



Customized Teaching of English in Rural Haryana

Sudesh Sharma

Govt. College, Barwala (Hisar)

Abstract

It is unfortunate but the truth that ELT in most of the academic situation in India seems to be inefficient and impractical. English language proficiency and communicative competencies of a majority of students are open to question at the college level, most of the students, who have passed university entrance exams by their cramming skills and survival stratagems are not able to communicate either orally or in written form even their basic intentions effectively, traditional approaches are used where the classes are dominated with the lecturing of teachers with students listening and working individually on assignments.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching of English over ages:

India had a glorious tradition of education. India's ancient universities of Taxila, Nalanda, Ujjain and Pataliputra were considered as the great reservoirs of knowledge and this quality encouraged many foreign students to visit India. With the passage of time and due to advent of British colonisers, English language was started and popularized in India as not just a foreign language but also as a most despised instrument of oppression. The ideology of the anti-English stance enforced English as a symbol of acceptance of foreign domination and its continuation as a stain (affront) to the self-respect of the country. But now, the scenario has changed so far as the use of English is concerned. It is well understood that English language plays a very important role as an international language and acquiring communicative ability in the language is the need of the hour.

The main aim of teaching language is not only to develop linguistic ability of the learner but it also focuses on the practical use of language. But if the learners are linguistically diverse i.e. if their language is other than the language thought, poses a big challenge for the teacher. Who work basically in rural areas. But it is also a fact that English is now treated more as a necessary skill for everyday living rather than a mere source of class identity. Today, English has established itself as a language of trade, commerce and has full participation in national

and international life. Good quality of higher education and advanced studies are not possible without knowledge of functional English language.

ELT in Rural Areas

All discussions about English language are true but the present English teaching strategy in rural India is a hit and miss affair. Realizing the demand and importance of English language, English is taught as a compulsory subject from the very first standard in almost all the states of India, even then the picture is not so rosy in every nook and corner of India. For this there are many reasons responsible, I am channeling some challenges encountered by teachers in rural areas. First of all in India about 75% of the students are from rural regions. Mostly are linguistically diverse i.e. their native languages is other than the language taught. When a child enters in a school at primary level, he is taught English as a subject not as a language. And only one hour a day, stress remains on formation of alphabets not on speaking or listening. When the same students enter in the college after reading English only as a subject, leg behind in studies, get discouraged due to lack of competency in writing and understanding English language. Then they try to pass an examination by cramming few questions. One more thing in this context is that they do not get opportunity to interact with renowned personality or peer group because mostly their parents are illiterate and if a small percentage which is literate, have no sufficient and adequate knowledge of communicative skills,

No doubt, it is true that environment and family background play a vital role in teaching learning process. But negative attitude towards English language of rural students is also a hindrance to overcome the drastic situation. Their attitude is negative in the sense that their ability and resistivity do not allow them to come out of their chamber of fear. Due to this they believe that English is out of their reach so take no steps on their side. This is a great challenge for the teacher to break off the negative attitude of students at college level. However, they might be able to write as per requirement but speaking remains out of their range. However, nothing is impossible attitude is a modifiable between the teacher and the students, and then the students negative attitude towards the English language would change is a positive one.

Negative Attitude Exhibited by Teachers

Some teachers are always of the opinion that rural area students are dull and can never improve. They forget the truth that rural students are first generation learners who take English as foster language and throughout life, not able to cope with it in spite of their best efforts. Due to this authoritarian attitude of teachers, the students find courage to stand on their own.

When the Outside world is using English for international and intercultural communication and technology purposes, universities and colleges in India still follow the same traditional syllabus which has not been revised for many years. If there is some change, it is merely super-ficial.

Our average undergraduate cannot speak a correct sentence in English speak curriculum vitae or even read an English daily. There is no exaggeration. Complaints such as there are voiced all over the country. Parents, teacher's examiners and employers complain our learner's poor achievement in English. (sood 167)

Faulty Examination System

The examination system is more achievement oriented rather the performance oriented, leading to an emphasis on grades and position rather than issues of fluency or proficiency. Indirectly, the teachers also remain in many classrooms even today, the facilitators of examination rather than of linguistic or communicative proficiency. In order to teach communication skills the traditional ELT methods are not enough. They have to be supplemented with a different knowledge base and have to borrow heavily from behavioral sciences and management. In fact, student's performance and grading in such exams however play the role of a gold key to their future success. Those who get the lightest ranks enter first class universities whatever students write in their annual exams is the only assessment of their whole year learning. In other word we can say that manifestation of competitive ethics in education system has made teaching subordinate to testing and pave the way towards their dream future.

A careful observation would make one to agree that many teachers do not have the required training or proficiency to handle ELT classes. The language is taught through rather than everyday discourse. As Gupta (2005) has asserted, one main problem is that learners' needs are constantly being ignored. The fact is that students are coming from different classes because their social cultural backgrounds create huge gaps in their communicative competencies their inability to converse in English., despite being familiar with the structure , generates severe psychological barriers. As a result of this situation in language classes, a number of learners either fail or try to get through as repeaters or pass with grace marks. The call of some renowned Iranian language teaching professionals like Mirhassani Ghafar Samar (2006) and many researches approaches, which focus upon the process of learning needs and socio-cultural context of English.

All students admitted in the college or universities are forced to take a common compulsory course which is grossly inadequate for students to acquire requisite skills in effective use of language for communication and for the give and take of social experience. The curriculum as well as the course books prescribed for students are without recognizing their needs, aspirations, attitude or taste. In the report of curriculum development committee (2001) 50% weighted has been given to the advance applied skills like academic addition, script writing for the media and preparation of web content etc. but it is pity that all these are highlighted only in the policies

Suggestions

In a multilingual and multicultural country like India, cleanse of mixed ability groups are a feature of every small town and village. So grouping of students of different ability levels is one of the most frequently suggests ways.

Academics truly make sense only when it is applied to some parts of life so we should try to groom our students in a manner that help them develop pan ion for their subject and creativity in its applications. A teacher should work towards the goal of bridging the gap between the classroom and the real world.

Our research and innovations should not be just a mere academic obligation, but a mindset. It is the time when we should think that if our education enables us to do more that what our job requires. A motivated English teacher can early transform the life of a student by affecting his/her career performance.

In brief, the present instructional system which implies the idea of burn the midflight oil, pass the course and forget after the exams appear to be no more helpful in problem solving real world situation. The need of the hour is a through overhauling of the educational system, which has already failed to bring effective bearing values morals and skills at all graded levels.

As the use of English has increased in present due to globalization. So it is the need of the hour for qualified teachers to instruct the students and make them proficient in this language. It is not worthy that there is a short percentage of teachers who using 'cutting edge' technology, but the majority of teachers still teach by traditional methods as translation method or lecture method. So a teacher should be innovative to accept new technologies of teaching to make their lectures more colorful and stimulating. It is because of the fact the technology can be utilized for the upliftment of modern styles, it satisfies both visual and auditory senses the students.

Stress should be given to promote student's communication capacity. But traditional teaching has hampered student's capacity to comprehend certain language and all understanding to structure, meaning and function of the language and makes the student passive recipients of knowledge. But innovative in-class activities such as group discussion, subject discussion and debates can provide more opportunities for communication among students and between teachers and students. This type of methods will greatly cultivate student's interest and motivation in study their involvement in class activities. It is the high time realize the need of students in present scenario. Functional English can head to better communication skills- those r elements of English that provide and individual with the essential knowledge, skills and understanding that will enable them to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life and to work. These practical skills in English help learners gain the most out of work, education and everyday life."(Department of Education and skills, 2005)

Certain changes in the teaching methodology are also suggested at this stage. Simulation of different circumstances can be easily projected with the help of multimedia techniques. Doing the language labs and introducing group activities. Group activities should not be

limited to holding group discussion or debates. The teacher should organize role plays and games keeping in mind the linguistic capabilities of the learners. These exercises should be done in small groups and this should be followed by a peer evaluation. Debates too play an important role to improve the speaking ability of the students. This also helps them to organize their thoughts and ideas in a specific way while speaking.

To Sum Up:- The illocutionary force of this paper is an overall reconstruction of the entire educational mechanism if we want to go side by side with paradigm shifts and face the challenges of globalizations the present English language Teaching strategy in India is a hit and miss affair. As Margic S. Berus says,

“Language is interaction. It is inter-personal activity and has a clear relationship with society. In this light languages study has to look at the use of language in context both its linguistic and its social or situational context (Beru 1984, P5)

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