



A Novel Perspective of English Language Teaching

Dr.A.BALU

Principal i/c., Alagappa University College of Education, Alagappa University, Karaikudi

Mr.P.RAJKUMAR

Assistant Professor in Commerce, Vivekananda College of Education, Kummangudi

ABSTRACT

The use of English language gives new openings and opportunities at the international front. On the one hand, we have innumerable people who are keen to learn, read, write and speak English but variety of these learners and their qualities, location and circumstances have made English language and its teaching a hard nut to crack. Use of ICT seems to be the only rescue to the new horizon of English Language Teaching (ELT). The field and perspective of ELT is really multi facet but we need to step forward very cautiously to make English everyone's cup of Tea. This paper presents the famous trends in the ELT that have been used practically in recent times in the entire world with specific reference to the trends prevalent during the previous decades.

KEYWORDS : Teaching Methods, CALL, Visual Aids and Spoken Skills

INTRODUCTION

English Language Teaching is a continuous process which needs many changes and we are observing changes from time to time. Challenges before the English Language teachers in India are enormous and apparent. They should be able to cater to the practical needs of learners, to make them competent enough to interact with one another and also to retrieve information all over the world. English has a base in several countries and is considered as the most suitable and convenient tool for International Communication. The people who have proficiency in this language could access large number of jobs and also were seen holding high positions in many National and International Organizations. In the earlier days English was just like a Library language, but now that notion has changed totally. At present the challenges visible before the English language teachers in India are diverse and it is necessary for them to shape up accordingly to meet the demands of the day.

ENGLISH IN INDIA

English is used in India in official, professional, personal and academic circle. India is a developing country trying to open its feathers in the sky of developed countries. Cultural hegemony and Modernization has given new emerging trends in expansion of English language. In addition to it, use of Internet and other electronic devices have opened gates of accepting English as language of changing scenario. As the world is shrinking day by day and culture barriers are breaking, I think there is a great need of not only learning English but accepting new and emerging trends of English language learning and teaching.

ENGLISH IN INTERNATIONAL SCENARIO

English is used widely not only in India, but at over the world. It works as a connecting language across the barriers. The use of English as global language and first language of world makes it really impossible to discuss anything about it. Its use has opened many new opening for young mob. So, they are running after learning this language. India is a developing country, which need relationships, social, political and economic growth in international market. For this professional growth, the countrymen have to be skilled in English language because it will not only make connection through communication, but also make technology and electronic advancement well versed with everyone. Use of modern electronic gadgets, devices and Internet can only be possible with the well versed knowledge. of English. All developed countries use English as main medium of instruction and all scientific and technical knowledge is based on it. So, English is not only the language of Poetry, Fiction or Drama but it is the language which is working as a base and bridge for expressing and learning all the inventions and innovations in the field of science.

IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH TEACHING

As English has turned into a universal language, its presence and value in the world has expanded enormously in the past decades. Many

money-earning activities such as BPO, Medical Transcription and IT add to the importance and relevance of English in every walk of life. Prof. Jacob Tharu says, "English is no longer some remote but a powerful mystery, lying hidden in the world of textbooks and examination."

CONVENTIONAL ENGLISH TEACHING

In the past, students were introduced to English only in their sixth standard. Students learned English just as another subject like Physics and Mathematics and got very little opportunity to using it within the school as well as outside the school. The above context was appropriate for the use of methods that did not focus much on communicative competence. Language teachers adopted and followed some or all of the different methodologies listed below to teach the language.

1. Grammar Translation Method

Grammar translation method was used by the teacher to teach young children, where teacher explained every word to students in the native language to make him understand and learn English. But in this method there was at least one disadvantage. Both the teacher and the student concentrated more on L1 rather than L2. In this method English language class seemed to be L1 class rather than L2 class. Students got only limited benefit through this method. Unfortunately, this method is still in use in many rural schools throughout India. This method is also supported by the methods used to teach mother tongue in our schools.

2. Bilingual Method

May be we should declare this as the method, our own favorite method in our schools. Most teachers follow the bilingual method to teach the students in Indian schools, where the teacher first of all explains the entire English sentence in L1 and then asks the students to perform activities in English. Here, it used to be a main assumption that only the teachers have the freedom to take the help of L1 and students are not supposed to use it. However, this constraint is found mostly on paper, not in the classroom. When a student is in the process of composing his or her English sentences, abundant help through the use of mother tongue sentences is provided. This method does not help fluency and naturalness in language expression. Thus, this method became beneficial to students in learning the second language only up to some extent.

3. Direct Method

Earlier, teachers used to follow the direct method to teach Indian students mostly in private schools, which usually charge a higher tuition fee, etc. These teachers will stick to the practice of using only English, without depending on L1. Here, teacher is not supposed or authorized to use any single word from L1. This forced seclusion made students from many families with no past history of learning or using

English face great difficulty in understanding certain words and their meanings. But this method turned to be more useful for the students to learn language than any other method as this method creates more encouraging language environment for students in the class room.

METHODS ADAPTED TO IMPROVE SPOKEN SKILLS

1. Group Discussions

Now due to the world wide growing trends in English, teachers give more emphasis to communicative approach rather than the lecture mode. Their main goal is to make the students effective communicators in English both inside and outside the class room. To achieve this, they involve the students to participate more in classroom activities so that they will acquire adequate command over speaking skills. To create this environment, teachers can conduct group discussions, where students are supposed to speak only in English. Here, they can give their views, ideas and thoughts in English due to which they develop the habit of speaking fluently in English like they do in their mother tongue. Various types of discussions also help students to improve their general awareness and understanding about current affairs. It gives a lot of scope for good imagination and deep thoughts. This type of discussions helps the students to listen to the views of fellow students which in turn helps them to gain knowledge and enrich the vocabulary also.

2. Debates

Debates too play an important role to improve the speaking ability of the students both at school and at higher level. Debates not only make the students to speak boldly and fluently but also help them to take one stand and be firm and consistent on that. Along with this advantage of reasoning, it gives students some experience to control their emotions without losing their temper. This also helps them to organize their thoughts and ideas in a specific way while speaking.

3. Role Plays

Role-plays are another important task that can improve the basic colloquial English of the learners. In role plays, the students assume themselves as one of the characters and behave and speak accordingly involving in the given character completely. In these types of activities teachers have to play a vital role as instructors and guide the students properly so that they can act appropriately to meet the situation. They should help the students now and then to understand and take up the role given to get a grip on the tone of voice.

COMPUTER ASSISTED LANGUAGE LEARNING (CALL)

Now-a-days computer has become a part and parcel of our day to day life. It plays a vital role in the process of teaching and learning. It can be used to learn a foreign language like English. Computers have made language learning easy and also made the language learning process interesting and enjoyable for both teacher and student throughout the world. CALL has reduced the burden of the teacher whose teaching methods will be out dated to teach language to present day generation of the world. It is described as one of the interactive methods that can help a learner according to their own ability to learn, which enriches their language skills. CALL enables the learner to look beyond the conventional mode of learning and encourages self learning.

TEACHING LANGUAGE THROUGH VISUAL AIDS

One of the innovative methods used by the teacher to teach language in class room is visual aids. The teacher distributes visual aids to students by dividing them into various groups. The students are then given stipulated time to extract relevant information on the given aids. After that, those learners are supposed to speak about the visual aids given to them. This method expands the analyzing capacity of the students. By looking at the picture, the learner should think and come out with innovative thoughts which also help in learning language by creating fun-filled environment around them. The teacher acts as facilitator who motivates the students to talk freely. As each person gets their own unique thinking it helps to sharpen their thinking process. In addition to the above mentioned methods teachers also use various language games to teach English language apart from the conventional ways of language teaching, which helps in developing vocabulary from the language that is being learned.

CONCLUSION

To meet the present day challenges in teaching English, first of all, English should not be treated as a subject as it is to be used actively in interacting with one another throughout the world. By using conventional methods, maximum portion of class time will be wasted in exercises and drilling, dealing with grammar and pronunciation which takes away a large portion of class time. These methods were mostly used to develop basic skills of language learning such as Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing, but by following these methods listening and speaking skills were neglected as students cannot put their language in practice. Students are also now facilitated by software to practice pronunciation through phonetics. To achieve the goals of language learning today every college should be provided with language lab, sophisticated equipment like computers, LCD Projectors. In addition to these, our faculty too should update their knowledge, skills and should acquire thoroughness over their syllabus to meet the demands of globalization since English is seen as a key educational investment in this world. If provided with the latest language teaching tools and with the support of technology, one can teach the language effectively and motivate the students towards language learning.

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