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INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN INDIA



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ABSTRACT

In India English is taught as a second or foreign language. Therefore, teaching English is an indispensable topic because it is impossible to communicate effectively with all class of people across the country without English. As English is the language of global communication, it is inevitable to look it from the linguistic and pedagogic points of view across the countries where English non-native language. Keeping all these features and functions of English in mind, the present paper aims to provide some solutions to overcome the problems of the new learners of English language in rural India. It will prove a path-paving step to acquire the fluency in listening, speaking, reading,

and writing skills. If a beginner pays sufficient attention towards the suggestions suggested in the present research paper, no doubt he will come out as a good user of the English language

KEYWORDS : *Language Skills, Communication, Teaching, Innovative Methods.*

INTRODUCTION

In India, English is a language of education, science, technology, government, employment, etc. It is a medium of inter-state communication, press, and broadcasting. The number of newspapers, journals, and magazines in English are consistently increasing. The spread of English throughout India is being encouraged, so that it will become a genuine link language of the country. In this situation, the underprivileged students in rural India depend on the teachers of English to improve their prospect at the degree colleges.

Emulating Lord Macaulay's educational policies, the Government of India have been teaching English as a subject by means of literary components and not as a language by means of communicative components. Teaching of English is more examination oriented rather than communication oriented. As a result, the rural students, despite being intelligent, suffer from low confidence while using English. To overcome this problem, the syllabus of English for degree students must be focusing on listening and speaking skills. There should be well-equipped language labs in the rural colleges. It seems that the existing methods of teaching English have not been conducive and congenial for effective learning of English. Hence, it is high time to adopt simple and well-known

strategies for imparting effective teaching of English and make the practical exposure available for the rural students. The strategies like motivating students, conducting reading programs, using humor in the classroom, involving students' in-group discussions, role-playing, language games, etc are to be used to the optimum result in the effective learning of English as a language and the students would obtain the basic required proficiency in English as in their mother tongue.

The degree college students of rural India joining the degree colleges come from poor and agrarian family background. Majority of them attend the classes with single notebooks, which they use for all the subjects. Most of them do not buy the prescribed English textbooks. On the contrary, the teachers go to the classes with textbooks and teach through translation method. The use of mother tongue is useful as far as the better understanding of the content of the text but not in acquiring the basic skills of English. The teachers translate and explain everything in the text in the mother tongue. It seems that teaching English effectively is a challenge before all the teachers in India. Therefore, it is an urge of time to rethink and revamp the teaching strategies with the changing times.

Lord Macaulay in 1835 emphasized English teaching in India through his "Minute of Education." He imposed English on Indians way back in 1835, and now it has been deeply entrenched its roots in a country that prided itself about its great Sanskrit, the classical language of the world. In 1854, Sir Charles Wood stated that English could be a suitable medium of higher levels of education in India, because a sound knowledge of English was a prerequisite to seek admission into any established university. English had adopted as the medium of instruction for fundamental sciences and mathematic science, which resulted in the phenomenal development of secondary and higher education, especially in urban areas. Since from our Independence, the need for English had greatly realized in the field of higher education and research. In this regard, the Kothari Commission, a study group appointed by the Ministry of Education, Government of India in 1964, referred to the study of English in India and strongly supported the structural approach of teaching of English and that has still extensively practiced in different parts of India.

Today, in this nation of billion plus population with a literate population of 74% in 2011, knowledge of English guarantees a job across the sectors. Be it a hairdresser, a peon or a waiter, salutations and courtesies in English are considered so essential that often a minimum skill in the language is non-negotiable with recruiters. It is a need for the academicians to rethink and revamp their teaching strategies with the changing times. Since, there has been a constant change in the teaching methods and techniques all over the world in every subject. English language teaching methods and techniques need desirable and radical changes in a view of the demanding job market in the globalized world.

Language is one of the vital aspects of speaking community. We need language in all spheres of life such as public administration, commerce and industry, education, and so on. One cannot survive as a member of the community unless he/she uses language effectively. Therefore, teaching language is very essential in the case of second language. Teaching does not consist only in what the teacher does in the classroom with his students because conversation is governed by several factors. When we talk about the teaching, we must consider the significant aspects such as the curriculum, the course, the classroom techniques, and the system of evaluation. The teacher in the classroom is certainly important, but the learner or the student is also equally important. The learner must be at the center of entire process of instruction. The experts write books and the institutional authorities appoint teachers and conduct examinations to assist the learners to learn something new. Notwithstanding this, the curriculum should provide a comprehensive plan of the entire system of teaching and learning process. The course and the curriculum should be complementary as the diagnosis and the treatment that doctor prescribes as result of diagnosis.

TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS A SKILL SUBJECT

The ultimate aim of teaching is to produce effective learning. We may define learning as the change that take place in the individual's behavior or state of knowledge because of experience. Teaching involves a proper plan, selection of appropriate examples, grading the teaching methods, intelligent direction, sharp observance, prolongs experience, etc so that the desired target comes within reach. Language teaching is an act of helping the learner to get a reasonably good command over important language skills by means of words, pronunciation, and various structures. The Oxford English Dictionary defines a skill as "the ability to do something well". Teaching a language means teaching the four different skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing. A skill is a matter of doing or using than of knowing. A skill shows practical mastery over the various aspects of life and language is one of them. If we say, that teaching language means acquiring good linguistic habits, then literature can be a very helpful tool in teaching these habits. Literature helps effectively to develop language skills. In other words, if we want to teach language, it is imperative that we should make a good listener/speaker and reader /writer. Listening and reading are the passive skills of language and helps accumulate the knowledge of language therefore, the learners of language should master these two skills if they want to be a competent user of language.

LISTENING SKILL

Listening and speaking skills are the primary skills of language whereas reading and writing are the secondary skills of language. However, listening and reading are the passive skills of language and speaking and writing are the active skills of language. While listening and reading, we receive the words whereas, we produce words while speaking and writing. We should all agree that 'poetry reading' involves 'poetry listening'. It is true that the poetry exploits best aural qualities of language. Sound pattern plays a very crucial role in poetry. Thus, poetry, being mainly oral art form, helps to create positive effect on the listener. Besides this, recording of famous plays, speeches, etc can be immensely helpful in the classroom to develop the listening skill.

READING SKILL

The extensive reading provides practice to develop a sustained, rapid, and self-directed reading skill. Therefore, the students should be encouraged to read a lot. Reading poems, novels, or plays of the same author helps the students to understand the writer's style. English is a second or foreign language in India; therefore, reading skill is the most important language skill for the Indian learner. Reading is a process of sight, sound, and sense. For example, teaching English language is like teaching someone how to swim. Likewise, a new swimmer, in the beginning starts swim in shallow water before venturing into the deep water and later throws himself into the deep water and becomes a good swimmer. Similarly, it is a good idea to introduce a new language learner with simple and interesting books.

TEACHING OF VOCABULARY

In order to express our thoughts and feelings, we need appropriate vocabulary, either in spoken or written form. Indeed, neither literature nor language exists without vocabulary. Different types of instructional modes and approaches are practiced to build vocabulary. Teaching vocabulary in context, combining vocabulary with reading and writing activities, and providing the students with different lexical information about the words under study enhances students' vocabulary.

TECHNIQUES AND METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH

Due to the existing conventionally practiced methods of teaching English, the required level of

learning English language is not happening at the undergraduate level in rural India. Therefore, there is an urgent need to change existing methodology of teaching by replacing some of the following suggested strategies to motivate the students to learn English and develop communication skills. For example, conducting of reading program helps the students to develop other communication skills; the use of humor in English class will arrest the attention and kindle interest in learning English; group discussion is an important strategy, which develops all the four skills of English language to the students. The following are some of the significant methods, which help enhance teaching and learning:

1. Problem Solving Practices

The teachers should evaluate the students' problems concerning their difficulties in understanding certain concepts and rules of English language. After identifying students' problems, it is better to divide the class into different groups and to try out different methods of explanation within the lesson series, and thus it helps arrive at workable method of solving the students' problems.

2. Begin with Familiar Ideas

If the teaching of certain element begins with the examples that are familiar to the students, they will not be startled and on the contrary, the students will emerge with better learning. Therefore, the teachers should attempt to build their lessons on what was already familiar to the students.

3. Active Involvement of the Students

The teachers should enable students to interact with their teachers and with their friends during the class. This will help student to establish a productive rapport among the class, so that they will fill at home in the class.

4. Use of Multiple Resources

Use of multiple resources help bring a significant change among the teachers and students and motivates them to think and prepare for the class in advance and to select teaching materials appropriate to the level of their students.

5. Sensitivity to Learners' Difficulties

To make teaching and learning an enjoyable and still effective activity, the teacher should be sensitive to the difficulties of the students in the learning process and that each lesson should be planned keeping the learners' difficulties in mind.

6. Seeking Advice and Outside Support

The teachers should seek help of their senior colleagues to solve some classroom problems and to enhance the evaluation system regarding students' progress. Thus, such collaborative work brings maximum result.

7. Maintaining Flexibility and Positive Attitude

Positive attitude is very essential factor for the better outcome. The teachers need to have a positive attitude towards their students and that they should understand that, there should be some flexibility in their attitude and action in classroom so that it will help the students to learn better.

8. Promoting Learner Autonomy

To enhance and sustain effective teaching in classroom, the teachers should give freedom to the students to choose the activity or the lesson to be taught and the necessity for creating a climate conducive to learning in the classroom.

9. Integrating Language Skills

While designing activities for the students, integrating language skills is one of the important aspects of innovative teaching methods. By means of group discussions and pair work among the students, the teacher can effectively integrate listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills by means encouraging the students to use the internet to gather information for classroom activities, utilizing the library resources to collect information related to the lesson prescribed, etc.

CONCLUSION

In the present article, the various techniques and methods of teaching English are explained precisely. The paper recommends that it is a need of the time that the teachers must use new and innovative techniques while teaching English in India. It is true that there is no sure remedy or method to master any language in a short time but one has to make dedicated efforts to achieve it. Therefore, if a student practices the above-suggested methods sincerely, no doubt he will come out with a linguistic competence of using English. It is also mandatory that the student should show keen interest and enthusiasm in using these methods while learning and understanding a language. Thus, according to the numerous approaches, techniques, and practices of teaching English discussed above, the teaching and learning will become an enjoyable activity rather than monotonous.

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