the advance level (Revised Blooms Taxonomy), it becomes the perilous situation in the real sense and failure result will occur either in the form of mark sheet/placement process or at the workplace and at personal level, too. Though advancement at scientific and technological level happen but something is lacking and that has to be empowered, specially here focus will be on language skills that still will confine up to reading and writing skills. These are the two crucial skills that have to be empowered, because both help to generate idea and to develop creative and critical thinking, too.

Of course at some what level the technology has brought changes in the classroom teaching

Learning method but the use of language is slightly updated and more hampered by technology. That doesn't mean the diversify only worst situation that's focusing, there are benefits, too, likewise variety of live examples/situations/videos are available on internet, whatsapp, so that one can approach and learn the language.

This is the time of screen-agers, netizens and app-agers. Buying, reading-writing, selling, presenting, attending classes, all these work a person can do by sitting at his convenient place. One of the best examples of use of technology at the grand level is our respected PM, Mr. Narendra Modi.

Various kinds of e-sources, blog, and websites are available that a person can use and learn numbers of things, where websites and web links play the crucial role as an E-resource person and prepare the students/candidates/learners for the desired/planned lesson/tutorial/workshop, etc.

Looking at these numerous benefits of technology here my paper will confine up to teaching and learning reading-writing skills, especially for UG students in this digital age. Now the paper will present some review of related literature followed by the use of technology in teaching language.

**Reading-** reading is a mental interaction of a reader to the text. Reading as an interactive Process - The reader reconstructs the text information based in part on the knowledge drawn from the text and in part from the prior knowledge of the reader. Thus reading is viewed a kind of dialogue between the reader and the text (Barnett 1989; Carell & Elsterhold, 1983). The term interaction refers to many component skills potentially in simultaneous operation. The interaction of cognitive skills leads to fluent reading comprehension. Here in this process it assumes that skills at all levels are interactively available to process and interpret the text.

### *Why it's important?*

Reading, being the input skill helps to produce fruitful language, if proper reading has been taken place. As I have stated earlier that it is a mental interaction of a reader with the text, While reading it's provide the way to the reader how to read text, to understand, to get the meaning, to analyse, to judge, to reconstruct or to rewrite/summarise, to evaluate and recreate, etc. How the reader is reading the text is also significant, does the reader known to the reading techniques and if knowing, using them while reading and able to come out with desired or extra ordinary output.

In daily communication, listening plays an important role. Research has demonstrated that adults spend 40-50% of communication with listening, 25-30% speaking, 11-16% reading, and about 9% writing (Vandergrift, 1999).

Researchers reported that 39% of children and teens read daily using electronic devices, but only 28% read printed materials every day. Those who read only onscreen were three times less likely to say they enjoy reading very much and a third less likely to have a favorite book. The study also found that young people who read daily only onscreen were nearly two times less likely to be above-average readers than those who read daily in print or both in print and onscreen.

As Kamil (2004) notes, effective comprehension instruction is far from simple. The problem may stem, at least in part, from a lack of training and a dearth of instructional resources. Making Connections... was developed to respond to this need.

Research indicates that good readers of all ages engage in conscious, active comprehension strategies before, during,

and after reading (Pressley & Wharton-McDonald, 1997). Much of the research on reading comprehension has centered on the question of whether it is possible to improve children's understanding and recall of texts by explicitly teaching them to implement the strategies that good readers use. The answer is a resounding "yes." With respect to types of reading, there are two types of reading, extensive and intensive reading (Hedge, 2003, cited in Suleiman, 2005). Extensive reading refers to skimming and scanning activities or quantity of material.

Hedge (2003) states that since extensive reading helps in developing reading ability, it should be built into an EFL/ESL programme provided the selected texts are "authentic", i.e. "not written for language learners and published in the original language" (p. 218)- and "graded". In intensive reading, students usually read a page to explore the meaning and to be acquainted with writing mechanisms. Hedge argues that it is "only through more extensive reading that learners can gain substantial practice in operating these strategies more independently on a range of materials." (p. 202). These strategies can be either text-related or learner-related: the former includes an awareness of text organization, while the latter includes strategies like linguistic, schematic, and metacognitive strategies.

#### *Characteristics of an Effective Reader*

- Chooses a variety of topics
- Reads for different purposes
- Responds to text
- Reads different genre
- Pre-reads and rereads to increase understanding
- Shares reading
- Reads to: Predict, Connect, Question, Clarify, Evaluate

## II. SELECTION OF THE TEXT

While selecting the text, what Francoise Grellet (1981), David Nunan (1989) and Christine Nuttall (1982) said- These skills which include word-attack and text attack skills seem to be the most relevant to our situation. Effective reading depends upon difficult level of the text, the unknown words in the text and background knowledge of the reader. It all contributes to the reading successfully getting the message of the writer.

Factors which make reading uneasy /or difficult for the learners. A list of such factors is given as under: Vocabulary. Structure of sentences. Background knowledge of the students.

## III. DEVELOPING INTEGRATED SKILLS

As, Francoise Grellet (1981) suggests that reading comprehension should not be separated from the other skills (p-8). The integration of skills seems to occur naturally.

1. Reading and listening, for example, listening to several summaries of the same text prepared by the learners with a purpose to enable them to focus on the main points in the

text and listen to their classmates. For more authentic listening task they could be asked to summarize a text.

2. Reading and writing, for example, summarizing a text to one third of its original.

3 Reading and speaking, for example, discussion, appreciation after reading a text. The purpose is to enable the learners to react to different types of texts and to express their own ideas and opinion in English.

#### *Writing*

It enables the transmission of ideas over vast distances of time and space and is a prerequisite of complex civilization. Writing is of fundamental importance to learning, to development of the person in each learner, and to success in the educational system. As teachers, we need to work continually to aid our students in their search for fulfilment as writers (Graham & Harris, 1993).

Lannon (1989) views writing as "the process of transforming the material discovered by research inspiration, accident, trial or error, or whatever into a message with a definite meaning- writing is a process of deliberate decision" (p.9). It means that writing must convey a message with a meaning.

Moreover, writing is directly linked to people's roles in society. According to Tribble (1996: 12) to be deprived of the opportunity to learn how to write is "to be excluded from a wide range of social roles, including those which the majority of people in industrialized societies associate with power and prestige." In the same direction goes Kress (1989; in Tribble, 1996), emphasizing that learning to write is not just a question of developing a set of mechanical 'orthographic' skills but it also involves learning a new set of cognitive and social relations.

*Writing and ESP-* is concerned with the linguistic delineation of registers and vocabulary and structure, specific to certain contextual boundaries. If the text is for scientific purpose then the topics, the language, the structure and discourse will change automatically.

#### *Barriers to effective writing*

1. Lack of confidence in writing and in the styles of presentation are major deterrents (Hemings et.al.2005& Hicks 1995).
2. Fear of rejection and open criticism.
3. Not knowing where, when and how to start.
3. Unable to put thoughts into words.
4. Lack of organization skills of ideas, accuracy and appropriacy.
5. Lack of command over language in written communication.
6. Unable to adjust ideas in apt format and style.
7. Don't know academic writing.

Harmer (1998: 79) illustrates the reasons for teaching writing as follows:

*Reinforcement:* Some learners acquire languages in a purely oral/aural way, but most of them benefit greatly from seeing the language written down.

*Language development:* The mental activity learners go through in order to construct proper written texts is all part of the ongoing learning experience.

*Learning style:* For many learners, producing language in a slower way is something they appreciate. Writing provides time and ease for learners more than face-to-face communication does.

*Writing as a skill:* Learners need to know how to write essays, how to put written reports together and how the writing system operates just as they need to know how to pronounce language appropriately.

#### *Characteristics of an Effective Writer*

- Chooses a variety of topics
- Writes in various modes
- Generates many drafts
- Tries new writing techniques and strategies
- Revises to improve how the piece sounds
- Shares writing
- Takes pride in finished piece by making sure it is correct:
  - Grammar, spelling, punctuation, legibility.

#### *Integrating Reading and Writing*

Reading and writing are considered as the productive skills in terms of language acquisition. Classrooms in which reading and writing are integrated are described as using “whole language” (Newman, 1985) or “literature-based” (De Ford, 1986) approaches. Such approaches stress immersion of students in a language-based program that de-emphasizes skill instruction and stress supportive environment in which students are encouraged through different opportunities to develop personally relevant reasons for selecting books or topics about which to write.

Promoting reading comprehension and focusing on writing are considered highly important in Content and Language Integrated Learning methodology (Wolff, 2005, p.16, cited in Loranc-Paszyk, 2009). Integrated reading and writing activities brings benefits to the learner with respect to both content learning and language learning processes.

*How to make them efficient-* Well instructional based material will definitely play the pivotal role and make any reading/writing programme efficient and effective and interactive. It is depending upon the strategy used by the researcher, how s/he executes the programme in the classroom. Using Blooms taxonomy will make one's reading/writing programme interesting and lead learners towards the level of developing learner autonomy in a multi directional way. On the other hand various kinds of mobile apps can help to develop reading and writing skills. For e.g

- Describe the following incident in your words.
- Rewrite this passage in your words and find out different conclusion of this story.

- Analyse this theorem as per your understanding.
- Critically analyse the theory of .....

Such kind of exercise will definitely indulge learners to use language and use their own idea, so that use of critical thinking skills (from LOT to HOT), writing skills and other integrated skills will develop automatically.

Furthermore, Use of technology is also help the researcher to make it much more interesting and lively. Numbers of mobile applications related to developing reading and writing are available, so that the researcher can use them and teach reading and writing. Likewise, prepare a lesson, upload it on either blog/virtual classroom/android reading/writing application, as and when you post it, your selected learners get and they will read the given task at their own time, perform task and reply, even if they can share with their peers and share their feedback, too. Internally evaluation and discussion on the given task is also possible. The researcher will afterwards get the data and evaluate it and send the remarks. In this way it can be done effectively.

Moreover, use of language lab software during laboratory session will also help the researcher and the students to update their language skills.

#### CONCLUSION

As it is stated earlier numerous advancements have been taken place due to scientific and technological advancement, where internet and mobile applications have emphasized a lot as far as developing language skills are concerned. Online teaching/learning programmes for developing reading and writing will definitely enhance their skills but care has to be taken personally, where well instructional programme will help to develop their employability skills, too.

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