

# **LANGUAGE IN INDIA**

**Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow**

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## **The Role of Language Resource Centre in ESL Classrooms**

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### **The Idea of a Language Resource Centre**

Language Resource Centre is an innovative solution for imparting English Language skills to learners. A simple Language Resource Centre may be established in every college and even school to help our teachers and students to use English better.

There are a number of factors that determine the method of teaching English Language and a new approach needs to be evolved to motivate learners so that they adapt the English Language to the communicative demands of our social situation in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. Language Resource Centre can equip learners for their present and future academic pursuits and also prepare learners to function effectively in actual professional, social and everyday situations. Language Resource Centre will help develop their ability to learn the four skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing in a more learner-centred and communicative way.

### **Teachers' and Students' Reluctance and Sense of Fear**

There is a sense of fear at the beginning of the use of Language Resource Centre. Fear gives way to cautious reciprocation to what the learning material demands. Progressively learners understand the advantages of the Language Resource Centre and begin to like it and

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learn from it. Though, initially learners are hesitant and afraid of even touching the state of the Language Resource Centre paraphernalia, gradually it was observed that learners adopt the technology and start participating in the process of learning English through Language Resource Centre. They respond and reciprocate favorably to the demands of the learning materials. The responses of learners indicate that, Language Resource Centre really helps in expediting the whole process of teaching English language. The learners show a marked change in their behavior towards learning of English skills, especially listening and speaking.

### **Aims of a Language Resource Centre**

The Language Resource Centre aims to improve communication competency of learners. It prepares the target learners for job market and also for international certificate courses such as Business English Certificate and IELTS.

There are three fundamental issues pertaining to the viability of Language Resource Center as detailed below.

### **Success Depends on Many Factors**

There is a doubt whether Language Resource Centre is successful or failure. Certainly language resource centers are successful. In terms of proficiency enhancement of any language, the role of language resource centre is paramount. It gives learners a structured pattern of language acquisition. The paraphernalia such as computers, headphones, speakers, LCD projectors, and microphones make the whole process standardized and easy to acquire. Once the learners come out of the language resource centre with training, they try to identify themselves with the speakers and the dialogues they come across while in the language resource centre and there is a marked improvement in their pronunciation. In other words, Language Resource Centres may replicate the situation within the Centre and thus help students to succeed in using language even outside the Centre.

### **Updating Technology**

Language Resource Centre improves upon the technologies like tape recorders and provides personalized attention of teachers to individual learners. The traditional pattern consists of a tape-recorder which helps the learners to record their voice and enables the learners to listen on one track and record on the other track, the individual recorders are connected to the teacher and the teacher can plug into any of the learners' system and monitor the individual performance of the learner. Learners' access to Internet and Web materials in the Language Resource Centre is a clear improvement over the tape-recorder based technology. Language Resource Centre expands the resources available to learners. It enables them to sort out different kinds of information and prepares them to use language in a meaningful way.

### **New Methods Adopted**

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In Language Resource Centres, we will have computers and internet connections that enable learners to learn better using advanced methods.

The following are the methods generally followed in a language resource center.

- 1) The learner observes a video clipping and listens.
- 2) The learner repeats the dialogue as well as the body language of the model.
- 3) The learner listens and records his voice.

This method helps the teacher to assess and monitor the individual performance of the learners. The teacher can control the activities of the learners as well as can give individualized attention to the whole class.

### **Basic Pattern Adopted in Language Resource Centres**

The basic pattern of the Language Resource Centre remains the same, whereas some new features are introduced in these programmes.

- 1) The learner listens or watches (the model).
- 2) The learner repeats.
- 3) The learner records.
- 4) The learner repeats and tries to imitate the model.
- 5) The learner tries to learn the sound pattern.
- 6) The learner learns the basic sound patterns and records.
- 7) The learner listens and practices the sound pattern.

This helps learner to acquire the basic skills of communication such as listening and speaking.

### **Intermediate Level**

In the intermediate level the following techniques are used:

- 1) Learner listens and watches a clipping (dialogues).
- 2) Learner answers the questions in the dialogue.
- 3) Learner finally exposed to the right answer.

This level exposes the communicative ability of the learner. The teacher can control and test them using on-line tests.

- 1) Learner observes a clipping.
- 2) Learner takes roles.

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- 3) Learner repeats and practices the dialogues.
- 4) Learner tries to take different roles.
- 5) Learner answers and records.
- 6) Learners are exposed to the correct pronunciation and dialogue delivery.

### **Advanced Level**

In the advanced level the following techniques are introduced.

- 1) Learner listens and observes the model.
- 2) Learner identifies the sound pattern.
- 3) Learner imitates the original sound.
- 4) Learner practices and records his voice.

This method enables the teacher to monitor the level of the learner and corrects the pronunciation level of the learner. This helps the learners to test their fluency level.

### **Providing a Variety of Resources**

There are varieties of resources available in the Language Resource Centre. Some of the modern aids have not yet been exploited fully. A set of criteria for evaluating the performance of learners are necessary. The most important is syllabus. Syllabus design and material production is an important aspect of the language resource centre. The evaluation pattern too could be explained in the syllabus.

e- learning can be a part of language resource center. e- learning helps to create material, deliver the material to learners, helps the teacher to assess the performance of learners, track the mistakes and correct learners, on the whole it helps the teacher to manage and assess the overall performance of learners.

### **Live versus Virtual Situations in Learning English**

The present scenario reveals that learners need to learn in 'live' rather than 'virtual' situations. So the language resource centre should help learners to learn in 'live' situations. Since the resources available in the centre presents the material in an interesting way with colorful pictures, characters, even video and audio aids, learners are attracted to the Language Resource Centre. Through on-line the teachers can ask learners to prepare their assignments using on-line resources available in the lab. The materials could be from CD-ROM and the Internet. Learners can use LAN (Local Area Network), it works like a classroom, and the whole class can access the same material and do the tasks given by the teacher. It can be evaluated by the teacher on the spot.

### **Limitations**

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Language Resource Centres have certain limitations which at times hamper the smooth and targeted performance of a Language Resource Centre. The first and foremost problem is that of uninterrupted power supply. At times the electricity supply is so low that it becomes totally impossible to run any system. Faulty equipment dampens the whole process. The demand for English learning is so high that it is in fact very difficult to accommodate each and every student of the university. Computer literacy of the students is very poor, which is a stumbling block in the handling of Language Resource Centre paraphernalia. At times many functions of the teacher do not work properly and which defeats the very purpose of smooth transference of data from the teacher to the learners. And yet advantages seem to outweigh the disadvantages.

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