

Methods and Methodology used to Teach English Language in Secondary Schools in Dr. B R Ambedkar Konaseema District, Andhra Pradesh

Dr. T. Sharon Raju

Head of the Department

Department of Education

Andhra University

Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India

Kadiyam Sajaya Kumari

Research Scholar

Department of Education

Andhra University

Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, India

sajayakumari31@gmail.com

Abstract

Communication skills in English have become very essential in this Information and Communication Technology (ICT) revolution era. People who have effective communication skills in English have better opportunities to either receive or disseminate knowledge. Almost entire higher education is being offered only in English and to communicate with people in a highly diversified country like India is once again through English.

For most of the students studying in state run schools, the status of oral and written communication skills is poor. The teachers and the students including the educational

administrators prefer communicating in their mother tongue than to communicate in English. Much of the time, communication in English is influenced by mother tongue or local dialect in every part of India. The development of communication skills among students can be effectively understood by the materials and methodology of learning and teaching English language, and it is keenly observed from the communication point of view.

This paper will help the teachers to introspect their methods and methodology in imparting communication skills among the students. It will help the administrators and the authorities to plan suitable methods for teaching communication skills to students from L2 learners. This will throw new challenges to the teachers.

Keywords: Methods, Methodology, Materials, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), English Classroom.

Introduction

The stakeholders of education are found to have complained against the poor quality of the English language learning despite allocating 20% of the entire curriculum load and at least one class-hour to English every day. Though different types of training are offered to the teachers by different training institutes, teachers are found not to have been aware of innovation taken place in the language education. Though the textbook proposes for learner-centered classrooms and learner participation through communicative tasks and activities, the established norms where teachers possess a dominate status and learners possess the status of recipients, seem to be resisting against them. Teachers teach at the secondary schools are both exposed to this cultural background and their educational background through which they teach and have been taught. The textbooks are prioritizing CLT throughout its components are suitable for these teachers who are largely exposed to the traditional method of teaching, combination of the structural approach and GTM. The adequate contextual support e.g.,

classroom condition, and ideal teacher-learning ratio needed for implementation for this new kind of textbooks are not availing. Added to all these factors hindering against the proper implementation of the new textbooks in the presence of different types of corruptions existing in almost all the sections of secondary school education e.g., in the textbooks, teachers appointment, parental interruptions, political unrest and natural calamities.

Teaching in secondary schools, observed that students have neither language competence nor the ability to perform in English. They could neither read nor write properly. They cannot perform simple functions in English. Surprisingly, it was also noticed that their scores in English were quite good though their quality did not reflect results. All these together imply that there is a mismatch between what expected outcome from the textbooks is and what is achieved from implementation. All these suggest that there must be some problems in the process of teaching and learning English language.

In the light of the above, the present paper is mainly intended to know the Method's and Materials used to teach English in secondary schools in Andhra Pradesh. It is aimed at knowing the perceptions of the teachers and students in different managements i.e., Government, Private and local body schools.

Early Methods

In early phases of the emergence of methods, four methods are found to be prominently in use. Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) is the oldest, most popular and most used method of all until now. It was used for teaching classical languages like Greek and Latin. It is still existent throughout the world emphasizing grammar, vocabulary development, mastering structures, building translation capacity in a teacher centered environment in a deductive manner through the use of prescribed textbook and 'chalk-and-talk' way of lecture. It emphasizes, not knowledge of language, but knowledge about

language. However, reading, and often reading aloud get priority here though in a contradictory manner and spoken part is mostly neglected. It is characterized by behaviorism and structuralism.

Along with Grammar Translation Method (GTM), in the earlier phases of the emergence of methods, we also find certain context methods in use e.g., West's (1926) New Method (NM) in India, prioritizing reading, Direct Method (DM) emphasizing listening and speaking and keeping the mother tongue out of the classroom, and Dodson's (1967/72) Bilingual Method, using both L1 and L2 and target language.

An Overview of Language Teaching Methods

Debates and developments around the methods of language teaching and learning have been ongoing since the time of Comenius in the 17th century. The complexity of contexts and the greater appreciation of the issues lead to the conclusion that the panacea of a single, universal, optimum method for teaching, and learning languages does not exist. Instead, teachers now acknowledge the need to adopt an informed eclectic approach, incorporating elements from the range of methods available.

So far in this paper the methods of second language acquisition have been traced. Now, briefly Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is presented to reveal how they are related to methods and its other co-factors. As this paper is related to the analysis of Method's and Materials, a look into the Communicative Language Teaching and its use are taken up.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

The word 'communicative' has been used in relation in the teaching methodology for more than three decades. There are materials and textbooks in India, which prefers to use the term 'communicative' and 'communication'. It shows how the primary focus of textbooks and materials are more on communication skills related to the need of the study. It

is designed for. In other words, the purpose of the textbooks and materials is to enhance learner's 'communicative competence' (Hymes, 1971).

According to Nunan (1991), the purposes of communicative language teaching is to enhance macro-skills of the learners. Nunan (1991) highlights five basic characteristics of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):

- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on the language, but also the learning process itself.
- An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences adds important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- An attempt to link classroom language learning with language activation outside the classroom.

These characteristics are highly related in English classroom as it emphasizes the use of target language through authentic materials. English teachers can adopt and adapt texts from science and social studies which students are mostly familiar with. As English focuses on learners than any other stakeholders of education, there is a need to incorporate learners' personal experiences and background knowledge.

Communicative Language Teaching and English Classroom

There are many approaches and methods which could be appropriate for an English classroom. Some attributes of CLT methodology are 'learning-centered', 'task-based', 'activity-based', 'problem-solving' and so on. All these attributes are generally associated with communicative-oriented approach to language teaching. Two major

approaches are significant while taking decision of choosing a particular methodology relating communicative competence to the classroom. They are communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based instruction (TBI). The following are some of the basic tenets suggested by Brown (2007) for the two approaches.

- Classroom goals are focused on all the components of CC.
- Language techniques are designed to develop learners in the pragmatic, authentic and functional use of language for meaningful purposes.
- Fluency is more important than accuracy.

Focus on the 'use' of language, productively and receptively would depend on the needs analysis of a specific group of learners.

Bridging the Gap: Theories and ELT Classroom

The impact of ELT theories has direct implications for classroom practices. The theories discussed in this paper provide a theoretical support in designing ELL (English Language Learning) curriculum. According to Hyland (2006), there are five aspects of ELL which need to be taken into consideration while designing teaching tasks and materials for ELL learners. They are as following:

- The study of communication not language: The primary concern of any ELT classroom is to equip the learners to face the language requirements of the real-life. Thus, the focus of ELT classroom is to understand how language is used in particular contexts and serves the purpose of communication.
- The teacher as a researcher: ELT teachers are expected to design materials and choose appropriate methodologies based on their group of learners, to do so, the teachers have to undertake research to find out needs of the learners. This can be done through different methods such as observations and interviews.

- Collaborative pedagogy: As English Language learner need to acquire competence in specific genres and specific communicative skills, there is a need to understand the topics, content and practices of the specific profession. In order to deal with specialized topics, ELT teachers need to collaborate with subject experts or students to take the content input and provide them language supports.
- The importance of discourse variation: ELT believes in the principle of linguistic variation across different disciplines. Thus, there is a need to teach communicative practices related to the specific disciplines.
- Language and institutional practices: ELT focuses on the use of language for social practices. Further, it emphasises on the role of language and power, which is linked with institutional practices.

Questionnaires

Questionnaire is a major instrument for the study. The questionnaire is administered to the teachers and students of the secondary schools. The researcher administered two hundred questionnaires to the students and fifty questionnaires to the teachers of English.

Rationale for Using Questionnaires

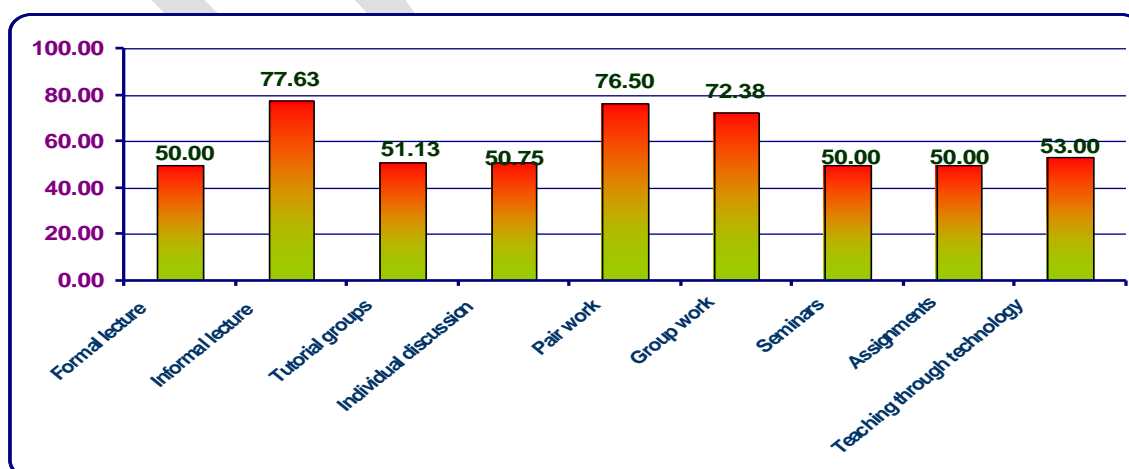
The study is exploratory in nature to find the issues of methods and methodology used to teach English language at secondary school in Dr. B R Ambedkar Konaseema District, Andhra Pradesh. The primary aim of the study is to find out the methods and methodologies used to teach English in secondary schools, i.e. 8th, 9th and 10th classes, and to evaluate their suitability to learners' needs.

This paper aimed at extracting the perceptions of the students and teachers on the methods and methodology used in the process of teaching and learning English.

Percentages as perceived by teachers with respect to teaching methods and methodology.

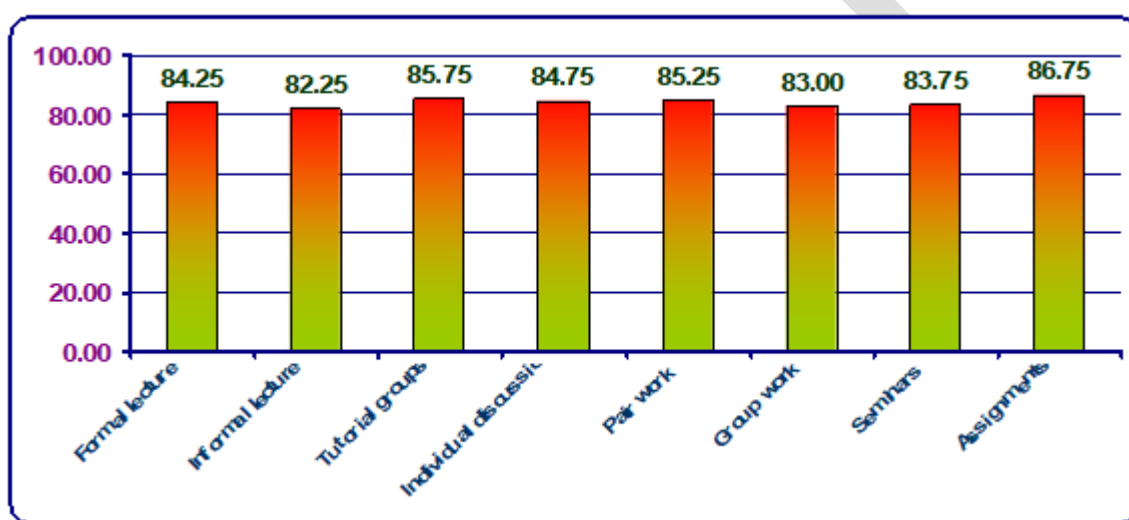
Item	Methods & Methodology	Mean Percent
A	Formal lecture (during which students are not expected to interrupt or ask questions)	50.00
B	Informal lecture (during which students are permitted to ask questions)	77.63
C	Tutorial groups	51.13
D	Individual discussion (with teacher)	50.75
E	Pair work (working with other students)	76.50
F	Group work	72.38
G	Seminars	50.00
H	Assignments	50.00
I	Teaching through technology (computer/projector)	53.00

Percentages as perceived by teachers with respect to teaching methods and methodology.



It is evident from the above table- that teachers are of the opinion that they use teaching methods like informal lecture, pair work and group work more frequently than any other methods. However, almost all the teachers believe in using different teaching methods according to the needs of the class. This shows that they use interactive method for classroom teaching. However, while classroom observation, it is noticed that teacher prefer formal lecture mode of teaching.

Percentages as perceived by students with respect to teaching methodology.



Teaching Methodology

Teachers of English responded that they use 'interactive method' for classroom transaction such as pair work, and group work. From the classroom observation, it has come to the notice that teachers prefer 'chalk and talk mode' in the classes, where teachers explain certain concepts through giving analogs. However, some teachers tend to give scope for interaction through language activities and games. Like teaching materials, in case of teaching methodology, there is a gap between what teachers believe and what they really practice.

Teachers highlighted using different methods to teach English. Teachers expressed that they adopted different methods in the classroom while teaching. It is more teachers-

centered where as in the activity classes the classroom becomes more learners-centered. Teachers believe in interactive mode as teaching methodology in theory (explanation) classes. Further some of the teachers highlighted that some students expected the teacher to dictate notes for examination purposes, which were carried out whenever necessary. Thus, it is found while interacting with the teachers that their teaching technique varies i.e. teacher-centered, learner-centered and learning- centered.

Suggestions for Teachers

Teachers are the most important agents of translating all principles of education into practice. Their role is the most crucial for the proper implementation for the innovation. They should adhere to the following suggestions:

- Teachers should know very clearly what they are teaching and why. If they are confused about the content they are teaching, they can never enlighten the learners.
- Since teaching is a noble profession teacher need to develop a sense of professionalism within them. They should know how to be professional with colleagues, students, administrative staff and parents.
- Teachers need to engage themselves with personal and reflective practices like discuss pedagogical issues with colleagues, write reflective diary, and share them. They should attend seminars; conferences focused group discussions and form special interest groups.
- Teachers need to arrange for dialog with the learners as well. They should talk to them listen to them cater to their needs, collect students feedback on their classes and be open to criticism. They should be open to bring out changes in their own practices.
- Teachers of English play significant role in the enhancement of English language competence of secondary school students. Teacher must be aware of the current and effective principles of language teaching.

- Further, one of the key responsibilities of every English teacher is to conduct' need analyses and then design materials.
- As students are quite interested to learn through the medium of technology, teacher should incorporate technology in their teaching. English lessons may include audio-video, PPTs, use of internet and so on to make the class more interesting and effective.

Conclusion

In addressing the research questions, elaborations are given as follow: Their views over the enacting of methods and methodology underpin their practices and impacts which entail the process can be depicted that some teachers still use the outdated method in teaching English; moreover they use the text book. As a result the teacher and learning English becomes monotonous bored. Since today is the era of revolution industry, it is recommended that teachers need to learn and elaborate new methods and techniques in teaching to make the learning process interesting. It is prominent that they have to adapt to the new era which need to apply new methods and techniques in teaching English. The teachers are also required to consider about the way of teaching English skills; it must be integrated among the four skills to reach the objective of teaching and also the English teachers should focus on the usage of the English language, productively according to the needs of the learners . The English language teachers should focus mainly on different methods and techniques of the English language which could be implemented successfully in the English classroom for better learning, as we know English is most widely spoken language of the world; learners are going to explore each and every corner undoubtedly in all aspects of ELT. Learning of English language will open the gates to the huge flood of opportunities in various industries of various countries. By consuming the English language

teaching, learners not only develop a much better understanding of the world but also accelerate learner's personal growth (both economically and financially.) English language teaching also leads to digital literacy... almost all major apps have their user interface in English only. Finally English plays a huge role in helping learners to achieve accessibility in IT and communication skills.

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