

English Language Teaching
Updating the English Classroom with Techniques and
Communication Skills

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Dedicated to my Beloved Husband Mr. H. Mohan
and
My Beloved Daughters Harshini and Varshini



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Preface

English Language Teaching - Updating the English Classroom with Techniques and Communication Skills contains ten scholarly articles. I started my teaching career as a primary school teacher in Trivandrum, Kerala and later on became an Assistant Professor and worked in various institutions. At present I pursue my Full Time Doctoral Degree in the Department of Linguistics, Bharathiar University, Coimbatore. I thank my Professors of Bharathiar University who motivated me to publish my articles as a book.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to my Father Mr. V.S. Venkataraman and my mother Mrs. V. Gomathi who encouraged me to involve in Teaching Profession and my brothers and sister. I extend my gratitude to my parents and hoping that their blessings are with me always. I cannot complete my Preface without quoting about my in-laws Mr. R. Hariharan and Mrs. Alamelu Ammal, a retired teacher who inspired me a lot to dedicate to this Noble Profession.

I take this privilege to thank my Husband Mr. H. Mohan who encourages me always to achieve my goal. I also reiterate my thanks to my little angels Harshini Mohan and Varshini Mohan who gave their utmost support in all my endeavours.

I thank all my friends/research scholars and especially my best friend Mrs. Suba Hariharasubramanian who gave suggestions in completing my work.

I thank Almighty God who gave me courage and strength to complete my work in time and offered me a wonderful supporting family.

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1. PEDAGOGICAL CONCERNS IN CURRICULAR MATERIALS

Introduction

We have seen that there are a wide variety of types of learners. Of course, individual learners have their own unique qualities which are important for their learning. But these differences cannot be known in advance and clearly planned for in designing a common curriculum. As we are aware, we cannot realistically think in terms of separate courses for individual pupils. What we can do is make the general curriculum flexible, so that at the time of implementation, some adjustment or accommodation to the needs of actual learners can be made. Curriculum planners should try and get information about the variability within the group of learners being targeted by the course. It is true that all the needs of different sub-groups cannot be met. The important principle here is that we should not assume that the characteristics of one sub-group that we know well are a proper indication of all other sub-groups. In many of our centralized state syllabuses for various subjects, we can find a hidden assumption regarding the 'average' child. It seems to be taken for granted that each child comes from an educated urban family, living in a house with modern amenities. A similar error in planning an English curriculum would be to assume that all pupils have contact with English and exposure to it in the home and neighbourhood. The general principle here is that the needs and styles of different groups should be taken seriously.

The Language Curriculum

The central theme of this title is the nature of teaching strategies – ways of creating special contexts that provide learning opportunities and learning experiences that would support and promote language learning. Our specific focus will of course be on the learning of English, but many of the ideas discussed will be relevant to the learning of language in general. We have come across various concepts and explanations that help us to understand the nature of language. Since languages have always been an important part of the school curriculum, there is a long tradition of planned and deliberate 'teaching' of languages. The experience of this large volume

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of professional effort – available to us as the technical literature of language. The central question we shall consider is: what are sensible and efficacious way of **promoting** language learning through a programme of instruction? We shall try to identify those general principles (or strategies) that are likely to work. We could describe the ground covered by this course in another way, by calling it a discussion of the **language curriculum**. It is important to bear in mind here that ‘curriculum’ is being used in a very broad sense, and covers two complementary aspects. Firstly, there is the system of **pre-designed** and **pre-determined inputs**. This is what we usually associate with a syllabus scheme: objectives, requirements, coursebooks, teaching techniques, etc. secondly, there is the dynamic and **unpredictable process** of implementing such a scheme in **real settings**. These real settings are the actual classrooms in which **particular** groups of learners guided by their own teachers actualize the ‘plan’ into teaching-learning activities in a manner unique to them. The uniqueness lies in their particular characteristics as a group (levels of ability and motivation and degree of variation among them), the qualities of the teacher and her relationship with them, the level of facilities and the atmosphere of the school, and the degree of support from the neighbourhood / community which it serves. Obviously, teaching-learning is located in these everyday classroom processes, and that is where the focus of our discussion will be. All the same, the framework of the formal syllabus does affect what happens in classroom lessons, and so we need to understand the relationship between these two aspects of the language curriculum.

Pre-designed Aspect

In our discussions, we will take as typical the situation of the teacher who is working in a school, handling a class of 30 or 40, and teaching about 50 periods a week, following a given syllabus. The teacher’s work in this very common situation is governed by the formally prescribed syllabus: objectives, course book(s), examination scheme, etc. This prescribed scheme can sometimes be cumbersome and restrictive, and complaints about the rigidity of ‘the system’ are commonly voiced, especially by competent and committed teachers. It is important, when considering this point, to make a distinction between the **requirements** that appear to be imposed on the teacher by the official syllabus, and the **support** for the teacher that this pre-

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arranged curriculum represents. The pre-designed and organized curriculum package is the product of the specialized professional efforts of a number of agencies: those who identify needs and lay down objectives, those who frame the syllabus, those who develop course materials, those who prepare the model examination paper and specify the marking scheme, etc. this scheme or package represents *resources* that are meant to support teachers and learners by providing them with some basic matter or outlines on which to build the ‘learning process’ we associate with actual classroom lessons.

Pre-Organized Aspect

When a Directorate or Board prescribes a (new) syllabus, it is in an important sense approving and endorsing the work done by the teacher’s fellow professionals – which is intended to give the teacher a whole lot of resources, as a sort of initial deposit. Since this package is always general in the sense of being common to hundreds (or even thousand of ‘parallel’ classes or schools) it cannot possibly be in the form that makes it directly and simply applicable in any particular class. This fact highlights the crucial role that the language teacher (even one following a prescribed syllabus) has to play. She has the responsibility to select what is most useful for her class from the general possibilities and suggestions contained in the curriculum package. She has also then to *add to and develop* this partial matter or base into the full-fledged *lessons* that make up the implementation process. In this sense, the teacher’s implementation of a language syllabus involves judgement of a high order and initiative, since what is given is incomplete. We have seen that there are two major aspects of the language curriculum taken in its entirety: the **pre-organized aspect** which is general and common to many separate groups, and the **open-ended aspects** which evolves during implementation as the specific needs of a given class of learners is responded to.

Planning in the Curriculum: the Relevance of Strategies

The word *planning* has two somewhat different but equally important meanings and associations. One is the careful and well organized working out of details so that a programme of activities can be carried out smoothly and efficiently. Teachers who have had to organize the loading of a few hundred children of different ages into 8 or 10 buses by 6.30 a.m. to leave for a

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day long excursion will fully appreciate the importance of detailed planning for avoiding chaos (even if total smoothness and efficiency is not achieved). The other aspect of planning is related to ideas such as looking ahead, noting possibilities, considering various alternatives and their probable consequences, being ready with many different plans of action. All this points to the quality of being alert and well prepared, but not tied down to a fixed and detailed sequence of actions. The notions of strategy and flexibility are closely linked to this perspective on planning. When we reflect on planning in the context of the curriculum, we can see that both aspects of planning are important. Education (organized teaching-and-learning) on a large scale requires the efficient assembling and coordination of a variety of human and material sources. A programme for teaching English, for example the school level course of 5 years (Std. VI to X) for regional language medium students, requires as a first step detailed syllabus specifications for each year including the relevant course books. This is the broad level of curriculum planning. More detailed planning is done at the school level when a ‘calendar’ showing topics/units, tests, etc. weekwise is drawn up. The logic behind all this is easy to see. But we should also note that these plans only deal with resources and teacher based ‘inputs’. Nothing has yet been said about learners and the actual operations of learning. This focus emerges only when the planning of lessons is done by the teacher, with her particular group of learners in mind. As we have already seen, the common curricular package has to serve as a base from which lessons geared to actual classrooms can be developed. The package has to be open and flexible so that there is room for adaptation and elaboration by individual teachers. Planning that is too detailed and efficient will prove to be counterproductive. The planning of lessons by teachers (with the learning activities of a 30 or 40 individual learners as the focus) also poses a challenge from the perspective of flexibility. Today we see language learning essentially as process of interaction and negotiation among individuals trying to ‘use’ language to communicate. Learning ‘about’ the language (the way we learn about the Indus Valley civilization in history, or about flowering plants in botany) is not central to classroom lessons. The important point is that learners **actively contribute** to language lessons: they do not merely ‘receive’ input from the teacher and the course book. This makes language lessons rather **unpredictable**, since the responses of individual learners cannot

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be prearranged and controlled. And yet the teacher cannot simply go into class unprepared and expect interaction and language learning to happen automatically. This means planning of the lesson in a manner that leaves it open-ended and emphasizes the preparedness to handle a variety of possibilities, rather than providing a detailed step-by-step sequence of actions. Thus we see that both for the general curriculum and for classroom lessons, it is important to plan ahead by specifying and structuring many details, and to maintain a flexibility that permits appropriate responses to new (unforeseen) situations. In our discussion of ways of promoting language learning spread over this course, we will keep running into this (healthy) tension between the two approaches towards planning. There is the pull towards order and efficiency and also the pull towards openness and flexibility. Neither approach is good nor bad in itself. We need to appreciate where in the totality of the curricular process each makes its best contribution, so that their effects are complementary. The term **strategies** symbolizes this double perspective on planning and organizing instruction. We will in various units, review a range of concepts and principles that theory and practice have shown to be helpful in promoting the learning of English. We will also keep observing that the rules and procedures derived from them can only be guidelines; these have to be used purposefully and flexibly, adapting them to particular situations. Thus suggests broad principles, which need to be understood and appreciated as **strategies**.

An overview of the Contents of the Course

We begin our study of teaching strategies to foster language learning with a look at the various decisions and actions that are largely in the classroom teacher's hands. Then we go on to a survey of the principles underlying various 'teaching inputs' that have been found to be helpful in promoting language learning. We will try and identify those techniques and activities that are especially useful for developing particular skills and subskills of language ability. For convenience we shall look at listening and reading (the receptive skills) and speaking and writing (the productive skills). There will of course be a fair amount of overlap since these skills are rarely used separately when communicating through language. We shall also look fairly closely at the principles underlying the preparation of materials: printed course books and matter in

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various other modes. These are probably the most important of the resources prepared by fellow-professionals that the teacher draws on in her day to day work. Finally we shall consider the procedures for evaluating the progress of learners, and the issues that arise when we attempt to do this. We will emphasize the point that test scores of learners tell us as much about us (the usefulness of our efforts to teach) as they do about the learner's success.

Planning Lessons: From Course Materials to Classroom Process

It focuses on the teacher's preparation and planning for classroom lessons and on ways of looking back on lessons after they have been taught. After going through it, you should have gained an awareness and appreciation of

- The nature of learning experiences that can be generated during a classroom lesson
- The difference between 'teaching' a body of content and 'facilitating skill development'(in the context of language learning)
- The range of factors affecting the nature and quality of classroom activities
- The way of recording weekly and daily plans in a teacher's diary, and of preparing detailed lesson notes
- The value of making post-lesson entries in the diary
- How the planning of lessons can be comprehensive and yet be flexible
- The need for the effective management of classroom activities

The Nature of Instruction through Classroom Lessons

The individual teacher dealing with her particular class of pupils is, as we have seen, working within an already prepared framework. This framework represented by the syllabus and materials, is general and common to all classes of a given level. It is easy to see that designers and producers of the common curriculum (especially the course book) do not have access to all this detailed information about every class in every school; and even if they did, they would not be able to include it in a common curriculum in any meaningful way. Thus the prescribed scheme found in the syllabus and materials amounts only to a loose and incomplete framework. The teacher has to fill in the 'spaces' and fulfill the **intentions** of the curriculum planners. She has to develop this scheme (words on paper) into teaching-learning activities that call for attention and

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effort (cognitive operations) on the part of **real** learners. These activities that make up **lessons** provide learning experiences. These lessons spread over a term or year constitute the major part of the actual **instruction** in given subjects that pupil **receive** in school. They are the building block of school based instruction. The simplest way of describing the school teacher's job or profession is to refer to the teaching of 'lessons in the classroom'. Of course the teacher does other things; and many things that happen outside the classroom are also the concern of the teacher: homework is the best example. But nearly all these outside class activities are linked to some specific aspect of lessons in class.

Conclusion

What this means essentially is that different pupils could be doing somewhat different things, and some part (atleast) of what they say and do contributes to the **public lessons** – and does not remain only a personal learning experience. When individuals interact and collaborate they have different roles and so have to use language for different purposes. This means producing a wide range of **texts**. The 'language' available during a lesson thus does not have to be restricted to what the teacher says. When we discuss language lessons, we will see that these (potential) inputs from learners themselves can be of great value for language learning. We have seen how the teacher needs to develop the base material in the syllabus and coursebook into the processes of lessons. To some extent the nature of the 'subject matter' influences the structure of (suitable) classroom lessons. Here we find that *language* has certain special qualities. For most school subjects the course book provides, in a fairly detailed manner, the items of *content* (information, definitions, rules, theories) that are to be 'taught'. This involves presenting, explaining, demonstrating, etc. by the teacher so that this content is **transmitted** effectively to pupils and it becomes a part of their knowledge. For language (which we treat as a skill subject rather than a content subject), the value of such content (knowledge) in itself is rather limited. The main objective of the teaching-learning of a living language – like English – is to help the learners to become able to use it to communicate with others, by sending and receiving meaningful messages.

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2. ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING – TEACHING AIDS

Introduction

Language which has been considered man's most remarkable achievement, is so much a part of our lives, like the air we breathe, that very often we take it for granted and as often are not aware of its characteristic features. There are many things about language that are still a mystery and will probably remain so. However, there are aspects we do know. The past several decades have seen a tremendous amount of linguistics as a language, a description of its basic characteristics would make a better understanding of linguistic science. Language is a system. It is not a random collection of items. Patterning is all important. Each language has its own structure, its own system. It has its own unique way of organizing its units into an internal structure.

Teaching Aids

Teaching aids reinforce the spoken or written words with concrete images and thus provide rich perceptual images which are the bases to learning. When these materials are used in an interrelated way they make learning permanent. They provide for a great variety of methods. They bring the outside world into the classroom and make us teach efficiently. In order to derive the advantages of using teaching aids, a teacher needs the knowledge of different types of teaching aids available, their place in the teaching-learning process and the methods of their evaluation. Teaching aids supplement the teacher and they do not supplant him. The aids alone cannot accomplish the task of education and the teacher always remains the main pivot of all teaching. While using teaching aids the teacher should be clear about the objects of instruction and thus make the right use of the right material at the right place and at the right time.

Advantages of Using Teaching Aids

Effective use of teaching aids:

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- ❖ Adds interest and involvement
- ❖ Makes learning permanent
- ❖ Reduces verbalism
- ❖ Develops greater understanding
- ❖ Stimulates self-activity
- ❖ Fosters continuity of thought
- ❖ Makes us teach efficiently
- ❖ Helps in overcoming language barriers
- ❖ Provides a great variety of methods
- ❖ Brings the world into the class room

Classification of Teaching Aids

All teaching aids can be broadly classified under three heads namely.

1. Projected and non-projected aids
2. Audio aids, visual aids, audio-visual aids and activity aids
3. Hardware and software

Here the classification followed is audio aids, visual aids, audio-visual aids and activity aids.

CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHING AIDS

Visual aids	Audio aids	Audio-visual aids	Activity aids
Pictures, Photographs, Flash cards, Poster, Charts, Diagrams, Graphs, Maps, Cartoons.	Radio, Record Player, Tape Recorder, Compact Disc Player	Sound motion, Picture Projector, Television, Video closed circuit, Tape-slide Projector, LCD Projector	Demonstration, Programmes Instruction, Teaching Machine Computer assisted Instruction, Language Laboratory

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1. Film-Strip Projector

Film Strips: Film-strips are otherwise called ‘still films, strip films, or slide films’. It is a related sequence of transparent still pictures or images on a strip of 35mm, film. The picture may be in colour or black and white and it may be in single or double frame. Most of the film-strips have single frame pictures. Normally film-strip contain 20 to 50 frames in about two to five feet length.

Advantages of film-strips

- ✓ It is easy and convenient to use
- ✓ It takes up little space and can be stored easily in container
- ✓ A wide range of film-strips are available in colour or black and white
- ✓ The picture or images in film-strips are sequential in order
- ✓ It can be used at any desired place while teaching
- ✓ It can be used effectively even in semi-darkened room
- ✓ Some film-strips are accompanied by records carrying appropriate music and sound effects

2. The Overhead Projector

From the name of the equipment itself, it would be evident that in overhead transparency projector, the projected image is obtained behind and over the head of the instructor. The OHP reflects images coming from a powerful light that shines through a transparency on a screen by means of tilted, highly polished mirror and lens assembly. The screen image is bright enough to be seen even in a lighted room. The projector area ranges from 3”x3” to 10”x10”. Normally overhead projectors are compared to a projection lamp, to act as a source of light, condensing lenses to concentrate all the light into usable beam, a polished mirror and lens assembly and a blower for cooling the system. OHP should not be kept on continuously for long periods. To use it as a chalk board is a very costly affair.

Advantages of OHP

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- A large image in a minimum projection distance is obtainable
- Permits the instructor to face the class as he writes or indicates points of importance on the transparency
- Projected images obtained could be seen even in a lighted room
- Simple and convenient to operate the equipment
- Low cost, home made materials could be used in minimum time.

The Micro Projecting

Micro projector is specialized projection equipment designed to project microscope slides to a class of pupils at the same time, during teaching learning process. The particular advantages of micro projector are:

- It minimizes the need for expensive microscopes, for each student
- It presents a greatly enlarged picture of the object on the slide and
- It assures the teacher that his pupils are seeing precisely what he wants them to see

Graphic Aids

Almost any material involving illustrations is basically graphic in nature. So it is difficult to define a rigid list of these materials. There can be almost infinite variety of graphic materials, however, there are certain categories of graphics worth considering. They are

- Charts
- Diagrams
- Graphs
- Maps
- Posters and

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- Cartoons etc.

Charts

The word chart in the common usage means variety of graphic presentations such as maps, graphs, pictures, diagrams, posters etc., for purposes of clarity, it is desirable to consider charts as a means of visualization with certain attributes. It may be defined 'as combinations of graphic and pictorial media designed for orderly and logical visualizing of relationships between key facts or ideas'.

Types of Charts

There are many types of charts. The charts most commonly used in teaching are genealogy or tree charts, flow charts and chronology or tabulation charts.

1. Tree-Charts

From the name itself it is clear that tree-chart is developed from a base composed of several roots which lead into trunk. The branches in turn represent development and relationships. This type of chart is useful in showing developments resulting from a combination of several factors.

2. Flow-Charts

The organization, of student council or a unit of government, or the development of a manufacturing progress may be shown to advantage in a flow or organization-chart. In making a flow-chart, squares, rectangles or circles are used for each breakdown and lines are used to show flow or directions.

3. Table-Charts

The table-chart is indispensable in many teaching situations. It is effective, for example, in presenting a breakdown of financial statements such as bank balance sheet or the profit and loss statement. It may also be used for comparisons or for listing advantages or disadvantages of a

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business or organization. While making table charts, layout the charts with straight columns. Titles and captions should be clearly visible. Do not overcrowd the chart. A good collection of charts helps the teacher considerably and if charts are available the teacher can make use of them during teaching. This will result considerably in saving time and energy. **Minimum material required for the preparation of charts are:**

- ❖ Drawing paper of adequate size
- ❖ Coloured card board
- ❖ Drawing pencils
- ❖ Colour crayons
- ❖ Nylon fibre-tip pens and different colour inks
- ❖ Letter stencils
- ❖ Self-adhesive tape
- ❖ Gauge cloth for packing
- ❖ Wood reapers of any light wood

Diagrams

A diagram is a simplified drawing to show interrelationships primarily by means of lines and symbols.

Graphs

A graph is a visual representation of a numerical data, presented in a quick and an effective manner. A good graph requires little explanation and conveys informations at a glance.

Types of Graphs

The most commonly used graphs are the line, bar, circle or pie and the pictorial graph.

The following suggestions are of practical value while going for preparing graphs:

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- ✚ Determine the scale for the graph before plotting
- ✚ Use an adequate sized graph paper
- ✚ Layout graph with sharp pencil or colour crayons. Ink may be applied later
- ✚ Use a brief descriptive title
- ✚ Leave ample space to the left of zero line for all necessary drawing

Maps

A map is an accurate representation in the form of a diagram of the surface of the earth or some part of it, drawn to scale. Maps are universal visual aids.

Display Boards

A variety of display boards are available for education, to make an attractive display of information to be communicated.

Black Board/Chalk Board

The black board is probably the most widely used and versatile-tool of instruction. It provides a very convenient surface where the teacher can develop subject-matter visually in a manner and at pare to the suit the subject and the pupils.

Black board can be effectively used by following the techniques given below:

- Do not crowd the black board with too much information. A few important points make a vivid impression.
- Plan black board summary in advance
- Gather everything needed before the class meets, chalk, ruler, eraser, etc.
- Check lighting conditions
- Write legibly and boldly on the black board
- Erase stimulated materials

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- Use colour techniques like template pattern, over head projection techniques for effective display

Flannel Board

A flannel board is a piece of rigid material covered with cotton, flannel, felt or wool. When objects like pictures, drawings, symbols are backed with strips of paper they will adhere to the flannel board.

Magnetic Chalk Board

The magnetic chalk board adds a new dimension and increased flexibility to class room presentations. It is a steel based porcelain-surface chalk board.

Non-Projected Aids – Models

On certain occasions, while teaching, first hand learning experiences do not lend themselves for better learning. For example, the operation of certain things like a pump, generator or an engine or certain abstract concepts cannot be seen from the outside or by providing first hand experiences. One way of solving this issue is by using models, charts, objects, films etc. Of these, models play a vital role in teaching-learning process in accomplishing the goals of education. Especially in linguistics, many models can be used. For example, in phonetics oral cavity, lungs, tongue, teeth, etc.

The Language Laboratory

Technological aids in language teaching are a major force today, and among these aids, the language laboratory occupies the most prominent place. **Lab as centre of teaching is rejected here for the following reasons:**

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1. It is more difficult and expensive to produce good materials that attempts to do everything than to produce materials that supplement the work of the teacher
2. Complete materials age rapidly and soon become out dated
3. Such complete materials are inflexible and awkward without a teacher to control them and adapt them to the student

In the lab-as-an-aid point of view:

1. The teacher is clearly thought of as the central figure teaching the student
2. The lab is one more aid, not the central component of teaching
3. The lab materials are designed to supplement class work selectively.
4. The materials are not complete lessons

3. THE TEACHER AND THE LEARNER

Introduction

Our educational system is failing to meet the real needs of our society. Our schools generally constitute the most traditional, conservative, rigid, bureaucratic institution of our time. We, as teachers, have to create a genuinely humane climate in which we have to initiate a process where a young person can find him/herself respected, can make responsible choices, can experience the excitement of learning, can lay the basis for living as an effective, concerned citizen, well informed, competent in knowledge and skills and confident of facing the future. The ultimate aim of education – of all attempts at teaching – is to make the learners capable of doing things on their own. They need to be able to cope with the unpredictable. We as teachers must enable them to do so, and the training we impart should allow them to learn on their own, when the prop of the teacher is withdrawn. Although training the learners to learn by themselves is not a new concept, there has been a revival of interest in helping learners to take on more responsibility for their own learning.

Some of the reasons to advocate learner training are:

- ❖ Autonomy or being able to think and work independently is increasingly viewed as a basic human right. The goals society has for education are ultimately much broader than simply the achievement of certain areas of knowledge and skills. The process of making a learner autonomous is a way of coping with various sorts of differences among them. It is common knowledge among teachers that learners differ in their preferences regarding how to learn.
- ❖ Learner training is essential for continuing the process of education. At the college level, education becomes freer and less dependent on the teacher. In such conditions a learner trained to study independently would be able to cope with the situation much better.

Preparation Towards Becoming an Autonomous Learner

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The learners find it difficult to become autonomous in language learning due to the complexity of the subject matter. Because of this, pupils need three kinds of preparation which are closed interlinked. According to Leslie Dickenson and David Carver the three areas of preparation are:

1. They need to know how to continue learning a language – **methodological preparation**.
 - The learners need to be given extended practice in organizing their own work:
 - How to make notes
 - How to answer questions
 - How to read and understand, with context clues
 - How to work in a group
 - How to organize one's written work.
 - The learners need practice in correcting their own work, both written and spoken, either from answers provided or from other sources.
 - They need practice in keeping records of their own progress.
2. The learners need to develop self-confidence in their ability to work independently of the teacher - **psychological preparation**.
3. Finally the learners need to be given practice in taking responsibility for their own learning, that is, such things as initiating activities, making decisions about aspects of their own learning and so on. All this could be called practice in self **direction**.

Learning –Teaching Strategies

The training which learners should receive should prepare them to direct the course of their own learning, that is, it should take them from their states of varying degrees of dependence to the state of the greatest of independence or autonomy which is possible in a given set of circumstances.

- Co-operative learning
- Puzzling out things
- Self and peer correction

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- Choice of activities
- Trouble-shooting sessions
- Confidence sessions
- Using pupil teachers
- Extensive language activities outside the classroom

Definitions of a Good Language Learner

Good language learners have the following characteristics. They:

- Find a style of learning that suits them
- Try to figure out how the language works
- Are like detectives; always looking for clues that will help them understand how the language works
- Are creative and experiment with language
- Learn from their errors
- Use knowledge of their first language in mastering a second language
- Learn different styles of speech and writing and learn to vary their language according to the formality of the situation.

Role of the Teacher

The main concern as language teachers is not to inform our students about the language but to develop their ability to use the language for a variety of communicative purposes. The teacher will play different roles at the three stages of the learning process.

Presentation : when a teacher introduces something to be learned

Practice : when a teacher allows the learners to work under her directions

Production : when a teacher gives them opportunities to work on their own

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Presentation Stage : the teacher's main task is to serve as a kind of **informant**.

Conclusion

It is not enough to be merely a teacher who wears a “know all” mask, but a facilitator who understands her students, empathizes with him/her, and in fact becomes a part of the search with her students, for knowledge and wisdom. One of the advantages of systematically incorporating into one's teaching these learning-how-to-learn tasks is that learners became aware not only of their own preferred ways of learning, but also the fact that there are choices, not only in what to learn but also in how to learn.

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4. NATURE OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

Introduction

The most important concern of our educational system in the present is the development of our most precious natural resource – the minds and hearts of our young people. It is their curiosity, their eagerness to learn, their ability to make difficult and complex choices that will decide the future of our world. We need the help of all our youth – the serious and the thoughtful, the not so fortunate ones, the aimless, the affluent – the whole mass of our young people – if we are to preserve this fragile planet and build a future world worthy of the human race. The only way can be assured of that help is to assist our youth to learn, deeply and broadly, and above all learn how to learn. Our youngsters have to be ready to face a world full of controversy – political, social, international as well as personal. They will be involved in making judgements, choices, decisions that will affect their own lives, their families and society. We, as teachers, have to create a genuinely humane climate in which we have to initiate a process where a young person can find him/herself respected, can make responsible choices, can experience the excitement of learning, can lay the basis for living as an effective, concerned citizen, well informed, competent in knowledge and skills and confident of facing the future.

Introduction to Learning

The ultimate aim of education – of all attempts at teaching – is to make the learners capable of doing things on their own. They need to be able to cope with the unpredictable. During the period of formal education (in school) they have to acquire learning skills. We as teachers must enable them to do so, and the training we impart should allow them to learn on their own, when the prop of the teacher is withdrawn. That is what education is all about. Although training the learners to learn by themselves is not a new concept, there has been a revival of interest in helping learners to take on more responsibility for their own learning.

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What is Learner Training and the Need for it

The techniques and procedures for preparing learners to be autonomous and helping them to become more effective learners is commonly known as learner training. All language courses come to an end, but in very few do all the pupils learn everything by the end of the course. In language learning the very idea is ridiculous – there is far too much to learn. In fact, in many areas of study, learners continue learning about the subject after the end of the course. This is specially true in ‘practical’ subjects like cooking, vehicle maintenance, gardening, sewing, etc. but in language learning, it is only the successful few who continue to learn at the end of the course. A language is a highly complex set of systems, structures, and rules and consequently the process of learning is fairly complicated. So, while any reasonably intelligent person can learn more about gardening or motor car maintenance fairly easily by reading and practice, the same may not be the case with language learning. Therefore, a person who wishes to continue learning a language independently has to first learn how to do it, and has to build up his/her confidence in his/her ability to do it.

Some of the reasons to advocate learner training are:

- ❖ Autonomy or being able to think and work independently is increasingly viewed as a basic human right. The goals society has for education are ultimately much broader than simply the achievement of certain areas of knowledge and skills. A democratic society protects its democratic ideals through an intellectual process leading to independent individuals who are able to think for themselves.
- ❖ Learners are recognized as individuals with different ways of learning. The process of making a learner autonomous is a way of coping with various sorts of differences among them. It is common knowledge among teachers that learners differ in their preferences regarding how to learn. Some need to learn grammatical rules, others claim never to look at them; some enjoy struggling to communicate in English, others are very embarrassed if they are required to perform so simple a communicative act as

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greeting someone. Some cannot remember anything unless they write it down, others have very good aural memories, and so on.

- ❖ Learner training is essential for continuing the process of education. At the college level, education becomes freer and less dependent on the teacher. In such conditions a learner trained to study independently would be able to cope with the situation much better.

The Art of Learning through Bicycle Riding

Read this account of a young girl's experience about learning to ride a bicycle.

“ I sometimes ride a bicycle to school. When and how did I learn it? I remember it was during the summer vacation when I was seven. I was the youngest in the family and too small to reach the pedals on my brother's bike. So my parents bought me a small bicycle. I got on to the bike and came down hard on the pedals. I tipped over. I got back and tipped again. The bike fell on top of me and I had bruises all over. Kids younger and smaller than I could ride a bicycle with great ease. I had to learn, so I kept at it. In a week I could ride pretty well. Today I can read, write, swim, cook and drive a car and also do minor repair work. I learned them all the same way. There is something very simple in this way of learning. I needed to know or do something, so I went after it. It was hard, and hurt at times, but it worked. But learning in the classroom was not like learning to ride a bicycle. Often I sat passive, waiting for the class to be over. Sometimes I got interested in something and read about it. Anyhow, I did well in tests and exams and everyone thought I was a good student, but I have forgotten many things I learned in school!”

Preparation Towards Becoming an Autonomous Learner

The learners find it difficult to become autonomous in language learning due to the complexity of the subject matter. Because of this, pupils need three kinds of preparation which

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are closed interlinked. According to Leslie Dickenson and David Carver the three areas of preparation are:

They need to know how to continue learning a language – **methodological preparation**.

- The learners need to be given extended practice in organizing their own work:
 - How to make notes
 - How to answer questions
 - How to read and understand, with context clues
 - How to work in a group
 - How to organize one's written work.
- The learners need practice in correcting their own work, both written and spoken, either from answers provided or from other sources.
- They need practice in keeping records of their own progress.

The learners need to develop self-confidence in their ability to work independently of the teacher - **psychological preparation**. And it is the most important aspect of the preparation. This can be done effectively by development of **process orientation**. This means the development of an attitude in which education is viewed as a formal process of acquiring learning rather than a game in which players score points by getting the right answers – which is **product orientation**. For example, when writing an answer/essay does the learner go through the stages of thinking, organizing ideas, making rough drafts and then writing the final answer/essay, or does he copy a good answer/essay; write it with the help of an adult – in which case the process aspect is totally lost. The next time he has to write an answer/essay he is still very dependent.

The development in the learner of an awareness about his/her own learning is also essential. This can be fostered by giving opportunities for discussion of how different pupils go about particular learning tasks, of what learning difficulties different pupils have and how they might overcome them.

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Finally the learners need to be given practice in taking responsibility for their own learning, that is, such things as initiating activities, making decisions about aspects of their own learning and so on. All this could be called practice in self **direction**. For example, giving learners opportunities to gain periods of independence from the teacher – as in pair work, group work, project work, etc.

LEARNING-TEACHING STRATEGIES:

The training which learners should receive should prepare them to direct the course of their own learning, that is, it should take them from their states of varying degrees of dependence to the state of the greatest of independence or autonomy which is possible in a given set of circumstances. If this is to occur, then the learner must acquire a number of relevant learning techniques or strategies. Learner strategies refers to language learning behaviour(s) that learners actually engage into learn and regulate the learning of English (as a second language in this case).

- Co-operative learning
- Puzzling out things
- Self and peer correction
- Choice of activities
- Trouble-shooting sessions
- Confidence sessions
- Using pupil teachers
- Extensive language activities outside the classroom

Co-Opeartive Learning

- Pair work
- Group work
- Role play

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Pair Work

- Provides a lot of oral practice
- Gives learners a chance to work independently
- Prepares learners for group work
- Provides an opportunity to talk face-to-face, which reflects real life situations

Group Work

- Pair and group work differ in :
- Time set
- Nature of the group work
- Type of activity

Role Play

- Students play imaginary characters in given situations
- It brings a wide variety of language experiences into the classroom
- It gives an opportunity to use language as used in real life situations
- It helps better self expression (as it is full of fun and enjoyment)

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5. E-LEARNING AND THE ROLE OF THE ENGLISH TEACHER

Introduction

The objective in any language classroom is to get the learners to learn the target language and use it, which is done best when they are involved actively in the learning process. This in turn means that their interest must be sustained in classroom activity. A teacher who has a repertoire of techniques to teach different skills/sub-skills is more likely to succeed in this objective than one who has limited number of techniques at command. Another important point to be remembered is that having a repertoire of techniques is by itself no guarantee of success; one must know *when* to use *which* technique. In other words, judgement of a teacher should be fine-tuned to the *needs* of that particular class/group of learners. For example, drilling is a technique which can be used effectively at the practice or familiarization stage of a lesson, but not for a communicative activity which demands deployment of the learner's own language.

E-Education

E-education involves e-teaching and e-learning along with the various administrative and strategic measures needed to support teaching and learning in an internet environment. It will incorporate a local, regional, national and international view of education. The importance of a vision for e-teaching, e-learning and e-education. It highlighted the need for continuous and relevant training and support for educators and administrators at all levels. However, the report had a minimal focus on e-teaching and a heavy emphasis on e-learning. A potential e-teacher could well be left wondering *what does this mean for me if I want to be an e-teacher?*

E-Learning

E-learning is learning which takes place as a result of experiences and interaction in an Internet environment. A major fallout of the widespread use of computers in the field of education has been the advent of e-learning. This mode of learning consists of course material that can be accessed on-line. These course materials have everything that a normal course has

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and work more or less in the same way as a traditional course with assignments, tests, etc. The materials for these courses are delivered in two modes, namely, the CD-ROM and the Internet. The courses are usually prepared using learning platforms or learning management systems (LMS).

CD-Rom

In this mode, the course is available on CDs. Students either access the CD-ROMs on individual computers or on the Local Area Network (LAN). The LAN works like a classroom, with all students accessing the same material, for example business vocabulary.

Internet

Many courses are offered on the Internet, and after choosing the course they want to do, the students register for it on-line. Once they register and pay the course fee, they are given a password that will enable them to go on-line. Course materials are available on-line, and the students have to work through these. Most such courses have assignments that the student should complete and send to the tutors on-line. These assignments are assessed and comments on the work sent, usually by email. Facilities that are available on the Internet are made use of on these courses; for example, chat rooms are used by the tutor to talk on-line to the students or by students on the same course to talk to each other. At the end of the course, students have to do a test on-line. They are assessed, and a certificate given.

Learning Management Systems

These are systems that are used to develop and deliver on-line courses. They run like a university or educational institute, with one difference – they are virtual. Such systems even have provision for activities that the administrative section of a college or school carries out, such as admissions, fee collection and sending out of information. Look at the figures below to see how a typical learning system works.

Advantages of E-Learning

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E-learning certainly encourages students to learn on their own, at their own pace too. It also asks them to invest in the learning process. This is a desirable quality to nurture. However, since face-to-face interaction has its own advantages, most e-learning courses offer 'blended learning', that is, some work on the computer combined with live teaching by teachers. This also takes care of peer interaction.

Where blended learning cannot be offered, e-courses offer 'live' chat sessions with tutors or teachers. This is possible because of the video cameras that can be used with computers. The other and, perhaps, more expensive option is video conferencing. Video conferencing is becoming more popular, but only where it can be afforded. If the prices come down, the day will not be far when school children can talk to President Abdul Kalam on physics!

It has been accepted that very young children need to learn in 'live' rather than 'virtual' situations. Therefore e-learning is not done extensively at the elementary level. However, children are encouraged to use computers (and CSs) to practice what they have learnt. For example, if a child has had a lesson on prepositions in the classroom he can go back to an e-course on the topic and do exercises on it. Since the CDs generally present the matter in an interesting way with figures, cartoon characters and even music, children invariably enjoy these sessions.

The Disadvantages of E-Learning

E-learning has made remarkable progress in the past two decades, but it is still not very popular. The disadvantages of e-learning are as follows:

- E-learning requires computers, which many schools and colleges do not have
- They are too expensive to purchase and maintain, especially in the Indian context
- They need sophisticated infrastructure, which most schools/colleges do not have
- E-learning expects students to be responsible learners who need to work on their own
- A computer is impersonal; it is not like having a live teacher in a classroom setting
- Peer interaction helps learning; this is missing in e-learning

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- E-learning cannot be used at the elementary level, as children are being taught concepts, which cannot be taught on the computer

The disadvantages of e-learning are being reduced with the progress being made in computer technology.

- The prices of computers are coming down every quarter. Besides, most of the government grants to educational institutions today include money for computers, and various schemes have been launched by different governments and funding bodies to equip all schools and colleges with computer
- The infrastructure required to run computer labs is becoming simpler day by day. This is because modern computers are hardier than the earlier models

Conventional Learning Vs. E-Learning

E-learning can give students much greater control over their own learning experience while giving e-teachers an opportunity to further meet the needs of individual students in a digital age (Layton, 2000;Wallhaus,2000). A comparison of some aspects of conventional learning and e-learning are shown below:

Conventional learning	E-learning
Students attend a school in their local community or attend a boarding or correspondence school	Students participate from a variety of locations and may “attend” multiple learning institutions and/or their local school
Classes are scheduled according to school hours and timetables	Students may determine the times when they access e-learning opportunities
Students are directed to work individually or in groups	Students can choose to work individually or collaboratively with people who may or may

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Classes are synchronous. And teachers and students interact in real time	not be in their <i>regular</i> class Classes may be synchronous or asynchronous
Students are generally enrolled with one school	Students may take classes from more than one school
Learning objectives are set by the teacher and institution	Students may set their own objectives and explore their own learning needs and agendas
Students follow a linear pattern influenced by the needs of other class members and the teacher's planning	Students can follow a non-linear path at a pace that meets their individual needs at that time, i.e. just-in-time learning. The teacher is facilitating the activity
Teachers can work in a school	E-teachers can work in more than one school.

This comparison highlights some of the day-to-day differences that may become apparent according to how a school chooses to offer e-education and the choices which families will make for their children. It is important to recognize that while e-learning has much to offer it is not a signal for the end of regular classroom learning as we know it now. Classroom learning will continue to have an important role to play but as Rosenberg (2001) has identified, “it will be a different role from the past” and no longer the “default delivery system”.

The Role of the Teacher

The e-teacher who is surrounded by rapidly changing e-environments and technologies must at times feel like they are trying to change a tyre on a moving vehicle. When explaining the challenge and changing roles for e-teachers, it is a little like encouraging them to be information and environment architects. The environment they create may well be totally aligned with the work of the regular classroom so that e-learning becomes an integral part of it. Alternatively it

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may be a virtual classroom where the students only visit electronically. This seamless transition from what we now accept as learning to an e-learning environment will in time mean that the “e” ceases to have any particular significance.

The ability of teachers to communicate via the Internet, accessing and publishing information is very diverse. There are some who are pre-e-literate and others who utilize the internet for regular school and classroom activity. It is not unusual to find teachers storing information so that it is web-accessible but to actually make the move toward e-teaching is the next brave step.

Support for e-teachers is often difficult to get when the supporters have not had any direct and practical e-teaching or e-learning experience themselves. It is e-teachers who need to feel they are in the driving seat of a vehicle they have helped to design.

There needs to be careful consideration of how to make best use of the teaching possibilities in the internet environment. It is not about creating large amounts of content but about designing and creating different learning opportunities and experiences. There will be content online but it should be embedded in a teaching and learning framework that is flexible and accessible in terms of design. The content is not king, it is the activity around the content that is paramount.

The design of effective e-learning will be undertaken by e-teachers who are familiar with this new e-classroom environment. This is not the roles of the technical support people or software designers. The e-learning environment should be flexible enough for e-teachers to design and implement their own unique environments independently. Then e-teachers can leverage the distinct attributes afforded by the new technologies so that they are meaningful and motivational for e-learners. The assessment and evaluation of e-learning and the e-curriculum will not necessarily utilize the traditional models of accreditation.

E-Learning and its Impact on Teachers

The networked environment of this new Internet-connected world has expanded the opportunities for teaching and learning in ways that we are only beginning to understand. What

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makes the implementation of e-teaching so challenging is that we are asking teachers of the dot.com age to teach in a way in which they have never been taught when they were at school. They will work in an environment in which they have never been learners and may have had few first-hand experiences. However, without a history and a wide knowledge base to draw on, e-teachers will have the opportunity to be pioneers in their own right as they set sail. They will have the chance to examine what it means to be a teacher.

Conclusion

We are now sailing into a sea of change made possible by the rapid development and availability of the internet. These developments have already begun to fundamentally alter the way. What we can now consider is that the access to the internet outside of formal classroom settings has opened up possibilities that were inconceivable ten years ago. For many students their home will be the principal place of access to the internet and the word *classroom* will assume a whole new meaning. The nature of the traditional classroom is going to change beyond recognition and we too may wonder why *we didn't get* it at the time.

6. LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

Introduction:

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A language is a means of communication. What we feel or what we know, we have to convey the same to others. In order to convey we know or we feel, we need a tool. That tool is language. There are many languages in the world. One among them is English. The language English has been spread to various countries by the British people in the form of colonization. English language not only belongs to English people but to the people all over the world. English is considered as a secondary passport. If you know English well, you can go to any part of the world. Thus English is essential in every walk of life. Language is only one of the codes we use to express our ideas. Languages continually change; their statistics are “non-stationary.” Not only do they change continually with history, as social conditions in general alter, but they may show a difference, at any particular time, as environmental conditions differ. The relationship between the whole structure of a language (grammatical formalism) and the outside world associations (its semantic functioning) is extremely complicated; it is essentially empirical and above all, varies between different languages.

Scope and Purpose:

The word “communication” has become popular. It is used currently to label relationship problems between labor and management, among countries, among people generally. Some uses of the communication label refer to a different way of viewing these problems; others merely change the name of the same. The international aspect of both government and industry has become communication-oriented. Aristotle defined the study of rhetoric [communication] as the search for “all the available means of persuasion.” He discussed other purpose that a speaker might have; nevertheless, he clearly implied that the prime goal of communication was persuasion, an attempt to sway other men to the speaker’s point of view. This view of communicative purpose remained popular until late in the eighteenth century, although emphasis switched from the methods of persuasion to what constituted the “good man” in the speaking situation. In the seventeenth century a school of thought known as faculty psychology was developed. Faculty psychology made a clear distinction between the soul and the mind, attributing separate faculties to each. By late in the eighteenth century, the concepts of faculty

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psychology had invaded rhetoric. The mind-soul dualism was interpreted as a basis for two independent purposes for communication. One purpose was intellectual or cognitive in nature; the other was emotional. One appealed to the mind, and the other to the soul. By this theory, one purpose of communication was informative - an appeal to the mind. A second was persuasive – an appeal to the soul, the emotions. We should employ at least four criteria for our definition of purpose. Communication purpose must be specified in such a way that it is:

1. Not logically contradictory or inconsistent with itself;
2. Behavior-centered; that is, expressed in terms of human behaviors;
3. Specific enough for us to be able to relate it to actual communication behavior;
4. Consistent with the ways in which people communicate.

Language Choices:

Although we are often told that we should use clear and precise language, this recommendation is somewhat similar to the demand that we stop snoring at night. We would all like to break our bad habits whether they are poor language usage or snoring but we don't know how to do it. Command of the language requires years of practice and study. It is impossible to lay down strict rules that govern the choice of language for all occasions and for all circumstances. Therefore, we are going to limit ourselves to a few particularly useful recommendations. Specifically, we will discuss clarity, energy and vividness.

- Clarity – If we are saying something of special importance or if we are in a formal speaking situation, clarity is essential since there will probably not be the opportunity to make our point again.
- Energy - When there is energy in our communication we give our listeners a feeling of excitement, urgency, and forcefulness. In English, a sense of energy is communicated mainly by verbs the action words of the language. “She slapped him” and “He jumped up and down” are both sentences that have energy and excitement. Another way to add energy to language is to put sentences in the active rather than the passive voice. The

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active “The boy hit the ball” is more energetic than the passive “The ball was hit by the boy.”

- Vividness – Vivid language appeals to the senses. It enables us to smell the musky scent of perfume, to taste crisp French fries . [with a light sprinkling of salt], and to hear and feel the vibrations of a concert. Vividness also comes from unique forms of speech. When we say that language is vivid, we often mean that some one has found a new way of saying old things. Their unique perspectives make an old idea sound original and exciting.

The Ingredients of Communication:

The concern with communication has produced many attempts to develop models of the process – descriptions, listing of ingredients. Of course, these models differ. In the Rhetoric, Aristotle said that we have to look at three communication ingredients; the speaker, the speech, and the audience. He meant that each of these elements is necessary to communication and that we can organize our study of the process under the three headings of :

5. The person who speaks,
6. The speech that he produces, and
7. The person who listens

The Shannon-Weaver model certainly is consistent with Aristotle’s position. Shannon and Weaver said that the ingredients in communication include:

1. A source,
2. A transmitter,
3. A signal
4. A receiver and
5. A destination.

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If we translate the source into the speaker, the signal into the speech, and the destination into the listener. Communication sources and receivers must be similar systems. If they are not similar, communication cannot occur.

The ingredients that we will include in our discussion of a model of the communication process are:

1. The communication source,
2. The encoder
3. The message
4. The channel
5. The decoder
6. The communication receiver

We will mention many other communication factors; however, we will return to these six ingredients again and again, as we talk about communication at various levels of complexity.

The newspaper is one example of a communication network.

The Fidelity of Communication:

There are atleast four kinds of factors within the source, which can increase fidelity. They are:

1. Communication skills,
2. Attitudes
3. Knowledge level and
4. Position within a social-cultural system

Levels of Communication:

One way of studying the speech communication is to divide it into levels. At each level, the major principles and variables in a communicative situation operate differently. We shall use this approach because it is an excellent way of classifying the different forms of speech communication.

There are seven levels of communication and are:

1. Intrapersonal Communication
2. International Communication

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3. Small Group Communication
4. Intercultural Communication
5. Public Communication or Public Speaking
6. Mass Media Communication
7. Non-verbal Communication

The seven levels we discuss are not distinct categories and are not absolute in their differences. Some communicative situations fit easily into one category and other belong to several levels at once. We need to know about each level and its relationship to all other levels to see the differences between communication situations and to understand the total process.

Characteristic Features of Communication:

In the words of Dean Barnlund(1962):

1. Communication is a process,
2. Communication is not linear,
3. Communication is complex,
4. Communication is irreversible and unrepeatable and
5. Communication involves the total personality.

Barnlund points out that communication is the basis of change in our views of the world and of ourselves. Aside from common social rituals, men nearly always talk in a context of change. What prompts communication is the desire for someone else to see our facts, appreciate our values, share our feelings, accept our decision. Communication is initiated, consciously or unconsciously, to change the other person.

The Role of Communication:

We are born into a world of strange sensory sensations. Lights, visual images, and strange sounds bombard the nervous system. Our early days are spent sorting out these sensations. Sounds also begin to take one meaning as words are repeated over and over again. Eventually we begin to behave in certain ways that exert influence on the environment. Babbling, cooing and finally vocalizing “ma-ma” or “pa-pa” gain warm approving signals of positive acceptance from

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the elders. As we develop we become more sophisticated and discriminating as we attach meaning to phenomena, and we are more able to control our environments by initiating communication with others. We expand our experiences and our expectations of others in terms of our cultural surroundings and the models of behaviors that we encounter. Communication with its intrinsic feedback, is the means by which we adjust ourselves to our environment and adjust our environment to suit us. We don't think we overstate in saying that communication is the most important process in our lives. As human beings, we do not live simply as a result of the products of our own hands, but through our dealings with others. Barnlund has stated clearly and concisely the role and goal of communication in our lives. Communication arises out of the need to reduce uncertainty, to act effectively, to defend or strengthen the ego. The aim of communication is to increase the number and consistency of our meanings within the limits set by patterns of evaluation that have proven successfully in the past, our emerging needs and drives, and the demands of the physical and social setting of the moment. Communication ceases when meanings are adequate: it is initiated as soon as new meanings are required. However, since man is a homeostatic, rather than static, organism, it is impossible for him to discover any permanently satisfying way of relating all his needs; each temporary adjustment is both relieving and disturbing, leading to successively novel ways of relating to himself and his environment.

Conclusion:

In real life, all communications signals are subject to disturbances, usually beyond the control of the transmitter or of the receiver. The theory as treated so far has assumed that no disturbances are present; the source selects messages, and transmits signals, which are received without error, enabling the receiver to make an identical set of selections from ensemble. Group communication has been extended by the tools of mass communication. Language as it is used creates many problems. To be aware of some of these problems is to know the effects that language can have on us, our perceptions, and our communication. Our image of the world around us is integrally linked with our language and the categories we use in classifying our perceptions. What we say to ourselves about what we perceive is directly controlled by our language habits.

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Therefore, intrapersonal communication is directly influenced by our language habits, and language becomes an important part of this process.

7. LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

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Introduction to Language and Linguistics

Language, which has been considered man's most remarkable achievement, is so much a part of our lives, like the air we breathe, that very often we take it for granted and as often are not aware of its characteristic features. There are many things about language that are still a mystery and will probably remain so. Language has form which consists of a combination of distinctive sounds or phonemes. Linguistic forms are either bound or free. Language does not operate in a vacuum. It is an integral part of culture, and like culture, it is learned behaviour. Language is at the very core of culture itself.

Linguistics and Language Teaching

The need for the linguistics oriented teaching was greatly felt during the Second World War. The Allied forces while thrusting forward in the occupied areas found that the armed forces required a basic knowledge of the language of those areas in order to have a verbal access to the population that came across. Robert Lado (1964) had been of the view that "linguists insisted on the imitation and memorization of basic conversational sentences as spoken by native speakers. They also provided the distinctive elements of intonation, pronunciation, morphology and syntax, the powerful idea of pattern practice was developed". Repetition of selected patterns and structures assumed an important role in the gradation of lessons. In order to make the learning process simpler, it required to know the similarities and dissimilarities between the mother tongue and the target language. Charles Fried (1945) had detailed the significance of contrastive analysis as far back as 1945 regarding the teaching materials. "The most effective materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner". The learner finds certain areas of target language easy and other areas very difficult to learn. The latter is due to the absence of similar forms in his own tongue. It is the study of the differences which is most

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characteristic of the contribution of linguistics to a language teaching. This can be effectively achieved by the contrastive analysis of the mother tongue and target language structure.

Language Proficiency

Generally when the question of language teaching and communication are raised, one can immediately think about the knowledge of the structure of the language concerned and also proficiency in the four basic skills of the language. They are

1. Listening skill
2. Speaking skill
3. Reading skill
4. Writing skill

Among these four skills, both listening skill and reading skill are called as **receptive skills** or **passive skills** and the other two skills, namely speaking skill and writing skill are called as **productive skills** or **active skills**. It is very important to note that there is a close link between all the above skills. In other words, every skill in its own way is interconnected in order to achieve the overall objective of communication. Unless one has systematic exposure in receptive skills, he/she cannot be systematic in productive skill. Everything takes place and develops within the linguistic, cultural and social boundaries of the concerned society in which the particular language is spoken. It is the curriculum, syllabus; text book, teaching methodologies under the efficient functioning of the teacher in the class room, those students are shaped in different skills mentioned above.

Listening

Sam Mohan Lal (2000) states that the listening skill is the basic skill, which functions as a base for the development of all other skills. It is so because before the development of all other skills a child is exposed to various sounds with simultaneous exposure to vision. When the child

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listens to the sound and sees the sources of the sound, it **recognizes** and it is **recorded** in the mind of the child. This is the basic experience in **listening, understanding** and **recognition**. As a next step of basic listening, as and when the sound and its meaning is recorded in the mind of the child, automatically during the next stage of listening to the same sound the child can recollect and comprehend the meaning of the sound without having any visual mode. This is called retrieving from the memory and experience and recognizing and comprehending the sound. This process is taking place every time when the child listens to a sound. Now we shall discuss about the process with a help of a simple illustration which can be explained in the following four stages:

Stage – I

The child **listens** to the cawing of a crow simultaneously **seeing** the crow in the process of cawing. Then the child recognizes the sound and its meaning. Finally, the child **records** it in the mind.

Stage – II

The child **listens** to the cawing of a crow again after a period of gap. There is **no visual representation** of the action of crow in the process of cawing. The child **retrieves**, the meaning from the experiences already gained. Finally, the child **recognizes** the sound, and the child **comprehends** the meaning of that sound.

Stage – III

In this third stage, the inclusion of language component to represent the sound and its source will take place.

Stage – IV

When the cawing of the crow is mimicked, the child can recollect and pronounce the word for the source. Here it is crow and the first step to speaking.

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In the above four stages of basic listening and recognition, stage I is very important because only at this stage the child gets its full knowledge and correlates with the sound, symbol and meaning and registers it in the mind which is the base for forming the experience in the language speaking society. Hence, while teaching the skill of listening, the teacher should be keener in concentrating on this stage. This is to say that there should be aptness in making the children to listen to the language sounds in its isolation; in its phonic sequence and correlating the sound sequence with the meaning it gives. Any flaw made at this stage can in future create problems in the development of listening skill and subsequently comprehending properly what they have listened. In class room situation, while developing the listening skill among the students, the teacher should mainly look into the following two broad stages. At the stage one or at the first level of listening, the teacher can ask the students to undergo an experience of marginal listening or casual listening. At the second stage or the second level of listening the teacher can ask the students to undergo an experience of attentive listening and crossover to the level of focused listening and ultimately cross into level of analytical listening. It is the efficiency and the sincerity of the teacher to guide the students from the stage of marginal listening to the analytical listening through several methods of language and evaluation techniques. On the students are sure about what they have heard, they are switching over to the next stage of listening called the analytical listening. This is a very important stage of listening, because at this stage, the tendency of the students will be to analyze and evaluate each and every feature of the language and its content with that of the experience and knowledge they have already gained from other sources of information. Analytical listening can also be the threshold for creative thinking and subsequent creative writing.

Gradation in Listening Activities

As discussed earlier, listening skill is the base for the development of all the other language skills. Hence, it is ideal for a teacher to grade the material while giving for listening comprehension at an elementary level, which is as follows:

- The simple sentences with repetitive words which give the key point

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- The simple conversational situations which are very short
- The short and complete stories are provided
- The passages which give simple illustrations in order to explain a point

When adequate confidence is acquired by the students while listening to the materials, at the next stage in the level of primary and upper primary, the materials may have, more complex-sentences which do not have any repetitive words which explain the key points, more longer conversations involving various sentence conjunctives, use of several points simultaneously at one stretch, larger and complete stories involving more complicated characters and the incomplete stories which can inculcate the habit of guessing among the students while listening. As a next step, the teacher can think of giving listening from the indirect source as, recorded audio tapes, telephone conversation and radio broadcast etc. Still at higher level, the materials may have the following:

- ✓ Group conversations
- ✓ Writing of earlier period involving more standard usages which have more literal value
- ✓ The poetry which may have different syntax in its sentence structure
- ✓ The more complex sentences involving more than three or four ideas embedded in one sentence

Teachers are expected to keep in their minds that comprehension is not a skill which can be mastered once for all and then ignored while other skills are developed. Rather there should be constant practice with increasingly difficult and stylistically variant material. This is because the listening comprehension increases with growing familiarity with the vocabulary and structures of the language and when the student develops taste in this he/she will enjoy listening to various materials with more interest daily and continues to enjoy even after he/she leaves the classroom. This interest contributes to the development of other skill of language.

Speaking

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As discussed earlier, speaking is one of the productive skills, which is the active skill. The specialty of this skill is that the speaker who wants to say something should control the following;

- ❖ Identify the situation
- ❖ Decide the point to be spoken
- ❖ Select the words and the sentence structure of the language
- ❖ Recollect from the experience already gained in that language speaking environment
- ❖ Make an utterance by following the phonic and structural norms of the language

All the above activities should take place within a fraction of a second. This is the reason why among the students mostly there will be hesitation to speak. This initial hesitation if uncared will develop into a severe impediment in developing this skill at all. Moreover speaking is not a mere oral production of the written language. Rather it is the result of mastery over many other sub skills. This skill has different components, they are:

- ✚ Speaking and pronunciation
- ✚ Speaking and meaning
- ✚ Speaking and completeness
- ✚ Speaking and interference
- ✚ Speaking and style
- ✚ Speaking and voice modulations
- ✚ Speaking and gestures
- ✚ Speaking and coherence

Sam Mohan Lal (2000) opined that speech without coherence can be disastrous. In other words, it can be incomprehensible and also develop disinterest among the listeners. Coherence means the knowledge about the use of ideas as per the step by step development of the topic during the speech. Suppose a story is being told, the knowledge such as; how to begin, how to develop it, where to give explanations and how to end, etc. These are very much needed for the

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speaker. While teaching the coherence of thought during the speech, the teacher can involve the learners in different game based activities. Different graded steps may be adopted through games. For example,

Level – I:

A series of pictures may be given describing a known story which are not sequenced as per the natural development of that story. The students may be instructed first to sequence the pictures in their minds and develop the story in a cohesive manner.

Level – II:

The different words may be given to the students and they may be instructed to develop the story by utilizing the words given to them.

Level – III:

Different topics such as excursion, giving directions to others, explaining about an experience etc. may be given for cohesive speaking.

During such exercises it is very important that students should be instructed to use various oral strategies such as, description, prediction, simplification, use of direct speech, illustrations, use of narrative techniques, use of idioms and phrases, natural use of connectors, use of intonation, stress etc. as per the topic and the use of non-verbal communicative strategies etc. At every step of the speech activity the teacher should monitor whether the students are using all the relevant components at an appropriate place or not. In case of any drawback, the students should be given more practice.

Group Conversation

In the activity of speaking, various groups may be formed in the class and they may be asked to converse in the given topics. This activity for speech practice is important because through this activity the students can be trained in the following ways:

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- To the use of various connectors during the course of the conversation
- How to develop the conversation
- How to change the course of conversation by changing the topic
- How to use various styles of usages

This group conversation is also very much useful to get rid of shyness to speak among some students of the class. Such students will have tendency to come forward to speak during the involvement of a group.

Steps for the Development of Speaking Skill

- Place of articulation of sounds
- How sounds are produced
- Pronunciation exercises of individual sounds and sound sequences
- Development of lexicon
- Visually presenting materials for conversation
- Picture stories – sequenced
- Picture stories – non-sequenced
- One word one meaning
- Many words one meaning
- Different types of interference and rectifications
- Use of idioms and phrases
- Use of voice modulations
- Culture attested gestures
- Group conversation
- Testing the speech development at every stage of training

Conclusion

Learners may be given ideas and topics for discussion, for example ‘How I would make things better’. This title can cover different things, from school amenities to municipal work to

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administering a country. Young learners could be motivated by showing them children's pages in the daily newspapers. It would, incidentally, make the learner feel that a young person's opinion is respected enough to be published.

8. PRACTICING INNOVATIVE IDEAS IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

Introduction

A language is a means of communication. What we feel or what we know, we have to convey the same to others. In order to convey we know or we feel, we need a tool. That tool is language. There are many languages in the world. One among them is English. Language is a Language in India www.languageinindia.com

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system. Each language has its own structure, its own system. The main objective of the teaching-learning of a living language – like English – is to help the learners to become able to use it to communicate with others, by sending and receiving meaningful messages. Language is an important tool of communication to express one’s ideas, views and feelings. Language has been divided into four main skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing [LSRW]. **Communication is the art of being understood. Communicating in a global world is a challenging task!** Communication is the exchange of information or ideas between two or more people. It is the act of expressing thoughts in a manner that others understand.

Language Teaching

The objective of language teaching is not to ‘transmit’ the teacher’s superior understanding and appreciation of such texts to pupils; it is rather, to help them experience or ‘see for themselves’ the meanings. Teachers’ style is inevitably influenced by their attitudes and beliefs; the nature and role of knowledge, in the case of language learning, their view of language and the nature of learning and teaching. Language teaching plays a vital role to open up its resources to the learner so that he or she may find the right words and sentences to convey the meaning intended. The teachings of language is by no means a recent of novel activity and there has always been a constant search for effective ways of optimizing learning. The goals of teaching the mother tongue or the first language are different from those of teaching of foreign language or a second language.

Ideas for Listening Skills

Listening and Speaking are two important aspects of Communication. An active activity that involves receiving, deciphering and perceiving a message which intent to respond. An active activity that involves receiving, deciphering and perceiving a message which intent to respond. Listening is a technique for improving understanding of what is being said. Present paper aims at testing the listening and reproduction abilities of high school students in English Language. Listening plays a crucial role in Speaking abilities. Since listening is the receptive source or input how the language user understands and acquire oral language, this paper tries to study the Language in India www.languageinindia.com

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listening and speaking abilities if the learners based on their immediate listening. For this study 40 high school students were selected and they were asked to listen a story which ran about five minutes. After two times of listening they were asked to repeat the same story. Their speech were recorded and analyzed based on the vocabulary loss, gain, modification, creation, synonymical expression and grammar. In total their recall skills were tested. The following findings were drawn by the survey:

1. Students found difficulties in recalling words which has more than four syllables.
2. Many students have modified the sentence structure.
3. Some students misunderstood the stories and changed the conclusion.

Ideas for Speaking Skills

Competence in the grammatical system of a language alone is not sufficient for effective use of the language for communication, oral as well as written. To develop oral communicative skills in English, one should

- ❖ Acquire an acceptable pronunciation with proper word stress, pitch, intonation, etc.,
- ❖ Learn certain set patterns in English generally used in different day to day contexts of life, i.e., learning conversational English.
- ❖ Descriptive competency -
- ❖ Dictations – True/False types
- ❖ Interviewing a person

Ideas for Reading Skills

Present paper aims at testing the Cloze Test abilities of high school students in English Language. The word **Cloze** means to complete a pattern. In cloze test, a passage may be given with blanks at regular intervals. This is a technique to measure reading comprehension and general language ability. This procedure originated in the 1950s as a means of assessing the difficulty level of a reading passage for native speakers. The passage is followed by answer

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choices. Four or five choices may be given, of which the correct word has to be chosen to complete a sentence. This process is continued until all the blanks in the passage are filled up.

Quick reading will give a basic idea of the passage. The second reading should be accompanied with a reading of the options given after the passage. If the correct answer is not immediately apparent, check if the options fit in with the meaning and the structure of both the sentence and the passage. Eliminate choices that do not clearly fit in the sentence. Use discretion and judgement to choose the correct option from the remaining choices. For this study, 10 high school students were selected and they were asked to write the answers for Cloze Test passages within 30 minutes.

Under this cloze item type, two types of scoring procedures are used: the exact word method where the exact word used in the original text must be supplied and the appropriate or acceptable word method where the testee can supply any word which is acceptable or appropriate. Quite often, a cloze passage has provision for both the above scoring procedures, the exact words fitting into function gaps (conjunctions, prepositions and articles), and the appropriate words fitting into semantic gaps (nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs).

The following findings were drawn by the survey:

1. Students found difficulties in answering the questions because they are lacking in the reading comprehension as well as in general language ability.
2. Many students do not know the synonymical expression
3. Some students misunderstood the meaning of the passage

Ideas for Writing Skills

In our daily transactions of life we make use of English in the written form for various types of communication such as definitions, letter writing, report writing and note-making.

✚ Leave-letter writing

✚ Creative writing

✚ Descriptive competency

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✚ Dictations – True/False types

Ideas for Activities

- Jumping game
- Story writing
- Group discussion
- Picture comprehension

Conclusion

The techniques of language teaching are, to understand the students' beliefs and attitudes, to meet the anticipated objectives, to keep the syllabus short, precise and attractive, to indicate the advantages and possible disadvantages, to make the term easy for compliance. The learning should be the goal of teaching but not the mirror image of teaching. The teaching should be based on real-life needs provided opportunity for skill-practice. The teaching should encourage the learners to evaluate themselves. A language teacher takes pains to teach all the lessons well. The class is made lively and humorous, the emphasis should be on teaching than on testing. The methods adopted should not pressurise the students. How a thing is done in class is a *technique*. A technique is 'implementational – that which actually takes place in a classroom. It is a particular trick, stratagem or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective' (Anthony 1972). Techniques are closely related to methods and approaches. Another important point to be remembered is that having a repertoire of techniques is by itself no guarantee of success; one must know *when* to use *which* technique. This analysis shows that students have poor communication skills. Their syllabus curriculum was also not sufficient for the students to develop their skills. The students should be given as many activities or drills as possible to enrich their skills in all the LSRW skills.

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9. COMMUNICATION SKILLS – TEACHING THE TECHNIQUES OF LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS

Introduction

Communication is the exchange of information or ideas between two or more people. It is the act of expressing thoughts in a manner that others understand. The development of language learning or teaching from form-based to a meaning-based approach, the move towards an eclectic approach from a rigid method, the shift from teacher-fronted to learner-centred classes, are all subsumed under the broad term COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH. How a thing is done in class is a technique. A technique is 'implementational – that which actually takes place in a classroom. Listening and speaking are two important aspects of communication. Listening is the absorption of the meanings of the words and sentences by the brain. A closed mind is the biggest

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hindrance to effective listening. But it is also only one means to an end, and we judge a course communicative or otherwise not only in terms of how it is organized, but also in terms of its methodology.

Communicative Competence:

It is the ability, not only to apply the grammatical rules of a language in order to form grammatically correct sentences, but also to know when and where to use these sentences – in other words, to use them appropriately. Many syllabuses have been developed under the label ‘communicative approach’, and each syllabus claims that it can achieve the aim of the approach, namely, that of communicative competence. All these syllabuses share certain common features:

- They are all based on a *semantically* organized syllabus, such as the notional syllabus.
- They teach the language needed in different situations, to express and understand different *functions*.
- They emphasise *appropriacy* of language use.
- They also teach the language required to perform different *tasks* (for example, solving puzzles and getting information)

Techniques used in the Communicative Approach:

In communicative language teaching, information gap tasks are used. An information gap occurs in a situation where one person knows something which other people do not. Information gap tasks are introduced in the classroom using the following techniques:

❖ Language games:

According to Morrow (1981) language games are communicative when they are characterized by three features: *information gap*, *choice* and *feedback*.

❖ Mind Engaging Tasks:

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Communicative activities are based on the implicit recognition that a learner learns best when his/her mind is on tasks to be done *in* the language rather than *on* language itself. Thus many problem-solving activities are a part of the communicative approach.

❖ **Role Play:**

Since the ability to manipulate language in a social context is an important aspect of communicative competence, most communicative materials include role play as part of the activities.

❖ **Retrieving Text Order:**

The technique involves the use of scrambled sentences and scrambled picture techniques. By doing these activities, learners become aware of discourse features which are distinct from grammatical features. They become familiar with the use of cohesive devices ('and', 'or', 'nevertheless', etc.), anaphoric pronouns (the boy - he, the dog - it) and semantic clues (use of lexical items, topic, etc.) through these activities.

❖ **Group Work / Pair Work:**

Group work and pair work form an important part of any communicative activity, for peer interaction is an effective means of acquiring some language features which are not available in a formal teacher-fronted class.

Techniques of Teaching English:

How a thing is done in class is a *technique*. A technique is 'implementational – that which actually takes place in a classroom. It is a particular trick, stratagem or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective' (Anthony 1972). Techniques are closely related to methods

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and approaches. Another important point to be remembered is that having a repertoire of techniques is by itself no guarantee of success; one must know *when* to use *which* technique.

Language has been divided into four main skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing (LSRW). Each skill has been further divided into sub-skills.

Listening and Speaking Skills:

Listening and speaking are two important aspects of communication. Research shows that forty-five per cent of our time is spent on listening to someone or something. It is believed that while most of us speak at a rate of about two words per second, we can hear and process more than eight words per second. This shows that listening is easier than speaking provided we employ our skills usefully to achieve better communication skills. We can use the time we save while listening for observing other crucial tools of communication like body language or facial expressions of a person and try to detect the real intent of the speaker. As children, listening is the first language skill that we acquire. Listening is the basis for all other. Without listening there will be no basis for the other developmental milestone in a human being, be it cognitive or language development. Listening paves the way for productive participation in life for all human being. Nobody will listen to anything if the matter they listen to does not contribute to the improvement of his life. If you are visiting doctor no one needs to force you to listen to his instructions because you know very well that you need to follow his advice to get well. Similarly, your ears perk up when an announcement over the radio or the television comes up which imparts information you were looking for. Active listening is most natural in these circumstances. People are obsessed with what they would like to say. Everyone enjoys the idea of talking in an informal gathering. It is not unusual to see people interrupting other speakers to say what they are eager to say. If there is something that has to be said and if a person to so. The same eagerness, however, is not shown in listening. We have to agree that there is a minority which is an exception. Listening is the absorption of the meanings of the words and sentences by the brain. Listening leads to the understanding of facts and ideas but listening takes attention despite distraction. A closed mind is the biggest hindrance to effective listening. History repeats

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itself because no one listens the first time. A clear distinction must be made between *listening* and *hearing*. When we listen, we pay conscious attention to what is being said. A good listener learns a language quickly and efficiently. So it is very important to think of techniques which will enable learners to listen better and more efficiently. The best technique for speaking is to learn to articulate meaningful sounds in a foreign or second language is to begin naming familiar objects around us. It is a pedagogic truth that this activity is very close to the way one learns any language. It is a fact that we may know and use an object without necessarily knowing its name in the target language.

Techniques of Teaching Listening and Speaking Skills:

LISTENING and SPEAKING are two sides of the same coin – both are closely interlinked. The table below, which lists some sub-skills, illustrates this point.

Listening	Speaking
identify sounds	produce meaningful sounds
segment sounds into meaningful groups	produce sounds in meaningful chunks
understand syntactic patterns	produce language in syntactically acceptable pattern forms
interpret stress,rhythm and intonation	produce language using proper stress, rhythm and intonation
identify information/gist	convey information
identify emotional/attitudinal tone	formulate appropriate response

Conclusion:

How do the concepts of ‘notional’, ‘functional’ on the one hand and ‘communicative’ on the other relate to each other? It is the relationship of means to end. Our aim is to teach

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communicative ability, and this may lead us at the syllabus design level to specify and organize our teaching content in a semantic way. Semantic syllabuses are a means to an end – a vehicle for arriving at a destination. But it is also only one means to an end, and we judge a course communicative or otherwise not only in terms of how it is organized, but also in terms of its methodology.

10. CREATIVITY & INNOVATIONS IN LANGUAGE TEACHING & LEARNING THROUGH LANGUAGE SKILLS AND GAMES

Introduction

Language is essentially a skill. It is not a content-subject like science, social studies, commerce, etc. which aims at imparting information and fill the human mind with knowledge. A skill may be called the ability to do something well. Swimming, playing, etc. are skills which people perform after acquiring them. Knowing about these things is an intellectual exercise. Cognition and using or doing them is a skill (action). It must be remembered that language is a complex skill involving four sub-skills which are as follows:

1. Listening
2. Speaking
3. Reading and
4. Writing

The four language skills are divided into two parts:

- ❖ Receptive Skills (i) Listening and

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- (ii) Reading
- ❖ Productive Skills
 - (i) Speaking and
 - (ii) Writing

Task-based Language Teaching

Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) refers to an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. Some of its proponents (e.g., Willis 1996) present it as a logical development of Communicative Language Teaching since it draws on several principles that formed part of the communicative language teaching movement from the 1980s. For example:

- Activities that involve real communication are essential for language learning
- Activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning
- Language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process

Tasks are proposed as useful vehicles for applying these principles. Two early applications of a task-based approach within a communicative framework for language teaching were the Malaysian Communicational Syllabus (1975) and the Bangalore Project (Beretta and Davies 1985; Prabhu 1987; Beretta 1990) both of which were relatively short-lived.

The role of tasks has received further support from some researchers in second language acquisition, who are interested in developing pedagogical applications of second language acquisition theory.

Language Games

Psychologists believe that learning should be a pleasurable and rewarding experience. Children tend to learn more when they are tension-free. They can and do learn a lot of things through games. Language can also be learnt through a play-way method.

Language games have both fun and excitement and serve the pedagogical purpose. It must be noted that language games would fail in their purpose if they are not planned in advance and used methodically and carefully. According to Peter Hubbard et al., "Games are often wrongly

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regarded as an end-of-term activity or something to fill in the last five minutes of a lesson. In fact they can be used at all stages of practice from controlled to free”.

W.R. Lee discusses the importance of Language games in his book and states, “Language learning is many sided, which need not discourage us from seeing it crudely as a matter of four skills: those of successful listening, speaking, reading and writing” (1965:2)

Language games can be divided into four kinds:

- ✚ Listening games
- ✚ Speaking games
- ✚ Reading games
- ✚ Writing games

Role of Language Games in Language Proficiency

The idea of play-way method of teaching English was proposed in the late 19th century as it was brought that interesting games, if included in the teaching activity, could increase the motivation of the learners; learning will take place in an atmosphere of freedom and enjoyment. This idea has been incorporated in all the late methods of teaching English in the form of language games. Language games can introduce a healthy competition among the learners in English classes. They are useful for improving the learner’s knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and his language skill.

Advantages of Language Games

Language games, if organized well with care and interest, help the learners, especially the young ones, acquire a lot of language, because while playing a game learners have opportunities to learn without stress and anxiety, which is good for learning. The teacher uses a lot of language without conscious attention on it and this language is useful for acquisition. For example, the teacher uses words and phrases such as the following in plenty during the games.

- ✓ Stand here
- ✓ Make a circle
- ✓ Follow me
- ✓ Are you ready?

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- ✓ Touch your nose
- ✓ Stand behind here
- ✓ Sit down
- ✓ Do like this
- ✓ Can we begin?
- ✓ Cross your legs
- ✓ Show your cards
- ✓ Shut your eyes

and so on. These serve as a valuable input for language acquisition in a tension-free situation. Language games are not necessary in advanced classes. When necessary, games suitable for adult learners can be used in advanced classes.

Types of Language Games

1. Jumbled Words

Through this type of game the students are able to develop the skill of construction of a sentence and also sequence of words in.

2. Expanding the text

This type of expanding the text game is used to develop the skill of formation of sentences, to improve their grammatical knowledge and to improve the skill of concept and creativity.

3. Reading Aloud

This type of game is used to develop the skill of listening ability and also the questioning ability.

4. Word Card

Word card game is used for construction of sentences and to develop creative thing coherence and continuity of writing skills.

5. Three Picture Story

It helps to develop the skill like creativity in speech, imagination, pronunciation and sentence formation.

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Language Teaching through Games

It is now very generally accepted that language teaching not merely a simple learning but should be an enjoyable one. This is not to assume that it is easy, but only that there is no need, by excluding enjoyment, to make it more difficult.

Games are enjoyable. The essence of many games lies in out stripping, in friendly fashion, someone else' performance, or (and adult learners often prefer this) in bettering one's own, as in the world of sport. The goal is visible and stimulating: outstanding others, and improving on oneself, are by and large enjoyable pursuits. Enjoyable also is the active co-operation with one's fellows. In group or team activity, rivalry and co-operation go hand in hand. There are the other groups or teams to surpass, and friends to help surpass them. One's own activity takes on importance in the latter's eyes. But in spite of all the effort and sometimes, when attention is sharply focused and the learner's energies stretched to the full in a game, it is hard to see any differences between "work" and "play" there is a pleasant, informal, and often relaxed atmosphere, favorable to language learning.

A language is learnt by using it and this means by using it in situations and communicatively. Disembodied sounds, words, phrases and sentences, however wrapped about with rules, do not carry language remove such elements and look at them closely, much as them to the intermingling streams of discourse.

The situations which bring a foreign language to life in the classroom are provided by gestures, by handling and touching things, by incidents and activities, by pictures, by dramatization, by interesting stories spoken or in print and not least by certain contests and games. In these the language is linked with action and is no longer a disembodied thing.

Games therefore should not be regarded as a marginal activity, filling in odd moments when the teacher and class have nothing better to do.

Language learning itself is complex and many sided as a matter of four communicative skills. One more introductory point is that the game brings teachers and learners into a more agreeable and more intimate relationship, and that too helps to ease and process of learning and teaching.

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Role of Language Games in Language Teaching

When preparing your lesson, you start by planning the main items you want to include: the teaching of a new grammar point, for example, or a grammar exercise, or the reading of a text. But once you have prepared the main components of your lesson, and made sure it is learning rich, varied and interesting you may find you still need some extra ingredients to make it into a smooth, integrated unit. You may need, for example:

- A quick warm-up for the beginning to get your students into the right mood for learning
- An idea for a brief vocabulary review before starting a new text
- A light filler to provide relief after a period of intense effort and concentration
- A brief orientation activity to prepare a change of mood or topic
- A game or amusing item to round off the lesson with a smile

Besides contributing to routine lesson planning, you may find these activities can be of use in non-routine situations as well: when, for example, you have to fill in for another teacher and need some quick, easily-prepared ideas for instant use; or for supplying extra content for an English club evening or English party; for helping a group of new students to get to know one another; or for keeping students profitably busy when you unexpectedly have extra time on your hands.

We have included only teaching procedures which we consider to have genuine learning value for the students. We feel strongly that even in brief, enjoyable ‘transition’ activities the students can and should continue to practice, learn, increase knowledge and improve thinking.

Note that the first time a class uses a particular technique it might take a little longer than subsequent times, because of the extra minutes taken up with instructions and clarification.

Another guideline we have tried to observe is that the activities should demand the minimum of preparation before the lesson. The fact that the activity is short means that it is necessary to devote some thought to its introduction and ending, otherwise the frequent changes can cause a feeling of abruptness and restlessness.

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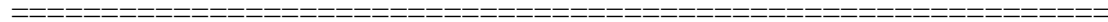
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Even if you are using activity as a total contrast, or as a rest or break with no connection with other parts of the lesson, in order to explain then the organization of an activity, you will usually have to give an example of what is to be done. However, once the activity is clear, it is advantageous if the student can take over the teacher's role.

Conclusion

Finally it is believed that becoming a more independent learner should be fun. Research shows (and common sense tells us) that young learners learn better when they are engaged, relaxed and having fun. Thus, the activities take the form of board games, dominoes, miming games, etc., activities that children associate with enjoyment.

Many games provide experience of the use of particular patterns of system in communication, and which can be played at various age levels. In general the challenge to guess arouses considerable interest and encourages the learners to communicate what they see as possible "right answers".



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