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**Interpersonal Approach in Second Language Teaching
Large Class Rooms**

Roseline Nirmala Jesudas, Ph.D.

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General Goal

A generally accepted objective of teaching in engineering colleges in Tamilnadu is to teach the syllabus not only from the textbooks but also to go beyond the restricted syllabus materials and make learning related to the student's real life. Particularly Engineering college students are expected to speak the language effectively and competently. This is an important pre-requisite for getting their placement in job recruitment camps. In order to enhance their communication skills the only possible method is to create an Interpersonal language learning environment.

Inter Personal Approach

Finocchiaro, M. & Brumft.C.(1983) have placed the following suggestion about Functional Notional Approach of language teaching .

This methodology is categorized along with others under the rubric of a communicative approach. The method stresses a means of organizing a language syllabus.

The emphasis is on breaking down the global concept of language into units of analysis in terms of communicative situations in which they are used.

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According to *Finocchiaro, M. & Brumft. C.(1983)*, Notions are meaning elements that may be expressed through Parts of Speech and the use of particular notions depends on three major factors:

- ✓ the functions
- ✓ the elements in the situation, and
- ✓ the topic being discussed.

Also he placed the functional categories under five headings

- ✓ Personal,
- ✓ Interpersonal,
- ✓ Directive,
- ✓ Referential, and
- ✓ Imaginative.

Of these five components Inter Personal Approach is one of the main components of the Functional Notional Approach. This approach enables the teachers to establish and maintain desirable social and working relationships. The Inter Personal Approach focuses on what the learner wants to communicate as its starting point. This method is possible and easy to apply in a big college classroom with 60-65 students.

Exam-oriented Approach to Learning

Students who were with us had an exposure with teacher-centered teaching. The language course is one of the important subjects to pass their public exam. Also language is the subject they can score maximum marks. This score will help them to boost up their total to obtain a better grade for their degree.

In Indian schools scoring marks and passing the exam is highly important than effective communication. This exam-oriented approach demands the school students to memorize an English vocabulary words, structures of letter writing, report writing, essay writing and acquired a certain reading level.

When students enter college, unfortunately, they are not able to cope with the syllabus. The teaching methodology remains the same just as what they were exposed to in their schools. Compared to their school syllabus, engineering college syllabus is quite comfortable for the students, particularly for the English Medium Students. Most of the college students still think English learning is all about memorizing vocabulary and reading for academic purposes.

What We Want To Do

As language teachers we want to enhance the students' vocabulary and reading capabilities and help them to explore the English Language by using what they already know.

Focus of This Article

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This article offers a methodology to teach Second Language and tries to explore an application of the Interpersonal approach in Second Language Teaching Large Class Rooms.

Faced with Heterogeneous Groups

Every language teacher faces a difficult situation at the beginning of every semester. It is very hard for all the language teachers to understand the level of heterogeneous group of students. It is also tough for them to discover their interest and from where to start. They have find answers to the question "how to develop the students' interest and to stimulate the imagination of the students".

To make their class to develop interest in what is going to be taught in the class room:

- Teachers should forget the syllabus for first few days and create an interest and awareness in students about what they may be taught and what they may be learning.
- Spend the time making them to understand: What is Language Learning?
- Encourage the students to bring their (Academically & administratively permissible) interesting topic or information for the classroom discussion.
- Guiding carefully and allowing the students to interact or discuss freely in the classroom. The role of teacher during this discussion is to facilitate them to make the discussion lively in following
- Focusing on accurate pronunciation
- Selection of Vocabulary
- Accurate Use of vocabulary in context
- Body Language

Designing Interpersonal Classrooms - Practical Demonstration

Objective to design interpersonal classrooms: To build vocabulary in context, improve grammar and to develop reading and listening skills associated with a particular topic and to develop assertiveness technique.

Instructions to the Teacher

A. Explain to the students the following

1. Reason to choose the topic
2. Materials/ Resources used to choose the topic
3. Showing how to read the topic /Explaining the reading skill (Scanning & Skimming)
4. If new words are there in the article, how to find out the meaning with the dictionary and how to memorize them in context.
5. If in need to find the meaning for many words, marking them and finally checking the meaning from the dictionary.

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A. Example Article

Major Causes of Global Warming

Global warming is a result of increasing temperature of earth's atmosphere due to several factors that can be natural or manmade. Whatever may be the factors the effect of global warming is not in favour of mankind and hence need to be controlled.

The main reason behind global warming is the increase in the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere due to greenhouse effect. Greenhouse effect leads to increase in the temperature of earth by trapping the sun's heat and light in the earth's atmosphere. In this phenomenon the heat and light of sun enters the atmosphere but cannot go out as they are trapped in earth's atmosphere by the greenhouse gases and thus resulting in temperature rise. The greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide plays the major role in greenhouse effect and excessive emission of these gases through various means is a major cause of global warming.

Another important reason for global warming is large amounts of carbon dioxide produced from burning of fossil fuels for the different purposes especially for power generation in various power plants. Due to burning of large amount of coal in power plant excessive amount of carbon dioxide is emitted in different forms in the atmosphere. In addition to that, countless number of vehicles running in the road today is one of the major source of emission of a large amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere leading to increase in the temperature of earth's atmosphere.

Methane is another greenhouse gas that results in global warming to a large extent. Methane can be easily obtained from rice paddies, bovine flatulence, bacteria in bogs and fossil fuel manufacture and hence easily available in abundance. Moreover, it is 20 times as effective as Carbon dioxide at entrapping heat in the atmosphere and is a leading cause of global warming. Similarly, another greenhouse gas called nitrous oxide and chlorofluorocarbons or CFCs is also responsible for the global warming. Nitrous oxide has 300 times more capacity of trapping heat than carbon dioxide while chlorofluorocarbons have heat-trapping potential thousands of times greater than carbon dioxide.

Another major cause of global warming is continuous cutting of a large number of trees across the world that is also referred as deforestation. It is projected that, 34 million acres of trees are cut and burned each year resulting in 25% of all carbon dioxide release entering the atmosphere.

Increasing population is another cause of global warming that cannot be neglected. As human being is known to exhale carbon dioxide means more population will lead to more emission of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere resulting in increase in the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and thus resulting in global warming. (Source from <http://www.newstrackindia.com/newsdetails/2012/3/15/19-Major-Causes-of-Global-Warming.html>).

B. Elicitation

Teacher can bring some interesting topics or create a situation to create a lively context and to attract the attention of the students. Teacher can mime, prompt words, gestures, use pictures and ask questions or use videos, pictures/cartoons and even songs.

C. Substitution Drilling

Teacher can use cue words to get individual students to mix the examples of new patterns.

D. Choosing Articles to Read

In order to improve the language skills of students, the teacher give students freedom to choose articles they prefer and also ask them to find out the particular topic individually. For example

- ❖ Does modern technology make life more convenient, or was life better when technology was simple?
- ❖ Is animal testing necessary?
- ❖ The mass media, including TV, radio and newspapers, have great influence on Students /Students education
- ❖ Describe the things that bring you greatest happiness.
- ❖ Describe three things you would like to change about the world and explain why you would change them. (Free TOFEL Essay Topic Samples <http://www.testmagic.com/test/viewtopicsofessays6.asp>)

Definitely each one will bring their own article related to specific topic; in this activity, they can find a wide variety of titles about a particular topic. Ask them to read, and share the information with the class.

E. Questions to Ask

During this activity the teacher should ask

- ✓ Why did you choose this article to read?
- ✓ How do you read?
- ✓ What do you do when encountering unknown words?

The teacher should adjust the timings accordingly in order for the students to share with others, and then ask the students if anyone would like to go in front of the classroom to share with other students of the class their learning process. If there are no volunteers, the teacher should randomly select students to share their assignments with the class. This is a good way to indirectly get students to do their task. They know they have to be prepared.

F. Five Questions

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There are five questions asked about how they prepared their assignments.

1. Why do they choose the articles?
2. What is the article about?
3. How do they read? Questions related to cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies are asked.
4. What do you learn from doing this assignment? How is the process of doing this assignment different from their past English learning experiences?
5. What do they do when they encounter unknown vocabulary words?

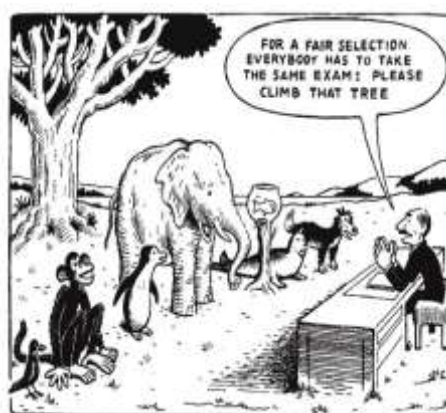
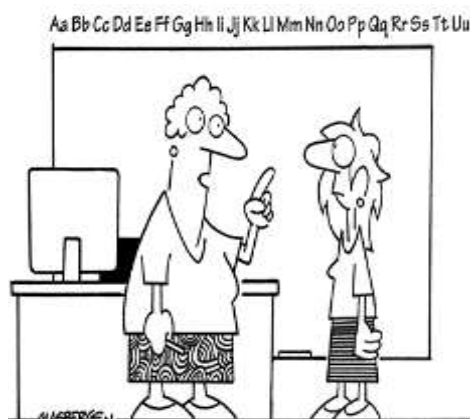
Give guidelines that they can check a dictionary not more than three times.

1. What are the words they wanted to check with the dictionary?
2. Why do they choose these words to check?
3. Could they list the words on the blackboard?

Brief and Mini Dialogue Using Cartoons /Pictures

This is another task to motivate the learners. This task will promote probable community experience and a discussion of the function and situation-people, roles, topic and the informality or formality of the language which the function and situation demand.

Example



Cartoon by Randy Glasberge (sources from www.glasbergen.com
eftybegone.wordpress.com/2012/05/27/standardized-tests-are-only-fair/)

Pre Listening Activities

Look at the pictures above and guess what these people are talking about?

Post Listening Activities

- a. Questions and answers based on the dialogue and on the Students' own imagination
- b. Oral Practice of the dialogue

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In addition to the above, using the same materials the teachers can teach the following items. Also students can be asked to do the exercises as a follow up activity.

- ✓ Parts of Speech
- ✓ Word Formation
- ✓ Prefixes & Suffixes
- ✓ Synonyms & Antonyms
- ✓ Hyponyms
- ✓ Sequential Expressions
- ✓ Cause and Effect Expressions
- ✓ Reported Speech
- ✓ If Clause
- ✓ Gerunds
- ✓ Instructions
- ✓ Recommendation

Examples of Teaching Syllabus Content in Interpersonal Context

INTERPERSONAL CONTEXT	SYLLABUS /POINTS OF GRAMMAR
Asking the students to give a recipes Example : how to make any kind of fruit juice ,Coffee etc., Asking the students to give procedures Example : How to Draw a money from ATM, How to drive a car	Imperative Verb form, Sequential Expressions,
Discussions on " Individual Students' Future"	Tenses and Conditional Clause
Discussion about some social issues and giving suggestions	Use of Modal Verbs
Explaining the rules and regulations of the college or any activity	Modal verbs ,Adverbs of time & frequency
Narrating own experiences	Tenses
Discussion on any topic related to expository, persuasive, analytical, argumentative	All transitional devices
Using Pictures	Synonyms, Antonyms & Hyponyms
Role Plays	Question formation, collective nouns and quantifiers, Direct & indirect Object Body Language
Preparing Compeering Note	Phrasal Verbs & Idiomatic Expressions

This method helps the students to choose their own topics to work with. At the beginning of the semester, if the language teacher tries to guide and create interest among the students through a new way of learning English, the teacher may have the control over the class. At the end of the semester, students feel more comfortable about the novel way of learning English.

Students studied in regional medium may not perform the task and many of them may complain about the approach. On the other hand, students who had studied in English medium at the school level may not like this kind of assignments because they were

used only to read the text book or follow the text book and perform the exam. This is a real practical setback for the teachers they may normally face in language teaching.

Language Teachers should make the students understand the following:

- ✓ Textbook focuses more on passing the semester exam and does not offer the use of language in real context.
- ✓ The material is not enough to develop their language competency, so they need to learn and perform beyond the prescribed textbook.

Conclusion

It is necessary to motivate the students by saying "Challenge yourself by reading real English". Discover your own interests and research them. Some students may find it very difficult to adjust this way of thinking and learning. Sometimes the students may have frustration with this task because they don't know how to discover the topics they were interested in. They concentrate only on passing the exam and scoring the marks and getting an excellent GPA. They desire to get job offers, but they may not recognize the need to do well in English. Students just do not understand what these issues have to do with learning English. But a language teacher should have the determination to implement the effective methodology.

Teachers should always encourage the students to continue reading in English about topics of their interest even while they are not at school. When they find the joy of reading and learning, learning will never be a task.

Reference

Finocchiaro, M. & Brumfit, C. (1983). The Functional-Notional Approach. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

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