E-COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE: THE FUNDAMENTAL PHASE IN E-TEACHING

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Abstract

Education is made available to the learners in this pandemic scenario by fusing technology in teaching learning process. There is a continuous shift, each and every day in using electronic devices in classrooms. Blending technology in education is a challenging task for teachers, as they are new to the e-classrooms and as they have to update themselves in teaching students by preparing teaching aids and materials in online mode. In this e-learning process communication plays a major role. The term e-communication is introduced where communication takes place through various electronic modes and medium. A good e-teacher should possess good e-communicative competence to prove his/her e-teaching as a successful path using educational technology. The e-communicative competence of an e-teacher is one of the key factors influencing the success of the students in e-learning. This paper focuses on how e-communication competence plays an important role in an interactive classroom and enhances e-learning and makes it more effective.

Keywords: communicative competence, e-teacher, e-communication, e-teaching, e-learning

Introduction

Teaching, in general, involves the process of transmitting knowledge from expert to others. It is the process of attending to needs of people, their experience and feelings, and intervening so that they learn particular things and go beyond the given (Smith, 2012). Information transmitted by a teacher to the students using electronic devices and virtual classrooms falls under e-teaching. In both teaching and learning, communication plays a major role, which helps the teachers to express their ideas to the students. Teachers

should possess the competence in using these electronic devices to transfer the knowledge and facts. In early period, the method of teaching used was verbal presentation, where students are made to memorize the content taught by the 'Gurus'. In the medieval period, the way of teaching was introduced with writing on the leaves, stone carving, paper and ink. In the 15th century printing was introduced by Guttenberg. Various textbooks, holy books, novels and drama are printed and published. It brought a great renaissance in the field of teaching. Later, mass media and technological devices such as radio, television, films, recorders etc., are fused in teaching learning process. The usage of hardware and software in the field of education leads to the path of online education. In current scenario, due to pandemic situation the way of teaching has been changed. The process of system approach, micro-teaching, interaction analysis and computer assisted instruction has led to the introduction of e-teaching.

E-teacher as a Facilitator

E-teacher is one who uses electronic devices and ICT technology to teach the e-learners. E-teacher should have the knowledge about the current and emerging technologies. Online teaching is marked as a challenging task for the teachers as they find it hard to adopt to this new technology of virtual classrooms. E-teacher requires along with good communication skills, skills for using new technologies in technology based teaching.

The E-teacher act as guides and facilitators in e-teaching. They provoke the knowledge of the students using virtual classrooms. Time bound works are given rather than conditioning, in the online mode of teaching. The e-teachers have the responsibility of providing highly improvised progressive and radical teaching. The mode of teaching falls with the use of the electronic gadgets, television, social media, network etc. e-lectures are provided to e-leaners in audio and visual mode. Virtual classroom, webinars and other virtual forums mark the places for e-discussions. E-learners are made to search for knowledge and an e-teacher assesses their knowledge and performance. E-teacher makes the learner as active participants, trying to minimize their

role as passive learners and maximize them as a knowledge seeker. E-communication plays a major role in the process of e-teaching and for an interactive and effective e-teaching, an e-teacher should be good at communicative competence.

E-communicative Competence

Electronic Communication is defined as the process of sending information using electronic devices either wired or wireless. This type of communication is made through text, audio visual and internet messaging, phone calls, faxes, videos, emails etc., As this communication is brought out using electronic devices as a medium, it is termed as e-communication. Competence is marked as the ability of a person to deliver the knowledge without any flaws or change with tactic techniques. It is an ability of a person to use electronic devices for various purpose such as finding, learning, teaching, communicating and so on. In the field of e-teaching, e-competence is measured from the e-teacher's interactive skills in using ICT for preparing and delivering material using software programs, power point presentations, mobile apps and so on.

E-communication is a broad term with the modes of verbal, non-verbal phase, text messages, e-mails and social media etc. This can be familiarized with the ICT technologies. ICT enables one to gather information using technology, organizes it with multimedia packages and delivers it to the learners. When an individual or e-teacher has the ability to handle the visual technology, computer technology and internet technology as medium for e-communication, then they are defined to pretence the e-communicative competence. e-communication plays a major role and forms the fundamental active phase in e-teaching. It involves various modes of teaching learning process. An e-teacher records the lectures and live streams the video or posts for later view of students. Live stream practices are nothing but the regular virtual classes and classrooms in the form of e-lectures, e-tutoring, and e-discussion. E-communication marks the key factor in this online teaching. The teacher delivers the lectures using ICT

technologies in normal classrooms. But in e-teaching, an e-teacher uses the audio, virtual and visual aids in e-teaching. e-teacher acts as a knowledge transmitter through the virtual platforms like podcasting, webcasting, google classrooms, google meet and so on. These virtual platforms are used once for professional meeting in business and so on. YouTube videos, mails, chat box and blogs play a medium for e-communication, through which notes and lectures are shared either as recorded session or live streams. E-communication can provide ways for students to go beyond traditional school boundaries.

Synchronous classes: In this type of e-teaching, the e-teacher and e-learners are enrolled and interact through online simultaneously. E-teacher uses e-lecturing, e-tutoring, augmented reality and e-teaching on digitalised content to teach the e-learners. E-teacher combines their experience, knowledge and communicates it to the student using electronic devices as a medium. This teaching method helps students to learn from distance mode.

Asynchronous teaching: Here, an e-teacher gives assignment and content within a certain time bound. E-teacher uses discussion board, chat boxes and blogs as modes of e-communication. It lacks face to face interaction with the e-learners. There is no time bounded classes allotted. It marks a challenging phase for e-teachers as they have to supervise the e-learners' understanding through assessment.

Multimedia: It is a blend of several media and helps in transmitting messages through e-communication. The media include photos, graphics, video, music, animation and messages. Multimedia combines five basic types of media in the learning environment. They are text, graphics, sound, video, and animation (Awadhiya, 2010).

*Webcasting***:** It is making the teaching sessions available through networked systems on a real time basis, accessible anywhere, anytime. A teacher should have all the tools available at his disposal to give the lecture to his widely dispersed students with real time audio, video and PowerPoint slides delivery over the internet (Appat, 2013).

*e-mail***:** e-teacher and e-learners are made to create a mail account. E-teacher uses it as a mode to send messages to learners through mails immediately. The data can be a folder, file, photos, texts, documents and so on.

Blog: Blogs are regularly updated websites or web pages, where e-teacher or learner share their views and ideas on particular topic that can be written in an informal or conversational style. It is run by an individual or a group of members.

Video meets: e-teacher and e-learners are joined in the same group. e-teacher uses this video meets as a platform to examine and observe the learners' activities. E-teacher shares power point presentation, data sheet, videos, e-lectures and so on.

E-communicative competence-Why?

When a e-teacher has better e-communicative competence, there is no problem in the e-classroom interactions. They help students with clear explanation of the content to be taught. E-communication is a rigid task where students' personal behavioural cues is assessed only through their participation in e-classroom. Communicative competence is the only element which is same in both online and traditional classrooms. E-peer interaction (Colema, 2011) is given by the e-teacher either in their absence or presence, allowing the e-learner to open their minds. E-structural group activity (Colema, 2011) is one phase in e-teaching learning process, where e-communicative competence, interaction and knowledge gaining is focused. E-learners learn more about the usage of blogs and social networks to increase their communicative competence. Mails, virtual classrooms, meets, e-classrooms are used as a platform by e-teachers to instruct the student with the class timings, tests and assignments. E-teacher can update their information to the e-learners only with the modes and media of communication, irrespective of the classroom teachings.

E-communicative competence – Challenges

Some teachers fail to adopt themselves to the online classrooms, due to the

lack of e-communicative competence. E-teacher poses less awareness about various online platforms and applications and they stick to one mode that they are familiar with. Inappropriate e-communicative competence leads to various misleading and misunderstanding in teaching learning process. The knowledge about the medium used for e-communication is lacking for e-teachers. Mobile apps and software fail to be user friendly in times of network crash. Lack of networking system makes this e-communication process a challenging task for e-teachers. Lack of e-teachers knowledge about e-learners' interest and e-learners' lack of knowledge about the application used by the e-teacher are some obstacles in effective e-communication competence. E-learners fail to get attached with the real-life situations. Virtual classrooms, images, videos and animations fail to deliver the real life experience, where learners find it hard to overcome the real-life situation. There will be more distractions during the classes when e-teaching is not organised within the objectives.

Educational Implications

Teachers must equip the learners in the usage of technology. Blended classrooms and flipped classrooms can be used as tools to develop e-communicative competence in teaching. Non-verbal cues in e-communicative competence can be used by e-teachers to bring back learners' attention. Orientation programmes can be given to e-teachers to enrich the e-communicative competence in targeted medium of teaching. E-teacher can implement different learning approaches using instructional models and make learners to enhance their higher order thinking. E-communicative competence must be given more importance so as to arrive quality learning. In this digitalized world e-communicative competence is unavoidable along with various communicative and teaching software. The use of mobile phone applications, computer applications can be made applicable to teachers through various e-conferences.

Conclusion

Irrespective of the mode of teaching, communication is the undeniable element in teaching process. E-teaching and e-communication is bonded with the usage of ICT and other software applications. Digitalised contents are portrayed through live and recorded teaching, no matter what the cues of communication is. e-teacher should choose the appropriate mode and medium with the ability to communicate effectively and teach the e-learners successfully by overcoming the challenges of e-communication.

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To cite this article
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Antro Swathy, J., William Dharma Raja, B., & Viji., B. (2021). E-Communicative Competence: The Fundamental Phase in E-Teaching. *John Foundation Journal of EduSpark, 3*(3), 36-43.

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