Information and Communication Technology in Modern Language Learning & Language Skills for Effective Communication

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What is Information and Communication Technology?

- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) refers to the diverse tools and resources used to store, share and access information.

- ICT encompasses a wide range of technologies, including computers and hardware, software applications, internet and networking, telecommunication technologies, data storage and management, artificial intelligence and machine learning, etc.

- Language learning in the age of globalisation has transcended the era of hard-copy textbooks and physical instructions as ICT has aided in providing inexhaustible materials and resources for enthusiastic language learners

- ICT plays a crucial role in making language learning more engaging, efficient, and accessible, catering to the diverse needs and preferences of modern learners.

ICT TOOLS FOR ENHANCEMENT OF MLL

- **Language Learning Apps: Apps like Duolingo, Babbel, and Rosetta Stone offer interactive lessons and exercises to help learners practice vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.**

- **Online Dictionaries and Translators: Tools like Google Translate, Linguee, and Merriam-Webster provide quick translations and definitions, aiding in vocabulary building and comprehension.**

- **Virtual Classrooms and Video Conferencing: Platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet facilitate live language classes, enabling real-time interaction between teachers and students.**

ICT TOOLS FOR ENHANCEMENT OF MLL

- **Language Exchange Platforms: Websites like Tandem, HelloTalk, and Speaky connect language learners with native speakers for conversational practice and cultural exchange.**

- **E-learning Platforms: Websites like Coursera, edX, and Udemy offer online language courses, often with video lectures, quizzes, and assignments to enhance learning.**

- **Speech Recognition Software: Tools like Dragon Naturally Speaking and Google's speech-to-text feature help learners practice pronunciation and improve their speaking skills.**

- **Interactive Whiteboards and Smartboards: These tools allow teachers to create dynamic and engaging lessons, incorporating multimedia elements to enhance language instruction.**

ICT TOOLS FOR ENHANCEMENT OF MLL

- **Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL): Mobile apps and games designed for language learning, such as Memrise and Quizlet, make learning fun and accessible on the go.**

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tutors: AI-powered tools like ChatGPT and Replika provide personalised language practice and feedback, helping learners improve their skills through conversation.**

- **Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR): VR and AR applications create immersive language learning environments, allowing learners to practice in realistic scenarios.**

Language Skills for Effective Communication

- For you to communicate effectively, there are requisite skills that you need to develop and these cover all four modes of communication: speaking, Listening, writing and reading

- SPEAKING SKILLS

§ clear articulation of thoughts, ideas and messages

§ correct pronunciation of words, phrases and sentences to convey meaning

§ Fluency – speak smoothly, naturally and at a comfortable pace

§ Effective use of body language- facial expressions, postures, gestures and eye contact to convey emotions and attitudes

§ Regulating the tone of voice as necessary- deploying pitch and volume to convey emotions and emphasis

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Writing Skills

- **Write clearly and concisely to convey your thoughts, ideas and messages**

- **Correctly spell words to convey meaning**

- **Use correct grammar, punctuation, and sentence structures**

- **Use specialised terminologies relevant to a specific field or industry when engaging in technical writing (i.e. word register)**

READING SKILLS

- **Read to understand written texts including emails, reports and documents**

- **Understand the meaning of words or phrases**

- **Scanning- enables you to quickly locate specific information within texts**

- **Skimming- enables you to rapidly read a text to gain a general understanding**

- **Seek clarification or additional information, do not just assume**

LISTENING SKILLS

- Attention- focus on the speaker and filter out distractions
- Understand the speaker's perspective and respond appropriately
- Recognise tone and inflexion (this can help recognise the speaker's emotion and attitude)
- You should be able to paraphrase and summarise the speaker's message after the listening exercise
- You should be able to provide feedback by responding with verbal or non-verbal cues

Conclusion

- A good use of communication and information technology tools for modern language learning will no doubt assist you in developing essential skills for effective communication