Traditional and Digital Resources in the Teaching Learning Process: Advantages and Limitations

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Abstract
The teaching learning process of the 21st century differs distinctively from that of ancient times. The success of classroom instruction of the past depended solely on traditional teaching learning resources but recently a drastic change due to the boom of technological and scientific innovations has occurred in the teaching learning process. Teachers across the world have been constantly hankering for a more improved, innovative and attractive kind of digital resources like websites, devices, tools and applications which could prove adjuvant during both online and offline instruction. Though the traditional and digital resources offer a plethora of advantages, but they are not quite free from certain distinctive drawbacks. This article aims exhaustively at elaborating the advantages as well as limitations of traditional and digital resources which are usually used on teaching learning platforms.

Keywords: Advantages, limitations, traditional, digital, resources, learners.

Introduction
Before surveying minutely the advantages and limitations of various traditional and digital resources in the teaching learning process, one needs to be equipped with a thorough understanding of what traditional and digital resources stand for and their importance and relevance in present educational institutions. E-learning or web-based learning is introduced in the world and it is undoubtedly crucial in carrying out an important pedagogical function, that is, to support the teaching and learning system. Resources are media, people, places or ideas that have
the potential to support learning. The teaching learning process revolves around some key factors such as—the teacher, the place of instruction, the means of instruction and the way of instruction and of which the most interesting thing to note is that they are intimately connected to each other. A teacher instructs his learners in his/her own distinctive style of teaching by carefully exploiting the traditional and the digital instructional resources available easily at his/her disposal in both the offline and online mode of teaching. Traditional resources in general in the educational sector refer to some useful tools or materials which are designed either in written or printed form. Magazines, newspapers, journals, books and diaries are some of the traditional resources usually used widely in the traditional classroom. While on the other hand, the concept of digital resources is basically associated with E-learning or web-based digital learning in which the use of technology forms an essential part. Digital resources in the teaching learning system are mainly the tools or devices which are prepared digitally or electronically with the help of modern technology and are also used as supplementary aids to the teachers in the teaching learning process in educational institutions throughout the whole world. Examples of such resources or materials include, as already stated earlier, a wide range of technologically developed tools, devices, applications, websites or electronic gadgets which help enhance the instructional experience and capabilities of the teachers. In the present scenario of the educational system, it could be noticed that everybody looks for the quality education in an educational institution but unfortunately nobody looks for the reason of why and how the teachers of an educational institute equip themselves with skills and knowledge for imparting what we call quality education. Teachers have been tirelessly with utmost efforts, sincerity and dedication trying to adopt a number of means, approaches and methods for meeting and addressing each and every demand of the learners so that they can drive home various concepts of their reading resources with ease. In order to enhance the way to deliver instruction or lectures in the class, most of the teachers take the initiative of introducing a set of attractive and engaging teaching learning materials or resources which have the potentiality to make the learners experience the real joy in learning various concepts. Those teachers who are acquainted with the process of using both the traditional and digital resources perfectly in the classroom achieve a new height of success, distinction, fame and popularity in the educational world. Mastery in the usage of such resources enshrines a
teacher with immense confidence which in turn proves quite useful and beneficial to him/her in the classroom. Finally, it must be acknowledged that the traditional and digital resources extend support equally to both the learners and teachers in the teaching learning process.

Review of Literature

Eminent scholars and distinguished authors of the recent time have extended their valuable opinions and responses towards the apt use of digital resources in teaching. According to one of such authors, resources are information assets - data points organized by an individual or individuals to convey a message (Allee, 199). Another scholar emphasizes that the instructors require to reevaluate both the content they are teaching and the way in which they teach (Goldberg, 2000). Nevertheless, educators may require continuous professional development and training regarding their ICT capabilities. Skilful teachers in a poor ICT learning environment can perform better (Burns, 2006). Moreover, a survey reported that 20 to 25 per cent of European students are taught by digitally competent teachers (EU, 2013).

Importance of Traditional and Digital Resources in the Teaching Learning Process

Resources whether they are in digital or traditional form are unique and appealing to both the teachers and the learners in terms of their capacity in lending facilities, support and guidance in the teaching learning platform. Usually, the importance of traditional and digital resources relates to the following inherent advantages:

1) When a teacher delivers verbal lectures in the classroom, she/he can stimulate only aural organs, i.e. ears of the learners but the resources under discussion provide supplementary media of access to the remaining organs of the learners.

2) In recent times, certain digital tools or devices serve as a means of connection between the teachers and the learners in online teaching. Thereby, they play a crucial role in merging the physical or spatial gap between the teachers and the learners and in saving their valuable time which is usually wasted in travelling a certain distance when offline classes are held in an institution situated in a remote place.
3) They suggest the fact that the learners will be able to retain the learning experiences in their memory for quite a long time as these ensure that the learners have the provision of a plethora of media access to knowledge.

4) Digital resources with their inherent fascinating features tend to bring variety and freshness to the class. The learners find them useful in order to get rid of the monotonous experience of learning experienced with extensive use of the traditional resources in a classroom.

5) Certain resources make abstract ideas concrete for the proper understanding of the same for the learners.

6) These resources have an influential impact in encouraging healthy classroom interaction. They also mediate between the teachers and learners. They foster interaction among the learners too during the class hours which is necessary for inclusive growth.

7) Both type of resources encourage the learners to become creative as well as innovative. These resources help them identify and realize their own inherent creative potentialities.

8) They help teachers save their valuable time and vital energy during classroom instruction. Instead of clarifying a topic of discussion verbally, a teacher can take assistance of the teaching aids to channelize that saved vital energy and valuable time to make the learners understand the same easily.

Advantages and Limitations of Some Major Traditional and Digital Resources in the Teaching Learning Process

Teacher: The role of the teacher both in the traditional and digital classroom can never be replaced by any other means in the teaching learning process. His/Her presence in the class is effective enough to carry on the instructional procedure in the classroom. Teachers may also act as facilitators, guiding the process and assisting the learner in clarifying the kinds of information to be considered and in locating potentially useful learning resources (Belenky et al., 1997; Beswick, 1990; Freire, 1993).

Importance or advantages of a teacher as a traditional resource could be substantiated through the following points. Teaching learning procedure
in its true sense is basically carried out by the intervention of teachers. Thus, undoubtedly, a teacher must be regarded as one of the most reliable and essential traditional resources in the teaching learning process. The teacher is often called an instructional designer as she/he is often found to have been engaged in either creating or selecting appropriate resources to enrich the learning experiences of the learners in the classroom. The term instructional designer used for a teacher could mean the description of the emerging responsibilities of the educators of the 21st century (Hartley, 2005). A teacher in instructional procedure facilitates as a friend, philosopher and guide to the learners especially in a child-centric classroom situation as she/he takes care of them by keeping in mind different factors affecting them. She/he is instrumental in exerting a painstaking effort in the pedagogical analysis, interpretation and application of the topics of discussion.

Limitations of the role of the teacher are highlighted through the following observations. Teachers often fail to have an understanding of the previous knowledge, family background, individual differences and desires of the learners which inadvertently result in becoming the barriers to the smooth conduction of the class as well as to the inclusive growth of the learners. A teacher cannot make progress in his teaching style unless she/he is equipped with the requisite knowledge of the modern day e-learning system which is introduced now in most of the educational institutions of different countries of the world. Teachers cannot always remain prepared mentally and physically to take classes due to some unavoidable circumstances or situations of their own. However, it affects the whole teaching learning process.

Textbook: The most reliable resource of teaching for teachers in the classroom is nothing but a well written textbook which has a pivotal role in the instructional design of the instructors or teachers during class hours.

Advantages of a textbook can be noted through the discussion of the following aspects. It acts as an influential guide to stimulate the experience of the ecstasy or joy of teaching of the teachers. As the area of learning is wide enough, a textbook always tends to bring closer the different aspects embedded in the learning system. The subject matter of a textbook is usually arranged in a sequential and graded manner keeping in mind different external and internal factors such as need,
age, motivation, etc of the learners. It also serves as a memory aid. When a learner returns home after being taught a particular lesson, she/he always prefers to look at the discussed lesson and then tries to look at the same once again and in this way she/he feels at home and ease. Thus, it is categorized as a tool of memory for the learners. A textbook generally contains items like exercises, glossary, colourful pictures and activities which add a variety to the minds of the learners.

But, it can be clearly stated that a textbook does not serve the holistic purpose fully of the teaching learning process. It has its limitations which are highlighted. Sometimes, approach of teaching from a textbook is seen to be one of the reasons of a classroom being turned monotonous and thereby learners especially at the elementary level feel bored which in turn results in their being inattentive to the lesson of the class. Standard language used in a textbook often seems a promethean feat to a certain number of learners in driving home the messages encoded in that language of the textbook and intended to be transmitted to them. Textbooks should be designed in concomitance with the factors like need, age, priority and emotion but unfortunately what happens sometimes is that the textbook designers fail to come up to these expectations. Textbooks are regarded as the cost effective means of learning in the age of technology. The learners are prone to the use of the e-copy of the same easily available in the internet facility with barest expenses. One will continue enriching the storehouse of knowledge as long as she/he remains alive through a wide reading of resources of knowledge and in this respect a textbook is not enough to be considered as the one and only source of knowledge and information in attaining unbound skills and knowledge of the world.

**Traditional Chalkboard**

Another attracting instance of traditional resources in the teaching learning process is the traditional chalkboard of which a teacher makes extensive use for several visual displays of the teaching contents. Usually, a chalkboard is black and chalk white. A chalkboard is used in the classroom by a teacher to explain complex concepts or important points. However, the perfect use of this board is considered no less than an art of the teacher. A teacher must be trained in the skill of using such a board for smooth classroom conduction. Some of the directions for using a chalkboard or blackboard or whiteboard include visible size of
the words written on the board, reasonable margin on left and right sides of the board, space maintenance between letters, words and sentences, use of coloured chalks as and when required, movement and talking by the teacher while writing on the board, etc.

The following are some of the advantages of using chalkboard as a traditional instructional resource in the teaching learning process. Chalkboard proves to be an essential means of the teacher who writes keywords, important points of a topic of discussion on it in order to make the learners understand the same without having to face any difficulty. All languages of the world consist of four basic skills—Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing which must be possessed by an individual in order to gain mastery in language which later helps to enrich his/her repository of knowledge. Therefore, these four skills of language are targeted by the teachers to be ingrained in the learners and this task is done through the use of chalkboard, especially at the elementary level. In short, chalkboard helps the learners in acquiring language skills required in every step of learning. Chalkboard perhaps may not have the glamour of other attractive tools of learning but it plays a significant role in investing the abstract ideas with a concrete form for the proper understanding of the learners. It can also act as a means of turning the attention of the learners from the periphery of the outside world to the lesson of the class. Chalkboard work on the part of the teacher in the classroom makes the experience of learning for the learners interesting and easier. Finally, it can be said that it is cheap to use and is amazingly flexible in the hands of the experienced teachers.

Drawbacks of using chalkboard could be realized through certain critical observations which are minutely pointed out here. Learning experience through chalkboard fails to satisfy the soul of the learners who have deficiency in eyesight. Installation of such a board requires sufficient space. But, it appears to be a challenging task to set up the board in such educational institutions which have limited space in classrooms. Modern-day technologically developed digital tools or devices have almost replaced the use of the traditional boards in the teaching learning process. Teachers prefer to experience the pleasure of comfortable and less time consuming use of the modern tools or devices which can be easily handled and instantly used by them to set up on the walls of the classroom without any difficulty.
Overhead Projector (OHP)

Overhead Projector has been used as an excellent tool of presentation in the teaching learning process since the 1930s. It is actually a kind of machine designed to project an image onto a small screen or on the wall or on the whiteboard. A permanent or cleanable pen on it is used for its controlled and smooth operation.

Immense expediency of the installation of OHP in the educational sector is proved by its wide usage in educational institutions. OHP offers the scope of recording a lesson in photocopied paper form which can be highly useful to the learners for later use. It is also both economically and ecologically sound and thereby it amazingly reduces the amount of paper used for photocopies as it has its provision of photocopying on the overhead projector. As already noted, it is less time consuming as an expert trainer or teacher of this tool can easily handle and perform a marvellous job of projection during class instruction within a very short span of time. An OHP displays the teaching content onto a screen or wall and thereby it is visible to a large number of learners. Experience of learning is effectively enhanced by the use of such a digital device. It turns a monotonous classroom into a lively one by the virtue of its being capable of displaying attractive and interesting teaching contents. It also adds variety to the learners’ taste of learning.

Despite having numerous blessings of OHP in the teaching learning process, its wide usage is restricted due to the following vital issues. OHP requires to be operated by well operative and skilled teachers. But, the unavailability of such teachers often puts a question mark to the utility of this tool. The installation of such a tool is costly as well. Some institutions often do not show interest to bear such expenses. Being a digital tool, it may cause distraction in the teaching learning process as it may be rendered inoperable due to some sudden technological glitches. It may not be an acceptable tool of learning to the learners with low vision.

Audio-Visual Resources

In addition to audio resources like radio, tape recorder and record player, a number of audio visual resources are exploited to fulfil the purpose of teaching in the teaching learning process. These resources’ importance lies in stimulating both aural and visual organs of the learners. Examples of such devices include TV, computer and mobile phone.
Audio-visual resources in the teaching learning process make the learners understand the lesson taught to them by their teachers during the class hour without making painstaking efforts. Its paramount significance rests on the fact that it helps learners retain in the mind permanently a particular concept. Teachers explain various concepts with ease and learners get engrossed and interested in the same.

Disadvantages of audio-visual resources can be mentioned through the following description. Audio-visual resources usually require a constant electric power supply and running out of the same causes distraction in teaching and it is definitely a costly system. These resources are risky for the eyesight of the learners and teachers. Learners are sometimes inclined to unsolicited use of it at home.

Google Meet
This popular digital platform launched with a web app, an android app and an iOS app allows a number of users to communicate virtually with its inbuilt audio video feature and is now widely used not only in educational institutions but also in different commercial sectors.

The following facilities and limitations are present in the teaching learning context in this application. The teacher of the virtual class can control the meeting by allowing or denying entry into the meeting. The feature of screen sharing enables the teachers to share presentations of lessons to be taught. Multiway communication feature in the app offers a healthy class interaction. Learners can put their questions anytime during the class without disturbing the teacher through the chat box of the application.

Learners having poor internet connectivity in their areas fail to join the class as the app’s activity largely depends on smooth internet connection. All the learners, especially in the rural areas, cannot enjoy this facility due to lack of availability of their own mobile phones. They also cannot afford the expenses for availing of the internet facility. Features like screen sharing, audio visual interaction stop functioning suddenly sometimes which results in class distraction.

CALL
Computer Assisted/Aided Language Learning refers to language teaching and learning in which computer technology is used as an aid
to the presentation, reinforcement and assessment of the resources or materials to be learnt, usually accompanied by an interactive system. In another way, it can be defined as that case in which either learning instruction is presented through a computer program to the learners or the computer acts as the platform for an interactive learning environment. There is a flow of information and interaction between the computer and the learner in CALL. The computer allows the learners to interact with it through its lessons already programmed in it. It provides immediate response to the learners. Major modes of CALL include games, tutorials, drill and practice, simulation, etc. It is meant to supplement face-to-face language interaction. The origin of this system goes back to the 1960s since it has a symbiotic relationship between development of pedagogy and technology. Its development can be divided into three distinctive phases—behaviouristic CALL, communicative CALL and exploratative CALL.

This digital resource of language learning promotes language learning along with its advantages which are truly worth mentioning. It provides an opportunity to the learners to learn at their own pace without getting affected by the performance of other learners as it has a method of instruction designed for self-directive study. It is also helpful to them in improving different skills. Learners are made to participate actively which starkly contrasts the more passive role in reading a book in traditional classrooms. Information is presented in a sequential order in it. Immediate feedback is provided to the learners who get a clear picture of their progress and success in language learning through it.

CALL’s major drawbacks include its being a costly system, popular apprehension of decrease of human interaction due to excessive use of computers, repetitive and boring inbuilt course instruction, etc.

The Language Laboratory

Language Laboratory, as the name itself suggests, is the laboratory or a room with division of booths where there is a provision for learning language with such facilities as the learners listening individually to tape recordings, recording and playing back their own responses with the supervision of a teacher (Dinda, 2014). Interaction through headsets or microphones is made possible between learners and teachers in this system. Traditional language laboratory and new language laboratory form two distinct types of language laboratories which have different
functions in the teaching learning process. In discussing the advantages of it, it must be pointed out that enjoyable experience of quality language learning with the opportunity of improvement in intense listening skill and pronunciation practice is its commendable feature while its limitations include lack of availability of sufficient trained teachers for the smooth operation of this highly technologically developed system of learning, tape recording resources of this system are often poorly designed which results in the frustration and monotony of the learners in the middle of the instructional course of a lesson.

Conclusion

Apart from the two basic types of resources of the teaching learning process which have formed the core analysis of the above study, numerous other resources such as Youtube, CALL, charts, models, posters and a few to name could also be at least mentioned from which the learners are immensely benefited. In this concluding section of the present discussion, I must concede that the harmonious coexistence of traditional and digital resources in educational institutions will add new dimensions and variety to the taste of learners in the present scenerio of the teaching learning process. They are just like two sides of a single coin. Effectiveness of these resources with their advantages and limitations is determined on how, when, where and by whom they are operated or used. Relevance of traditional and digital resources in the present context in terms of their efficacy in integration of the whole teaching learning system remains quite relevant and significant indeed.

References


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