

Building Liaison between Learners and the Outside World –The Changing Trends in Teaching and Learning English Language Skills

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Abstract - With the proliferation of technology and the growing demands of the learners, teaching English language and English communication skills is being aided with creativity. Teaching is not just restricted to developing Content, Framing Lesson Plans or Designing Activities. The knowledge of the curriculum and the knowledge of pedagogy, when integrated with the classroom teaching experience, form a complete loop. The demands of a heterogeneous-classroom are met with the critical analysis of the teaching practices. Learner-centered teaching and learning, outcome-based teaching and learning, and task-based teaching and learning are but a few emerging trends that have taken over the quintessential classrooms where the students passively listened to the teachers who monopolized the class. English teachers have realized the need of the hour and accordingly they convene different types of conferences and seminars to create a platform based on their ideologies and pedagogies in teaching and learning. The use of technology like google doc, mike note, cameras, and microphones has connected the learners to the outside world. English Communication Skills play a significant role in fetching a reputed job, salary and status. Because of this reason, engineering colleges and non-engineering colleges focus on improving English Communication Skills of students.

Key Words: Heterogeneous classroom, Mike note, Pedagogy, Proliferation, Task based

1. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurs are the future of the world; this future builds in the classroom where the teacher sows the seed of knowledge!

The era of information age in which we live, has shaped the trend of teaching English and transformed it due to numerous advances in technology. Learner-centered teaching and learning, outcome-based teaching and learning, and Task-based teaching, and learning are but a few emerging trends that have taken over the quintessential classroom scenario where the students passively listened to the teachers who monopolized the class. The methodology used in English language teaching in the classroom, has liberated itself from the clutches of the traditional teaching methods.

With the advent of technology and the growing demands of the learners, teaching English language and English

communication is made more interactive and creative. The use of technology like google doc, mike note, cameras, and microphones has connected the learners to the outside world.

Having realized the need of the hour, English teachers convene different types of conferences and seminars to create a platform and to sync with the upcoming ideologies and pedagogies in teaching and learning process.

An intriguing question that would clearly highlight the modern English teaching trend would be:

Would you prefer to go to a doctor who has only taken a series of written tests on medicine, or to one who has been able to demonstrate his knowledge by actually performing in a medical situation? The same applies to a teaching situation. Would you go or would you send your child, to someone who has taken written exams to demonstrate that he or she has the knowledge to teach, or would you rather have teachers who have demonstrated in the classroom that they can teach?

In other words, tests are subjective and lack practical knowledge. A teacher with a good experience would have a good hold on the class. Opening a session by emphasizing on the Course objective and course outcome, closing a session with recapping, keeping students engaged with task based activities and being on par with the technology defines a modern teacher. English Language has also become a means to learn content. To gain a universal appeal, a vital development in the area of language teaching design is the Common European Framework of Reference for Language: Learning, Teaching and Assessment. The CEFR intends to make it easier for educational institutions and employers to evaluate the language qualifications of candidates to education admission or employment.

The CEFR aims to provide a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabus, curriculum and skills that learners have to develop in order to be able to speak effectively.

1.1 A learner centered teaching that goes beyond the classroom

Another remarkable change that has taken place in teaching English in the classroom is keeping the learner in the limelight. Focus today is on the learning process rather

than achieving the target. Functional teaching has gained momentum. Outcome based tasks are given to a learner as interactive activity. For instance, a simple activity like interviewing a professional would help a learner acquire a language naturally. In the process of acquiring his target, a learner interacts with people, listens and learns. Teaching grammar with fun activities and including the Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking activities in the curriculum, has brought in sweeping changes in the teaching and learning process. Mobile Applications available on these activities help the learner to learn concepts outside the classroom. Cambridge English courses for different levels, is packed with learner-centered activities. Emphasis is laid on authentic and meaningful contextualized discourse. The teacher obliterates the pressure on the learner.

[1] Schools are now emphasizing on elevating the Communication skills of the students. Students engage themselves in surveys and interviews as their class projects. Field trips organized to Museums or Theme Parks that help learning extend outside the classroom have gained popularity. Along with the engagement of concepts, the student bonding that occurs on the field trips enhances the learning experience and creates a learning community. This also gives the instructor an insight into the student world – views that can help the instructor communicate the concepts of the course.

1.2 Technology based learning has modernized the teaching trend

A web based learning also called technology based learning or distance learning on line education, e learning is one of the fastest developing areas. It provides opportunities to create well-designed learner centered, affordable and interactive environment.

Blogging has become a communicative and interactive trend in English Language Teaching. Every internet service has an audio functions, and technological instruments like laptops with cameras. Students can conveniently communicate with their teachers and friends who are far away.

Mobile phone Teaching and Learning has broken the barriers of distance. Learners can search for new words using the dictionary option in the mobile phones and enrich their vocabulary. Group chats have made sharing of materials very convenient. Moreover, mobile devices allow you and your learners to interact seamlessly with each other, in both formal and informal learning contexts. For example, a teacher can encourage students to create a personal visual story about their daily routine. Students can take a series of snapshots of moments in their day-to-day life, form a narrative and share it. For example, their alarm clock, a toothbrush, a cup of coffee, their walk to work and other experiences and describe the actions to the teacher. For

example, collecting and sharing data like, 'I take a shower and get dressed...' This will often highlight aspects of language that require teacher input.

Technology is transforming the way we communicate, socialize, travel, shop and conduct business. These profound changes place increasing pressure on the traditional models of language learning, such as teaching in a formal classroom setting. They also present us with amazing opportunities to re-design the way we teach and learn English.

Camera phones provide a great way to ask learners to 'notice' grammar around them. Students can be encouraged to take photos of street signs, menus, advertisements, or other examples of written English that they see around them. Spotting the misuse of apostrophes ('s) or noticing incorrect spelling can interest them. Use of Interactive Communication Tools like projector, tablets, and Google books integrated with flipped classroom activity has changed the teaching and learning paradigm.

I- pods have helped ESL learners to improve their listening, Pronunciation, Vocabulary, Grammar and writing. Smart-watch and 3-D printers, consists of groundbreaking devices to educate students. The media streaming devices like the Google Chrome Cast and the Rokku, have made group studies become interactive and presentations surprisingly fulfilled one.

Another useful tool is the recording function on mobile devices. Here are three examples:

- Learners can record themselves speaking English and share it with friends, who can offer feedback. This is a great opportunity to practice speaking English.
- Learners can record conversations with native speakers on a range of topics and integrate them into projects and PPTs.
- Learners can use the microphone creatively and also incorporate voice recordings into edited videos.

Mobile technology turns the question 'What did you do last weekend?' into a personal story as learners enjoy sharing the group photos or videos of what they did, where they went, and how they felt. They can also share their social media activity.

1.3 Changing role of a modern teacher

The teacher in the modern teaching-trend plays the role of a controller, organizer, assessor, promoter, participant, resource, tutor, facilitator and an observer. The task based language teaching (TBLT), in the current paradigm is basically an off shoot of Communicative Language Teaching. "Experimental learning or learning by doing" is the main conceptual basis for the traditional method in a learner-centered classroom.

The traditional method lays more emphasis on a teacher and is teacher centered. Repetitive practice, mechanical drills and memorization are the hallmarks of the traditional methods.

The autocratic or the authoritative role of the teacher is gradually fading. A role that pertains to the long cherished traditional notion that pedagogic principles depend on how articulately a teacher teaches has now diminished. It is imperative to understand the current trends and evaluative methods of the English Teaching. The theories and methods are constantly evolving in the field of English Teaching. The teachers of the ELT are aware of the best practices involved in teaching and learning English that can benefit the students. It is possible for every student to learn English in the most enjoyable manner when supplied with the right kind of materials and pedagogy produced by one's own native wisdom.

2. Results

A clear outcome of a program is palpable when the learning is transcended to a higher level. The task-based teaching and learning integrated with ICT Tools, takes learning beyond the classroom. It creates interest among students. The language is easily absorbed when the teaching is outcome based with practical application. Introducing games, activities and videos, make the sessions effective.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Technology has provided a gamut of informational sources that has elevated the standard of teaching English Language. Learner's involvement and the teacher's empowerment, has created a ripple in the teaching methodologies. The use of modern resources has made teaching and learning more interesting. Teaching and learning becomes spontaneous and student-centered when moved from the confines of the classroom into the world at large.

However, there still exist several challenges that teachers have to overcome to elevate their teaching to a higher level. Teachers need to be trained to be proficient in the use of technology in the classrooms for delivery of lessons. A solution for this could be organizing workshops to equip teachers with the use of technology in the classrooms and generate materials to be used offline. This will help the learner of English Language excel in their field. Many Institutions do not accept the use of mobile for classroom teaching. Flexibility in the use of technology in a productive manner can fetch several benefits to the educators as well as the learners.

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BIOGRAPHIES



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Prof Shashi Prabha Nagendra has been working at BNM Institute of Technology, Bengaluru, under VTU, Belagavi, since 7 years.

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