Teaching Spoken English

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Abstract – English language is realized as a link language with global significance and also the most spread language in the world. English is used not only for communicating with the outside world, but also for inter-state and intra-state communication. The ability to express our thoughts and ideas in English effectively is an art. Every student has to develop good communication skills to survive in the global market. It is the role of teacher to make them acquire those skills. Several methods and approaches have arrived in ELT and they keep on changing according to the learners' needs.

Communicative language teaching (CLT) is a very exciting development in the field of ELT. In the recent past, language teaching seems to have shifted the emphasis away from "accuracy" to "fluency" and from "structural competence" to "communicative competence". This is one of the methods which suits to meet the learners' needs in the present scenario.

Keywords: CLT (Communicative Language Teaching), Communicative competence, Accuracy, and Fluency.

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INTRODUCTION

Communicative Approaches mainly emphasize communicative ability through the four language skills listening, speaking, reading and writing. Most of the college curriculums now concentrate on developing good writing and communicative abilities through the application of the linguistic knowledge students gained. Implementation of communicative approaches in the colleges is welcome to teach spoken language.

COMMUNICATIVE APPROACHES AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND:

"The communicative approach is based on the idea that learning language successfully comes through having to communicate real meaning. When learners are involved in real communication, their natural strategies for language acquisition will be used, and this will allow them to learn to use the language."(https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/communicative-approach)

Hymes in his 1972 exposition explains that communicative acompetence lies in four areas like the abilities of grammar, language, flexibility and suitability. Hyme's competence theory involves Linguistic competence, Sociolinguistic competence, Discourse competence, Strategic competence Later on many theories have grown out of Hyme's theory of communicative competence. He argues that "…a normal child acquires knowledge of sentences not only as grammatical, but also as appropriate. He or she acquires competence as to when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner. In short, a child becomes able to accomplish a repertoire of speech acts, to take part in speech events, and to evaluate their accomplishment by others."(Hymes 1972, p. 277)

Canale and Swain's Theory

Canale and Swain have supplied to the Hyme's theory of communicative competence the components of grammar, social language, discourse and strategy and this provision is a head forward in the area of language teaching and for framing meaningful language tests.

Bachman's Theory

In early twentieth century Bachman theory proposed a communicative language theory on the basis of several theories current then. He considered the ability to communicative in any language requires linguistic, strategic and psychological skills. His attempt is a model as it included psychological working. Besides the linguistic ability his theory described the strategizing as an essential skill to be able to

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communicate. This emphasis on strategy forming directs us that all the factors do have certain unique and mutually contributing importance.

Spoken language and zeroing in on activities:

Activities given by teachers should form the modus operandi of spoken language teaching. Teachers and students can have a variety of formal and informal interactions and some phrases for personal practice can be given by teachers. The idea here is to raise the conditions of exposure to language use before and after classroom teaching. If students and teachers hold on to such practice for a certain period, this strategy will form indispensable to future course learning.

Error correction is the brain child of traditional ways of learning language because in the initial stages of language learning scholars stressed on the ability to produce accurate translations of other language content into English and vice versa. In order of avert the feeling of embarrassment of being pointed out for errors among students should at any cost be avoided if there is to be an overt interest to speak.

AREAS OF INTER-CONNECTION BETWEEN THE ENTITIES OF COMMUNICATIVE APPROACHES:

Respective positions of Teachers and Learners

Canonical language teaching chiefly concentrated on the content presented by teachers at the cost of oral practice and thus demarking the role of the students just to being listeners and occasional note takers. But the Communicative approaches concentrate on the learner's participation through their spoken utterances. This suggests a new paradigm for the learners where there are supposed to assume an active role of interacting. On the other hand teachers have to become the facilitators of oral conversations to the learners where the teachers support and create an environment to motivate the learners to speak. There is a clean change in the roles of both teachers and students.

Accuracy versus Fluency

The dominant characteristic of the traditional way of language is that it lays emphasis on accuracy disregarding fluency altogether. Teachers are constantly alert to the potential errors of the learners and correction of such errors is instant. This kind of situation created for students an attitude towards speaking that they always feel instinctive to revise their internal utterance until they think it is correct. Interestingly, communicative approaches encourage the learners to speak fluently in order to convey the sense and accuracy assumes a secondary role. This should not be mistaken that communicative approaches neglect accuracy completely. Rather

they model an atmosphere congenial to learner's speaking.

Language Learning and Acquisition

Canale (1983) observes the distinction between language learning and language acquisition. Learning according to him involves conscious efforts towards linguistic knowledge, grammar and lexis whereas the acquisition of language simulates a natural way of acquiring the ability of using the language in the various contexts. Grammar teaching and reading are different from oral communication. Students may have gained some knowledge of language where they have some declarative knowledge of grammatical rules. This does not itself guarantee students speaking ability. Oral ability is a specialty skill that needs an especially created environment with sustained practice for a long time. Language acquisition is a subconscious process as Canale argues.

EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES

Role Plays

Richard et al., says role play is type of drama "in which students take the roles of different participants in a situation and act out what might typically happen in that situation. For example, to practice how to express complaints and apologies in a foreign language, students might have to role-play a situation in which a customer in a shop returns a faulty article to a salesperson." (Richards, J. Platt, & H. Platt, 2002, p. 398

The activity of role play enables the recreation of real life like situations for the purpose of practice. Role plays have high feasibility range allowing participants to live in respective roles to experiment with situations through language use. The feasibility also brings out a range of expressions which otherwise would have been monotonous or artificial. To those people who are tacit or introverts role plays offer a platform to showcase their talent under a variety of guises along with the use of language.

Spoken Presentations

They can be of two varieties depending on whether one is prepared or not. In the case of prepared presentation students have an edge because they have time to prepare for it and there is scope for private rehearsals. As a result the presenters can gain confidence from the fact of possessing content knowledge. On the other hand extempore are difficult to handle because learners performance cannot be taken granted. Dangers of extempore include loss of self image and a permanent feeling of embarrassment. Hence these unprepared then-and-there talks should be assigned carefully

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keeping in mind the level of proficiency of the learner presenters. An easy and wise way out is to allow learners to choose topics for themselves with little guidance from the teachers. This would give large scope to the learner presenters to explore what is comfortable for them to speak in front of an audience.

DISCUSSIONS

This is another favorite among learners and generally topics should be related to common topics which are easily conceptualized by any human experience. The range of topics is wide and can be taken from reading exercise, listening activity or other media outputs. Once the teacher gives the topic he or she asks the learners to get into pairs to take their positions on the present topic. The teacher might use some logic to group the learners on a variety of reasons so as to get the expected output. One important thing is to make every learner be made accountable and active by assigning any task related to discussion. Because it is only through such engagement learners are said to be present intellectually in the activity they are doing and without any such responsibility the learners simply idle their minds. They should also be given an opportunity to assess their peer group.

CONCLUSION

In order to teach spoken language one of the best solutions available as of now in the area of English Language Teaching are the methods which walk the learners on the lines of communicative approaches where primary goal lies in fluency and expression rather than on military accuracy. Moreover communicative approaches are closer than any other approach to natural ways of learning and hence it at the center of humanistic approaches. An overnight shift in the methods and approaches is difficult to assume and some reasonable time should be allowed to both teachers and the learners with some priming before they actually start speaking English.

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