



Teaching and learning of English language skills

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Abstract

English language is being taught and studied in India for over two centuries and despite the fact that the British ruled over us for two hundred years, Indians are still far away from being able to speak and listen effective English. According to a survey conducted by www.worldcolleges.info, it is found that there are 336 colleges in Haryana. Out of these 60 percent colleges are situated either in a rural or near a rural area. This means nearly 200 colleges are in rural areas and an average 10,000 students pass out every year from these institutions. But only a few of them manage to pursue English in their professional and personal lives. Rests of them are left with no other option out to grapple with language adjustments. It has been observed that there is less awareness of the importance of English as a global language among the rural students as compared to their urban counterparts.

Keywords: Pedagogy, Communication, Methodology, Approach, Learning.

Introduction

The new age heralds an era of open communication channels and delimitations of narrow spaces. The computer system and the entire IT industry owe a debt of gratitude to English language for its widespread applicability and usability. It has emerged as language of the global citizens of the new age. We need to master this language among other skills to be able to command the attention of the world and aspire to be the world leaders we have every right to work and dream for. Mastery over the English language has definitely added value to our global presence and we have the right to continuously monitor the latest changes and incorporate them in our educational institutions for implementation but this implementation should be evaluated from the point of view of their utility in realizing the objectives of learning this language. Pedagogy plays an important role in achieving the aims of language learning i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 'Pedagogy' means "the study of teaching methods" Webster's New world dictionary defines 'pedagogy' as "the art or science of teaching; esp., instruction in teaching methods". In this way Pedagogy can be called the art as well as the science of teaching method. It involves a constant working at, adjusting, imagining and adjusting again until the thing sets right.

Aspects of Pedagogical Analysis

- 1. Pedagogical Knowledge :** This refers to the teacher's general teaching technique like co-operative learning, role-playing are group work technique that are equally relevant to all academic content domains.
- 2. Pedagogical Practice:** It is mainly related to doing aspect. It comprises presentation of content in logical order, effective use of methods of teaching, proper use of language skills and effective verbal and non-verbal interaction for generating social climate in the classroom.
- 3. Pedagogical Belief:** This feeling aspect is helpful in

creating social and emotional climate in class room.

Teaching English has two aspects: (1) Teaching English Language and (2) Teaching English Literature which can be analyzed through pedagogical analysis.

Teaching of English in the schools and colleges of Haryana is in a chaotic state. Students are taught English for about six to nine periods per week about five years (graduate and post graduate level) but by the time they leave college; they do not know how to use the commonest structure of English. The fault lies somewhere in our education system. A teacher has to prepare students for examinations and not to make his pupils competent in the use of the foreign language they are learning. The student is nervous only about his success in the exam. As a result, they do not get the requisite time for giving drills in writing and speaking. Teacher as well as students cares more for degrees and diplomas.

Difficultly in ELT, English language teaching arises from the difference in native language and foreign language. In the rural and semi-rural areas, undue stress has been laid on Translation method. Under some circumstances, the use of mother-tongue for providing "meaning equivalents" of certain words is considered perfectly legitimate and desirable. Sometimes the mother -tongue is used indiscriminately in teaching English language. The biggest defect of this approach is that the profuse use of mother-tongue encourages the learner to think in the mother tongue and speak in foreign language.

College students tend to be learning English in large classes where they sit in straight rows facing the teacher. The teacher does most of the talking, reading the text or explaining the rules of grammar and composition using lecture method. Thus teaching is usually a one - way traffic in class rooms.

There are four basic components of English language - reading, writing, speaking and listening. While our university degree equips us with sufficient reading and writing proficiency, listening and speaking aspects are seldom taken

care of. Faulty pronunciation and inappropriate use of grammar are one of the major problems that need to be seriously dealt with. Mastery over literature is as important as proficiency in language.

A teacher who lacks knowledge about his students- their characteristics, cognitive styles, learning styles, previous knowledge, readiness level and motivation will be unable to pitch his lesson as per the needs of his students. He is unable to provide variety in methods, media and techniques of his teaching. Consequently, there is lack of rapport between the teacher and the taught.

More stress is laid on the theoretical aspects of the learning than the practical one. More emphasis is laid on conventional methodology like lecture method which leads to boredom, monotony and lack of interest.

Teaching which does not affect our senses is ineffective. Text-books and the teacher affect our auditory sense only, audio – visual aids are not used. The use of modern information and technological advancement should be made to make the learning more joyful for maximum learning and minimum teaching.

Growing population and increasing importance of education have posed the problem of over- crowded classes in our schools and colleges. In a large class it is not possible for a teacher of English to do full justice to his subject. He generally keeps in mind the mental level of an average student in the class. Thus the teacher applies the same methodology for the whole class which does not meet the requirements of all the learners present in the classroom.

The teacher should be prepared to design and transmit the curriculum in such a way that the learners should be inspired towards self-learning, self-assessment, self-understanding and self-evaluation.

All Teachers especially of foreign language need special facilities of in-service training such facilities are very meager at present. The government should make every effort to expand these facilities so that a large number of teachers are benefited from them.

Such training enables teachers to adopt teaching methods according to the age, capacity and learning level of the learners, the success of any teaching method depends upon.

1. The teacher- his efficiency, insight, training etc.
2. The objectives of teaching English.
3. The learner- his age, level of learning.
4. Availability of different types of aids.
5. Size of the class.

The success of teaching – learning depends upon the teaching as well as the choice of material. In order to raise the quality of our education and to meet universalization of education and to improve achievement motivation of our students, it is necessary to introduce and expand the new methods of teaching to meet the diverse needs of the learners.

Today knowledge is expanding vastly and new methods of teaching are coming up. Students need unique experience in the presentation of the contents. Learning becomes equal to teaching when teacher uses several resources in classroom teaching. Understanding of concepts, principles and contents become more effective for students when they are taught through more innovative devices like TV, Computers etc. the advancement in computer technology and communication

technology has revolutionized the education they have changed the style of teaching and learning system

The programmer of teaching English as a foreign language can be implemented successfully through the instrumentality of efficient methods and techniques and for this purpose we need evaluation of the existing methods of teaching. Evaluation is the systematic process of the existing methods of teaching. Evaluation is the systematic process of collecting; analyzing and interpreting information to determine the extent to which students are achieving the instructional objectives. It is a process of ascertaining or judging the value or amount of something by careful appraisal. 'Value' implies the outcome of the learning activity whereas amount signifies the acquisition of knowledge and skill. It is therefore necessary that the difficulties in teaching and learning English are diagnosed and attended as soon as possible. A method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no parts of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon the selected approach. A method determines what and how much is taught (selection), the order in which it is taught (gradation), how the meaning and form are conveyed (presentation) and what is done to make the use of language (repetition). In fact, a method deals with four things i.e. selection, gradation, presentation and repetition.

But it requires an inter-active process which involves an active participation of the students. The teacher should ensure the active participation of learners in second language classroom to reduce their communication apprehensions. Unless and until students attain mastery level in language, they are unable to learn any other curricular area. The teacher should try to relate the present knowledge of the college students with their previous knowledge gained at school level. There should be some link between the syllabi at schools level and colleges of Haryana. For laying firm foundations for language learning at schools, language teachers at schools should be invited to workshops and national seminars so that they can equip themselves with the latest experiments, trends and needs occurring in language learning. This will help learners to fill the gap between the learning at school level and at college level. An integrated approach of teaching should be adopted instead of discipline based and inter-disciplinary approach to teaching, an integrated approach should be preferred. Since ages teaching profession is considered as the noblest profession and society is highly obliged to the teachers for shaping the future citizens of the country. Teacher education is the most important topic but generally it is neglected. We should not talk about teaching and learning separately but should take into consideration the wholistic view to improve quality. Also there should be collaboration of universities, colleges and schools in order to make the teaching learning process successful.

By keeping these aspects of language learning in mind it is necessary to evaluate the existing pedagogy in schools and colleges of Haryana. The conditions of teaching English in our schools and colleges are unsatisfactory. This has led to the falling standards of English in our country. We do not have good conditions for teaching this subject. This weakness persists and it shall stay as long as the teaching and learning methodology of English will continue in its present form in our schools and colleges.

Thus there is an urgent need to bring about reforms in curriculum and existing methods of teaching is perfect in every respect. But this does not mean that teachers of English should give up the use of all methods. They might use one method or the other keeping in view the situation in which they are put to teach. The need of hour is that eclectic and pragmatic approach should be adopted because no single approach is useful in all situations.

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