Recent Pedagogical Approaches and Methodologies in English Language Teaching

A.N. Guru Prasad
Assistant Professor
Department of Humanities & Social Sciences
Vasavi College of Engineering, Ibrahimbagh
Hyderabad

Introduction

Twenty first century has seen many modified approaches and got them adopted in the language teaching and language learning process. To suit to the order of the day, the language teacher should gear up the language teaching tools, appropriate to the current trends and equip with the modern pedagogical approaches and methodologies in language teaching. The basic objective of language teaching is no simply to transmit the language teacher's views or knowledge on a language. However, language teaching plays an important role to open up its resources to the learners to enable them to find the right expressions to convey the intended meaning to the listeners. For developing language learning skills in English, the language teacher should adopt appropriate approaches and methodologies from time to time. The pedagogic approach should be
shifted from form-based approach to meaning-based approach. In other words, the move is towards a diverse approach from a rigid method, in a way it is from teacher fronted to learner-centred method, otherwise, called a Communicative Approach. In the process the listening and speaking, which are two important aspects of communication, is focused on this new approach.

An Over view:

Gone are the days, wherein, the language teachers used to handle a chalk and talk programme, writing all that was necessary to be infused into the minds of the language learners, on black board and then washing of their hands, leaving all to the end of the learners to get by-heart and get adopted to the grammatical systems, norms, rules etc.

The theory was dumped into the brains of learners and the learners used to get by-heart the content parts and then reproduce the same in times of necessity. However, the system of learning has undergone a tremendous change during the 21st century, wherein, the teacher-centered approach has turned into learner-centered approach. Language items were stopped figuring on black boards and instead, they started to appear in the form of sound systems and the practice sessions arrived in place of by-hearting method. New approaches were found interesting and thus the shift in paradigm has benefited the language learner a lot and left more challenges to the language teacher, who has to meet the challenges to adopt different teaching methodologies and language teaching approaches to the heterogeneous groups of learners.

To make the language learner quite suitable to meet the global needs in developing language competencies, the language teacher of modern times has to pick up an appropriate model and adopt the apt teaching approach and methodology to impart language learning habits among the learners. Among the many approaches and methodologies, the following are a few to cite as the modern approaches and methodologies in language teaching:
Various Approaches in Teaching Methodology:

The language teachers are free to choose appropriate approaches to involve learners to make learning process get completeness. There are a few approaches and methodologies at the disposal of the language teachers to impart language teaching, wherein they enable the learners adopt certain practices to enhance language competencies through approaches like, Co-operative Learning, Active Learning, and Problem-based Learning etc. Some other methods include, communicative language teaching, Constructivism and Task-based Language Teaching Methodology etc to focus on independent learning methods.

Co-operative Learning Method:

In Co-operative learning method, the language teacher involves the learners in group and they initiate deliberations on the given task, where the group participation and shared thought process will have a say at the end of the participation, resulting in an improvised result at the end.

In this approach, the assignments are done and handled by the teams. Here in this method, the involvement of the learners to enhance their approach to language learning and their adoptability are on focus. Positive interdependence, working for the success of the group / team, both individually and group-wise accountability, focus on joint performance, emphasis on teamwork skills and collaborative work pattern – are some of the salient features of this approach. The language teacher takes the role of a facilitator and learners, alone will explore the avenues to learn the language elements. Language learning, group behavior, contribution to group, the process of learning through co-operative methods etc. are practically on usage.

Active Learning:

In Active learning approach the language teacher enables the learners to, individually, involve on course related activity in the classroom than just listening to the instructor. This approach
endorses the learners to think individually and respond differently by active involvement and it energizes the entire class and makes it curious to know how innovatively or differently the learner responds on a given task. This system encouraged the spirit of competitiveness among the learners. In an enthusiastic mood, the learners voluntarily involve in the learning process and thus bring out the solutions to the problems given by the language teacher.

**Problem-based learning:**

The problem-based learning approach attempts to address the problems, through the process of learning and unfolds the problem aspects through application of knowledge and skills, with a view to solve them on the given task. In communicative approach, the language teacher does not look at the language learning as a set of linguistic patterns to keep them in learners’ memory, the teacher aims at developing a communicative competence. The language teacher intelligently involves the set of learners, who feel shy about involvement to learn a particular language item, to find a solution to the language problem. Hence, indirectly the learners do not think that they are involved in language learning process, but they involve out of a spirit in a competitive atmosphere to emotionally involve in the language learning process.

**Constructivism:**

In another approach, called constructivism, the learning is an active and constructive process. The learner constructs some information and in this approach, learning is an active and contextualized process of constructing knowledge than acquiring it. This is a different approach, wherein, the learners have a preconceived notion about a context in which they are working upon and adjust their language proficiencies according to a certain context. There upon the language learning is converted into the construction of knowledge on a given context. In this method, the language teacher provides a particular context for the learners to develop their thoughts and views so as to enable them to ventilate their opinions using appropriate language tools.
Task-based Language Teaching:

In yet another approach i.e., in Task-based Language Teaching, mainly deals with an approach based on the tasks as part of core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. In this approach, the focus is much on the process of communication than on the delivery of the final product. Here, traditional grammar method, structural grammar method, etc. are not in focus, but this method compels the learners to come out to take part on the task given by the teacher. In this method, the learners have no grammatical barriers to express their ideas and hence the learners, in large number, shun down their inhibitions and take part in the deliberations voluntarily and attempt successfully on the task. The language teacher acts as a facilitator and does involve the learners on different tasks and at times there becomes competitive by nature among the learners to actively take part on a task and it enhances zeal among the learners to equally take part on the tasks. Proactive approaches, independent learning methods, analytical thinking etc are on focus here in this method.

Conclusion:

In the wake of the facts cited above, the approaches and methodologies in English language teaching are leaving many challenges to the language teachers. Handling the heterogeneous groups of learners and adopting an appropriate approach and methodology to impart language learning and playing a suitable and correct role as a facilitator, a task giver, a resource person in

A problem oriented learning activity – are some of the challenging roles to be played by the language teacher in the English language learning classroom. However, the modern learner of language has many devices at his / her disposal to enhance the learning habits by adopting any of the above cited methods and even by adopting technology / multimedia in the language laboratories etc. Hence, it is a never ending process in a continuous endeavour to the language teacher to explore the latest and the most current methods and approaches in language teaching and language learning for effective delivery for enhancement of the learning process.
References