



Integrating Google Platforms for Effective English Language Teaching

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Abstract:

The nature of Language teaching programmes should be organized to cater to the needs of the learners. Any language programme must aim at making the learner an autonomous and efficient user of the language. The teacher can facilitate this process by providing opportunities for active language learning. In the era of e-learning, language teaching or providing learning materials to the learners has become a trouble free procedure. But the outcomes of learning should be monitored in order to confirm the students level of understanding. The assessments and evaluations executed throughout the learning will assist the teacher in improving oneself too. English Language Learning can be done through various platforms offered by Google. These platforms are free of cost, easily accessible and user friendly. Teachers can use Google dictionary, Google Forms, Google Classroom, Google Word Coach, Google meet and Google Translator judiciously to create learning tools and assessment tools. Anyone with a Google account can use these applications. The application is not even required in the system to avail it, but Google will be providing its web form. This can be exclusively exercised in the field of English Language Teaching.

Keywords: English Language Teaching, Assessment, Evaluation, Google Forms, Google Meet, Google Classroom, Google Translator, Google Word Coach, Google Dictionary.



Introduction

English Language Teaching has found new arenas in which innovations in the online teaching areas where the proficiency in language can be built in students regardless of the classroom adherence. The teaching - learning part was quintessentially done by using live streaming classes, recorded sessions, doubt clearance sessions, homeworks and additional writing works.

English Language Teaching is not complete without assessing and evaluating what has been learned. To evaluate the things that have been taught is the next priority of e-learning. Computer Based Tests (CBT) are not a practical option for evaluation as it requires the development of new softwares in which the test should be conducted. The whole scenario like this points to the need of having a freely accessible way of teaching and evaluating, which is easily understood even by the kindergarten kids.

Importance of Assessment and Evaluation in English Language Teaching

According to Huba and Freed (2000) “Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know and understand and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences; the process culminates when assessment results are used to improve subsequent learning”.

The three important activities in the process of Teaching of English are:

i) Selecting the most appropriate from among the information received; selecting appropriate information from the prior knowledge stored in memory in the form of audio and video images; then comparing the new information selected from among the incoming ones, with those drawn from the prior knowledge and interpreting. For example when the teacher introduces about the use of nouns and gives examples of noun words, the children remember how they have seen the said things or heard the place names. At this stage the child tries to link the newly found meaning of the noun to the already known words.

ii) Classifying and organizing of the new information takes place in this step. Children are now being able to classify things under the category of nouns and its division. They are also able to understand the nouns from their prior knowledge.

iii) Integrating the new information which has been well organized (i.e. new knowledge) with already stored knowledge in memory and modifying the 'cognitive structure' took place in this step. Finally now the child can easily classify any given words as nouns and understands the grammatical rules related to the same.



Taking into account the above three steps, this theory is called SOI (Selecting, Organizing and Integrating).

Evaluation : Teachers need to think about testing and evaluation as an extended phase of instruction, not as a separate form of instructional process. The evaluation process includes checking for understanding and misunderstanding during interactive teaching as well as testing students' understanding at the end of lessons or units. It also involves evaluating one's own performance and becoming flexible to work under different circumstances. Evaluation takes into consideration both quantitative and qualitative changes in the student. In English Language Teaching, evaluation can determine the effectiveness of instruction, the understanding and the teaching outcomes. If the student is able to use the language in the proper form, the teaching - learning process is working properly. For teaching, assessing and evaluating, Google has many spectacular tools which can be modified as English Language Teaching tools. Since Google is a very familiar search engine and the students are accustomed with it, introducing Google platforms as a study tool will strengthen their enthusiasm. The interface of every Google application is user-friendly so that even attempting a test through Google will lighten their anxiety and exam fears.

Google Dictionary

Dictionary has been considered as the most important book to keep with oneself if one is trying to learn a language. A dictionary gives the meaning of words. So a language learner can simply read through a dictionary and enrich their vocabulary. Google provides its dictionary, for free, which has access to the dictionary data from Oxford University Press's Dictionary database. Google dictionary started as a standalone in 2009 and later merged to the search engine. While learning English, one needs to be acquainted with difficult words and a teacher or student can not carry a dictionary all the time. Google dictionary is the free and most effective option to use.

Google Dictionary in English Language Teaching

- Since it is free of charge, the learner can access it as many times as needed and is available in mobile phones, tablets and computers with less data loss.
- It is available in many languages and if the learner needs to know the meaning in any desired language, the learners can opt for it. Dictionary can be accessed with the "define" or just by searching the word.



- The dictionary covers a lot of areas; numerous definitions will help learners explore definitions in greater detail. The categories of the word as in noun, verb, adverb and so on will be mentioned.
 - Phonetic transcription of words are also given along with the meaning to increase the pronunciation skills. The read aloud feature will let the learner hear the correct pronunciation. The learner has to just tap the speaker icon to hear the pronunciation.
 - Two options of accent are available in the read aloud feature. British accent and American accent can be chosen. The voice is loud and clear. It can be played as many times as one desires.
- Whenever a word is searched, a sentence with the usage of word is also additionally provided. Similar words are also mentioned so that whenever needed the learner can have another word with similar meaning which will also enrich their vocabulary. This will help in finding the correct usage.
- Images related to the word will be provided which will also aid the learner to cement the knowledge gained by having the visual aid.

The traditional print dictionaries cannot be taken to everywhere due to its heaviness whereas Google Dictionaries does not have that problem. The Google Dictionary is updated with every new word regularly. But the updated versions of print dictionaries take time to include the newly added words and whenever a new addition is made, the old one will be shelved. Images related to the words are not included in the traditional dictionaries.

Google Meet

It was launched as a video conferencing app which can add up to 30 participants. During the corona times, Google altered its version of Google Meet in a way that it can be used in ways other than corporate streams. Now 100 participants can join in the meeting and they can share their screen. There is the additional option of screen recording and the videos can be rewatched. Since then, Google meet is widely used in teaching students in online mode. Google Meet is one among the effective tools used in English Language Teaching. To access Google Meet as a regular Google user, one has to have a Google account. It can be accessible in the app form, which can be downloaded for free from the Play Store. Web forms of the same app can be accessed without downloading the app by navigating through the gmail account. Users can experience high-quality video and audio, and it can even be optimized for low-bandwidths and dark environments. A traditional classroom can only



accommodate 50 to 60 students whereas the Google Meet can allow more number and students who were absent during the live streamings can watch the recorded versions before attending the next class. The recorded version can be archived for future uses and can be stored as digital resources.

Google Meet in English Language Teaching

- The classes are safe and the host - the teacher - can prevent unwanted participants from entering the meeting with safety locks and automatic blocking of anonymous attendees.
- Along with the joining links the teachers can share the topics which will be discussed in the class, so that the students can get a prior idea about it.
- Video Conferencing: Non- Verbal communication is equally important when it comes to language usage. When the teacher is presenting themselves just like how they would teach in front of a class, it will immensely help the students to learn hand gestures, facial expressions, voice modulation and also eye contact even though no one is there in the eye level.
- Screen share option: Teachers can share their screen and show relevant audios, videos or PowerPoint Presentations required for the lesson. Teaching while pointing and highlighting the ppts will be highly effective as it helps in cementing the ideas in the students.
- Hand Raise feature: The hand raise icon, will allow the students to notify the teacher while she is talking or presenting. This feature can be used as a doubt clearance option. The learner can notify the teacher without interrupting the class. The teacher can complete the sentence or point they are making and solve the doubt raised by the student.
- Live Chat Option: While talking, the teacher can type the spelling of the words which are pronounced differently in the chat box. For example words like Lieutenant, Tsunami and so on. Students can see that and understand the difference. It can also be used to ask students to give examples of any particular topic, For Example, the teacher can ask the students to write down 3 adjectives after teaching adjectives. Since every student will be typing down at the same time, the teacher can read all those answers and it is not time consuming.
- Co-Host Option: This option allows the students to present themselves. Assignments and seminars can be presented by the students. This will also enhance the students ability to present before an online audience.



- Live captioning: Live captions are fully automated and allow anyone to follow it during the session. This will help the slow learners and learners whose listening capacities are low. The multiple language option can also be employed so that students can access the content in whichever language they are comfortable with.

Google Forms in English Language Teaching

Google Forms is an app used to create forms for any data collection purposes. Anyone with a Google account can use Google Forms to make surveys, questionnaires or data collection forms. The application is not even required in the system to avail it, but Google will be providing its web form. The form is easily accessible and can be shared with anyone by sending the created link. Data received using the form is collected in a spreadsheet. Google Forms provide a fast and easy way to create an online survey, in an online spreadsheet consolidated with responses collected. People answer your questions from almost any web browser - including mobile Smartphones, Tablets and personal computers. Any kids with the average knowledge of clicking a link can access the form and provide their response. Even the parents who have no prior knowledge about the Google Forms can help their kids to access it.

Google Forms offers a variety of 13 question types to choose from, including multiple-choice, checkboxes, drop-down, short answers, paragraphs, multiple-choice grid questions and file upload. Every variety of question types can be employed in the specific areas of English Teaching. The most fruitful ways of deploying them will give the expected results from the students. Simple surveys can be created asking feedback of every class which will also serve as the shorter version of achievement tests. Customisation option allows one to choose between a palette of colors, as well as own images as a background and this will help to diminish student's anxiety about tests.

- Using Google Forms with sections: One useful function in Google Forms is creating sections. By adding a new section in the form, a new heading can be added. This helps with the presentability of the examination and will be user friendly to the students since they can understand each section differently. For example, questions from reading comprehension, grammar and vocabulary can be asked with section partitions, without the children confusing one question with another. If the first section of questions deals with comprehensive reading, after those sets of questions with a section



partition thus breaking the many questions to manageable chunks.

- **Multiple-choice:** This question type allows students to select one answer from a list of options. You can use multiple-choice questions to collect qualitative data. This allows the teachers to collect a good idea of what the students understood and how they answer it in a word or two. For example, questions related to antonyms and synonyms can be asked as multiple choice questions. When the student is given options, they have to overcome any confusion related to the words in order to choose the right one. Questions related to spell check can also be included as a multiple choice question, where the student can learn and remember the correct spellings. For college students, phonetic transcriptions, phrasal verbs and so on can be asked
- **Short answer:** These types of questions are equally useful for school and college students. Short answer questions allow respondents to provide a short valid response. Answers can be recorded in 3-5 sentences. The number of words can be limited to 50-100. For school students they can answer from any chapter they have learnt. Reading comprehension questions can be asked in this way, where sentence formation is the basic skill required to answer them.
- **Paragraph:** Paragraph questions are similar to short answer questions, but they allow respondents to provide a longer, more detailed response using more words. This question type is useful for collecting qualitative data. For college students, these types of questions urges them to use language with brevity due to the word limit.
- **Checkboxes:** Checkbox questions are similar to multiple-choice questions, but they allow respondents to select multiple answers at the same time for the same question. For answering these types of questions one needs to have clarity about the answers. It's a very useful way of identifying whether the student has understood the whole idea and can differentiate similar ideas. For example a group of words can be given and the question can be to identify noun words. Teachers should be more vigilant while making such questions foolproof.
- **File upload:** File upload allows a student to upload attachments like word or PDF documents, images, video files and audio files directly into the form. For college students, typing long essays will be tiresome and



typographical errors occur. The typing speed of students may vary and hence will be time consuming. So to avoid that disparity, long essays can be written on papers and the pictures or scanned copies of the same can be uploaded. For school and kindergarten students, the audio file upload can be employed to increase their reading capacity. Since every student can't be given the chance of loud reading during the class time due to time constraints, students can upload the voice recording of them reading the lessons through Google Forms. Teachers can access it and give necessary instructions for their betterment. Audio questions can be given to the college students where the questions should be answered orally, which will also help to break their inhibitions in conversing in English. They will feel more confident to talk from the comfort of their houses and later that will increase their public speaking skills. Uploading short videos of them speaking will increase their public speaking and postures.

The teacher can set a question paper which will aptly evaluate the concerned areas. Since Google Forms provide a variety of options, the questions can be divided into small units and the anxiety of attempting longer duration of exams can be mitigated. Manual correction or checking of answers are not required because the collected data from forms are integrated with Google spreadsheets therefore we can access a spreadsheet view of the collected consolidated data. The workload of paper correction can be reduced and teachers can straightaway understand the hardest topic or the topic that needs more attention in the class generally.

Google Word Coach

Google designed the word coach as a game for non-native speakers of the English language. It has no official app. It will simply appear when one searches any word in Google. One can search Google Word Coach and access the game. The game can find fruitful ways in English Language Teaching.

- Any learner who is interested in enriching their vocabulary can play this game which includes a variety of questions ranging from meaning understanding, finding synonyms and antonyms and word usage.
- English phrases and idioms are also discussed. Non natives get to know more about how native speakers use the language.
- Beginning level is very easy and it gets harder with every question.
- Learners will get to know the answers and a consolidation of their performance in each level. The scores shown will also boost sportsmanship.



- Each question has two options and the learner can answer by clicking any one of them.
- The game asks questions on the topics such as opposite words, similar words and definitions in English Language.
- Visual identification questions helps the learners with understanding concepts and words related to particular images and it's usages.
- The questions are repeated again after some days to reaffirm the understanding.

Conclusion

When a teacher gears their teaching to the actual needs of the learners, the learners will be far more motivated to learn the language. The learners should not be spoon fed with answers to the language areas they have learnt at the end of the lesson. They should be encouraged to think about the learnt ideas and practically use them in daily life. Modern language teaching pedagogy urges the learners to use language functionally. One must learn to speak, read, listen and write effectively and independently. So to test one's understanding of the language, all the language skill aspects should be kept in mind. Effective learning will only take place if the learner is intrinsically motivated to learn. Especially learning a new language requires learner centred approaches while the learner can get acquainted with the language skills through activities and games. Learning by doing will be the most effective way of imparting a language to a student. Tools such as Google Dictionary, Google Meet and Google Forms are going to be the future of language teaching since it is uncomplicated to handle. All the aspects of language teaching can be dealt with these free of cost options. Encouraging teachers to conduct tests through Google Forms will also help them with analyzing the results and finding the needy areas more effectively too. Since these tools are available in the mobile phones and tablets, students can access it anytime. English Language Teaching should never be compromised in bringing up new tools for teaching.

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