



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

CLASSROOM PRACTICE AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Dr. Soumya Samanta
HoD, Dept. of English
Science College Autonomous Hinjilicut
Odisha

ABSTRACT

English is the single most important language, a language for employability. Today's English learning is completely different from traditional teaching. In this paper, the focus is on the various classroom practices and activities used to enhance the quality of English among the students. English for employability focuses on communication skills. The language comes with a complete package of learnability along with refined attitudes which carves a path of progress for students.

Keywords: Communication, learnability, employability.

INTRODUCTION

English has become an essential tool for communication. So it is an immediate need for the student to acquire basic communication skills. If they do not know this language then they may need a translator to do the job. Communication skills are vital for professional development. The capacity to convey oneself eloquently in both written and conversational form is critical to their professional development. When students go for a job interview, the most important criterion apart from their technical knowledge is their communication skills. If they have all the skills required for the applied job, but, lack fluency in English, then the chances of being recruited become less. What skills a student has or how talented a student is, nobody knows until and unless one explores that. Language is the best medium through which they can show their hidden talents and skills. In today's modern world English has found its place and without knowing this language employment becomes difficult.

PROBLEMS FACED BY THE LEARNERS

- Lack of vocabulary
- Weak in sentence construction
- Transliterating
- Unwilling to unlearn the old concept
- Syllabus spread
- Giving more importance to technical subjects
- Least interested in undergoing the learning process
- Pronunciation
- First language interference

The need for English cannot be overlooked in any learning process especially when it is focused towards employability. Rapid changes in media and communication have made English the preferred global language, which has led to a positive attitude towards learning English and increasing their employability. The paper focuses on the methods and classroom practices for learning the English language which can be helpful in the present scenario. The students confront various problems during language learning. It has become a challenge for teachers to help them acquire language skills. Our observation and interaction with the students made us aware of the fact that students acquire more when they are learning unconsciously. Initially, the students are put into groups so that they can develop conversational skills and gradually they perform in pairs and then individually. The instructors of NIST have designed an activity-oriented module that has enabled them to gain confidence to reach the corporate level. The strategies include English Reading Revolution (ERR), Movie Review, Critical Thinking, Task-based Learning, Language through Literature (LTL), Small Talk and apart from these developed methods we also focus on traditional methods like Proficiency Tests, Audio-Visual Aids, Pronunciation Practice, Self Evaluation, Peer Feedback, Presentation etc. Through these activities, we enthuse the learners and make them understand that English is not only important as a subject but also as an international medium of communication in Today's world.

The module is designed with utmost care in a step-by-step process so that along with language the learning process is also intelligible. The new students who join the college are a little shy and feel awkward to open up especially when the audience is large. The students feel that they are under constant supervision in the classroom and their anxiety level increases and they are afraid of making mistakes. Stress is minimal when the anxiety level is low. Our motto was first to help them overcome their stage fright. As trainers, we must understand their experiences, perspectives, backgrounds, level of proficiency, interests, and capabilities, and train them according. As trainers, we needed to be motivators too. A module is prepared according to their proficiency which focuses on all four skills i.e. reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills.

ACTIVITIES

- English Reading Revolution (ERR)
- Movie review
- Critical Thinking
- Task-based Learning
- Language through Literature (LTL)
- Small Talk

The idea of English Reading Revolution was started to enhance the vocabulary of the students. The ERR has three parts Newspaper Review, Word Power Review, and Novel Review. It is a part of our English laboratory. The first fifty minutes of our laboratory is devoted to ERR. This is an online test that includes three questions from newspaper, and twenty questions (ten synonyms and ten fill-in-the-blanks) from word power. A time period of twenty-five minutes is given to complete it. It is followed by a novel review in which students picked from the previous class must deliver a presentation on the novel they have read, a procedure that will continue throughout the semester. A movie review is also a part of our English Reading Revolution, every Saturday an English movie is shown to the students in the college auditorium creating a theatre ambiance so that through fun they can learn the language easily.

Critical thinking through some given situations is one of the best methods for students to learn English. Students are divided into groups or in pairs and given some critical situations where they need to think out of the box. Students should be encouraged to think in the English language. Students enjoy a lot doing such activities.

The concept of task has become an important element in syllabus design, classroom teaching, and learner assessment, (David Nunan). Task-based learning is the most enjoyable method to enhance the language skills of students. Through pedagogical tasks, students can learn English unconsciously. Creative activities are given to the students in pairs or groups which has to be fulfilled in a given period. Working in groups helps them to learn new words and when they face difficulty while expressing themselves they are helped by their team members. Hence in such activities, their main focus lies in the activity but in doing so they unknowingly and unconsciously improve their conversational skills and language.

From the observation, we could feel that most of the students are interested in learning literature. So we felt a need for literature for the students as it is not included in the syllabus. We planned to make literature a tool for learning a language. Thus Language through Literature (LTL) has also become a regular part of our module. Literature exposes language learners to the humanitarian aspect of life. Certain words and themes are given to the students and are asked to construct a story or a poem. Excerpts from the plays are also given to them in pairs and they are asked to understand and enact the same.

Small talk is an effective method that helps the students not only to know the language but also to enhance their social skills. Students connect with their friends and classmates to learn as much as possible about them, or they are given a questionnaire and must find the answers by talking with their peers. Not only knowing others but sometimes an understanding of the learner's personal experiences also contributes to the learning process.

The above-mentioned activities foster both creativity and imagination by reducing their stage fright. These activities make students more active in the learning process and help them develop basic interactive skills. All these skills help them to develop the four skills of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. When they undergo these activities along with speaking they listen, read and write. Apart from these we also make the students undergo the traditional methods of learning language like ice-breaking games, picture correlation, role-plays, meet the press, group discussions, sentence race, etc.

LSRW SKILLS

Speaking is an important part of second language learning. Good communication skills will help students to express themselves appropriately in each communicative circumstance. The instructor's communication skills also create the classroom atmosphere. Being instructors of English students who try to follow us, they take keen interest in our speaking skills thus it is very important for us to structure our communication skills and avoid first language interference. Real-life situations were taken into the class so that the students get acquainted with the everyday situations that they would face in their work and society. We also brought in authentic activities and meaningful tasks to promote oral language.

Written activities are also given to them to make their writing systematic and follow a pattern, and it is also important that they convey the message effectively through the writing. The written activities go from general writing to specific writing skills. Here too we include pair and group activities in the initial stage and later go to independent writing. It helps them to build their vocabulary. Note-making is an important aspect of writing as they learn to locate the important points from a given paragraph or an article. As all competitive examinations include writing sections the skill of writing has become an important English ability to learn.

Reading is fundamental to function and exist in today's society. It develops the imagination and the creative side of the students. It is an essential skill for finding a good career. Many well-paying jobs demand reading as part of their job duties. There are reports and memos to read and respond to. Poor reading skills necessitate a longer time commitment. Without strong reading and comprehension abilities, a person's potential is limited. Reading helps to increase vocabulary. Seeing how words are used in various settings can provide a more in-depth grasp of word usage and definitions than simply reading a dictionary. They will need to read notices, job advertisements, and many business-related things. They are given comprehension passages which they go through and answer the questions asked at the end. When learners read through the whole text two or three

times, they find that their comprehension of the text improves, and they find how information is presented or arranged in that text.

Videos motivate the learners and increase their pretension of material besides aiding comprehension hence apart from movies we also show them BBC English videos and CDs. We make them aware of the differences between Received Pronunciation and General American English. We also download different videos of Indian English accents and some recorded videos of speeches to help them get acquainted with the language.

OUR ACHIEVEMENT

Our achievement lies with the progress of the students. Gradually we could feel and find the progress in them. Our first achievement is when they can construct sentences. We cannot say that all of them have achieved a hundred percent result but to some extent, they have improved a lot. The best part is that they can evaluate their growth. Their development is seen in LSRW skills, pronunciation is rectified to a large extent and their confidence level is also increased. This remarkable development has given them exposure to real-world communication and they voluntarily come up to speak in front of a large audience. Learning English has also helped them enhance their soft skills, teamwork, and team spirit. At the end of the module, students are quite happy with their progress. Their personality was groomed which has made them confident enough to enter into the corporate arena

CONCLUSION

Language learning means having the ability to communicate in different situations. One can be perfect in the language when one is perfect in all four skills of the particular language i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Imperfection in any one of the skills will act as a barrier in the process of learning a language. Teaching a second language is not at all an easy task for the instructors. It's a real challenge for the trainers to train the students to inculcate all the skills of English. English language learning should be beyond the prescribed syllabus and texts. Moreover, the Engineering syllabus should spread for the third year, by this the students will remain in touch with English and develop both spoken as well as written skills. They may also feel anxious to perform better keeping an eye the advancing placement proceedings. English Students should be encouraged and a passion should be aroused in their mind to effectively learn the language. It can be done when more and more creative methods are used in laboratories and classrooms. A sense of curiosity and interest must be generated within the students so that they feel the need for language not only within the four walls of the classroom but also beyond it. Thus training should be in such a way that the learners should not be pressured or forced to think that they are undergoing a process of learning and in the end, they themselves should realize and feel that they have learned something from the activities and could evaluate themselves. Learning is stronger when it is done on an unconscious and sub-conscious level than on a conscious level.

REFERENCES

Emmer, E. T. and Stough, L. M. (2001). Classroom Management: A Critical Part of Educational Psychology with Implications for Teacher Education. *Educational Psychologist*, Vol. 36, No. 2, Pp. 103-112.

Harmer, J., *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, London : Longman, 1991.

Nunan, D. (1989) *Designing tasks for the Communicative Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, MA, Cambridge, USA.

Perfetti, C. A. (1985). Reading ability. New York: Oxford University.

<http://www.teachingenglish.org>

<http://www.learn-english-today.com>