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Blended Learning : The Future of English Language

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Blended learning is a style of education in which students learn via electronic and online media as well as traditional face to face teaching. The time is now! Pedagogy is rapidly changing. This paper suggests that Blended Learning is one of the most important pedagogical formats that can enhance students learning, optimize the use of active learning strategies and potentially improve student learning outcomes.

As per UNESCO data of 27.03.2020 about 1600 million students are affected by closure of schools and colleges globally. And around 65 million teachers in about 165 countries. Highlighting “startling digital divides”, UNESCO further emphasizes that about 43% of the young people worldwide have no access to internet at home. This means around 876 million students have no internet when ‘distance learning’ is the only option as colleges are closed. But many teachers and students are not techno savvy and also courses need face to face interaction, hence The Blended Learning becomes the need of hour; the future of Higher Education and English Language.

Higher education, and English literature in particular is completely torned, teetered and stuttered. Thus from the eyes of this research paper I want to peep into the changes now colleges and universities should make post covid period. The investment in e-libraries, e-studios, e-English labs, etc. has become compulsory along with the traditional class room teaching and hence the arrival of Blended Learning.

We all agree to the point that Blended Learning should emerge as future of English Language but we can't overrule the Challenges in the path of Blended Learning.

1. **Access to Technology:** As cited earlier almost 41% of the students not only in India but worldwide do not have access to internet activity, electronic devices, such as laptops, I Pads, computer or latest smart phones.

2. **Course structure and designing:** As blended learning means the fusion of class room teaching and e-learning, the curriculum should also be designed and restructured in similar way. We should redesign the present traditional course and syllabus to the new invented blended and hybrid learning.

3. **Enhanced skills:** Both the teacher and the learner should be trained appropriately and competent enough to handle the new technologies.

4. **Evaluation:** With the change in curriculum the process of evaluation needs to be changed as evaluation holds a pivotal part of our education system. The new evaluation system can include, more of online multiple choice questions, dropbox, check box and examinations no more depend upon the traditional application of crammed material.

5. **Expenses:** Technology is expensive and students in India are struggling in financial spect especially during covid and post covid era. The research has found that more than 40% of the students in government colleges of Haryana face financial issues and they can't cope up with the rising expenses of blended learning.

6. **Safety and security:** Cyber crime is the order of the day, and the learners should not be thoroughly acquainted with cyber security.

7. **Feedback:** Feedback lays the foundation of any teaching-learning activity. Therefore, persistent feedback should be ensured from variegated stake holders. But challenges are not stop signs, they are guidelines, rather they are meant to be met and overcome.

Thus despite the challenges we should concentrate on the usage and essential parts of this new pragmatic approach called blended learning.

1. Face to face learning : According to Grahim, face to face interaction, giving directions and interaction is an approach towards collaborative teaching. The importance of face to face learning cannot be overruled. This type of learning helps the learners to organize their studies, and they need to be same there at a specific time and place. It is easy to gather information through body language of teacher, and student's language and voice.

2. Virtual Class Rooms : Virtual classroom is an online learning environment that emphasis on on-line interaction between the teacher and student through effective use of ICT to support and extend teaching and learning. ICT is an effective tool in Pedagogical reforms in the present context of quality education. It includes the two ways : the rich presentation of information changes and secondly the vast distribution and easy access to information can mould and reform the relation between tutor and pupil.

3. Webinars : Webinar is a combination of 'Web' and 'Seminar'. It is a video workshop, lecture, or presentation hosted online with software. Webinars constitute an integral part of blended learning specially in English language where laboratory research is not there. They are a great way to stay up date in literature.

4. Links : Links are information on how to access blended learning programs from home, from Android, laptop or iPad. There are several informative and useful lectures and programmes on various websites and youtube. We can provide link to our students so that to have easy accessibility.

5. Simulation : Simulation based learning integrates cognitive, technical and behavior skills. Simulations are instructional scenarios where learner is placed in a world defined by the teacher. Here teacher controls this world and uses to achieve the desired instructional results.

6. Assessment : Assessment or immediate feedback in hybrid learning facilities the learner to get automatic feedback on submission of his / her task, unlike the traditional mode, enables the teacher to get genuine feedback from the students as they voice their concern without any inhibition, ultimately escalating into effective teaching and learning process. Additionally, the time saved by automated feedback can be utilized by the teachers to inculcate high order skills such as creativity, critical thinking among the students.

7. One in one coaching : One in one coaching sessions are an opportunity for students to share these ideas. As five fingers are not same; so are our students, individual differences exist. All the learners are not alike as far as learning capability is concerned, some are quick learners while others being slow graspers. Digital material being available round the clock; the slow learner can go through the contents as per his / her speed.

Today the world is facing pandemic as the corona virus sweeps its way around the globe and its impact is just the only beginning. The crisis has led in many deaths, large number are infected and have moved the world to a serious situation of global health emergency. The need of the hour is not to panic, hence it led to a total lockdown world over and India is no more an exception. The shut-down of the educational institutes has led to many apprehension among the students and teaching fraternity. However, alternative methods are being considered to face such situations, new alternative methods, online teaching, teaching based on power point presentations and other methods are being used for the betterment of the students.

The sudden declaration of closure of colleges and lockdown has further enhanced this situation terribly. The students are in state of dilemma and stress and wanted to know what is their future? And we find only one answer to all questions Blended Learning or Hybrid Learning.

Even though government is trying to run many programmes for the betterment of the students but still some questions remain unanswered. In the present scenario seeing the conditions and the solutions the educators are trying to build, we could only say that online class is not the solution rather it is an addition to in-person teaching and other teaching methodologies. It is temporary solution for the betterment of the upcoming generations in difficult times.

The challenges in hybrid learning are although minimized with the use of many e-teaching or e-learning apps. The apps such as Google Class-Room, Zoom, Easy Class, Go to Meeting, Google duo and many others have been adopted to teach the students as far as possible.

As colleges move towards online-only classes for instructions, there is also a concern on the quality of the work being provided to the students, also the students living in the remote areas which lack the resources are at major loss. Studies says student's performance, particularly for students who are already struggling, suffers, in the online courses, thus a juxtaposition of online and face to face learning is requirement. Other research has found that upto 20% of college students have issues accessing effective technology including working laptops and reliable high speed internet.

Thus, we find zoom, classroom, and Hybrid model can be future of higher education and English language too. With pandemic resulting in closure of colleges and universities across the world, both teachers and students have quickly got comfortable with remote classroom.

This paper delineates the inter-relationship between technology, creativity, teaching and learning of English literature and language. We are living in the era of digital humanities which is born by the intersection of digital technology and humanities disciplines. In such a scenario, teaching has become a challenging job. The spread of covid-19 and global demand of English has compelled the teachers to adopt new teaching methods as physical classrooms has shifted to the vertical space. The present scrutiny intends to look at how blended learning has transformed the teaching of English Language by allowing the young minds to wander freely.

It's time for reframing future in English language. Firstly online coursework will become standard and all the infrastructure to support it (technology, course designing, sound studio, student support system services) will be need of the hour for universities and colleges. While the higher education system seems to be in crisis, it has endured reformation, revolution and more.

I end up with 4W's and 1 H:

1. What new education policy says?
2. Where the learner looking for a changed system?
3. Why global markets are not accepting graduates as it is?
4. When teacher will start ICT based pedagogy?
5. How we can get the solution for all these odds?

Works Cited

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Ey-Parthenon's the other Looming Educational Debt Crisis : Institutional Debit and safeguarding the interests of students : A new student centered financial health metric for higher education institutions.