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Innovation and Change in ELT

(English Language Teaching)

Abstract

Change is the only constant thing that never changes. “There is nothing permanent except change” says the Greek Philosopher, Heraclitus. Innovation is the primary step that changes the degree of success to a great vertical extent. This paper attempts to highlight the innovation and change in ELT method. In particular, the paper brings out the barriers in which the learners find themselves laborious with fixed rules in learning ELT methods. It also discusses the innovative ideas of teaching ELT – with liberty, with laughs, with lyrics and with love. This may combined into a term, “Be a master with 4Ls”. This innovative method encourage the learners to stress on quality above quantity in learning this foreign language. This leads to language acquisition by understanding the semantic structures and encouraging the learner’s cognitive development. Using technological materials as a minor tool with nature as a major outset, learners can enhance their creativity and can see this foreign language as their second home language. Thus, the paper suggests that innovation and change in ELT is not a step towards new learning but also a way of enjoying English Language Learning and Teaching.

Keywords: Fun with ELT, Innovative changes in ELT, Liberty in Language Learning.

Introduction:

For last two decades, there were many books published on the topic of English language in general and English Language Teaching in particular. These books discussed only on the purposes of making the learners into a better one in their English Language. The result is the moderate language. But this result does not help today's younger generations to fight with the tremendous socio-economic structure, which is waiting ahead. Thus, after making a long research certain things are found as barriers on the way of learners in the learning of English Language. On the basis of innovation and change in ELT, the research brought out some innovative ideas which could break those barriers into none. Thus, the ideas were included as Learning ELT with Liberty, with Laughs, with Lyrics and with Love.

Barriers on the Learners' Way:

The teacher must bring innovation and variation in teaching to overcome the poor teaching methodologies. Truly, the teachers could not bring those variation due to the fixed rules and completely text centered classrooms.

- Break the Rules: If the teacher find any syllabus as an unfit one especially to their students, he/she can break the rules by choosing the methods which would be apt to their students level. By going against the rules, if teacher can give their students a better ELT classes, then this will not be considered as a wrong thing. There is a need for more flexibility in choosing the teaching methods in today's ELT classrooms.
- Boring Text-Based: Nowadays, especially in India, many classrooms in many institutions, are concentrating mainly on text-centered materials rather than student-centered classrooms. By teaching text-based materials for a whole day, may change

active classrooms into boring classrooms. It does not encourage student's participation and bring lively atmosphere in the classrooms.

Thus, there is a need in high level to enhance learner's acquisition through giving different innovative changes in the ELT classrooms to shoot away the boring air.

Innovation and Change In Elt:

Most teachers mainly stick to writing and grammar but forget the importance of communication, vocabulary and interactions. But these all can be achieved through innovative ideas in ELT. Here are some major innovative changes which would encourage learner's interest in learning English Language.

ELT with Liberty:

Liberty in learning a language should be given to both teachers and students who are involved in the activity. A syllabus should be decided based on teachers' and students' wish. The students should choose their syllabus based on their needs and interest. The students should be given liberty even to commit mistakes. A teacher should know the students' psychology level and then the syllabus should be trained to choose their own course, their own materials and designing their own tasks, but this liberty should not be violated by the teacher. A teacher should be sincere and righteous in her/his teaching. Therefore, this innovative idea, learning ELT with Liberty, is a step towards making the students enjoy liberty in Language Learning and giving the teachers professional satisfaction in the teaching materials.

ELT with Laughs:

“Play is our brain’s favourite way of learning”.

- Diane Ackerman.

“ELT with Laughs” shows the wide sector with recent needs like problem solving, emotionally culture based, unconscious to work, mentally free, new angle of thinking and so on. ELT with Laughs would encourage more fun in classrooms and also inspire learners’ creativity.

In Ron Friedman’s *The Best Place to Work: The Art and Science of Creating an Experimental Workplace*, he discusses,

“...Play may seem like the domain of children, and in some ways that’s the point.....Putting ourselves in a childlike mindset opens us up to alternative ways of thinking...”.

In addition to art and physical classes, there must be classes for the language and core subjects for laugh and fun. And also classes can be created in the outside environment where the creative ideas would find in encyclopedic range. It would give the learners the more comfortable classroom zones. Here are some games with laughs which includes :

Fun Games	Way to Use
Sitcoms	a situation comedy ,by giving own scripts to induce the learner’s intonation and situation
Tongue Twisters	funny tongue twisters to give more flexibility to the learner’s tongue & to increase the level of pronunciation
Balloon Dashing	dashing the problems in the image of balloons, to give the strength to hit the problems both physically and mentally
Super Heroes	transforming students into their favourite superheroes by giving

	their heroes' good values
Joker Show	playing comic characters with funny action, to remove hesitation and fear while on the stage
Miming Games	miming the sentence in grammar structure makes students to guess
Autography	making autograph books to aim the future goals of learners
Pops& Shares	sharing everyone's experience and fun to others- to build friendly classrooms

ELT with Lyrics:

Listening to songs in a listening class is a widely used method in foreign countries but in India, there is no such methods. ELT with lyrics is useful for teachers since finding music and lyrics is far easier than finding conventional listening texts. The literature has plenty of research for classroom use on the songs selection. Abrate (1983), Jolly (1975), Medina (1990), and Purell (1992), deal with this problem and came up with some lists of criteria. Shortly, the criteria consist of

- the level of students
- the content of the songs
- the speed of the songs
- the music taste of students, etc.

In the survey taken in the foreign countries, the most of the students favoured pop music and songs in learning a language. But in India, the iconic English songs were considered as their most favourite songs. By giving the songs on their taste and level, teachers can easily improve their language.

Table 1. Students response to the survey on using songs
as teaching materials, especially in grammar

	N	%
Daily for an hour	14	74
Once a week	5	26
Once a month	-	-
Never	-	-
Others	-	-

As shown in Table 1, the responses of the experimental group of nineteen members in government elementary school to the question of the survey on using songs in teaching materials reported that majority of school students preferred using songs in their classrooms. Using Music in the classes does not mean listening to songs and lyrics but also in various ways like changing the mood, setting the scene, drawing with music, kaleidoscope of culture, movie making, easy to translate, bringing spot concentration and liveliness and so on.

ELT with Love:

By giving the freedom, fun, music in ELT, the teachers and students must begin to love English language. Their attraction towards ELT can be enhanced by using technological features like Digital English Labs and Virtual Reality. In India, only few schools are provided with Language Lab facilities. It arises the students' interest in learning a language by recording their voices and replaying it, to correct the errors. By using the techno-influences, like virtual reality, teachers can enhance themselves and their learner's attention.

Conclusion

Thus, the Liberty, Laughs, Lyrics, Love – altogether give the learners a new way of learning the language. These together pave way to both student – centered and teacher – centered classrooms in equilibrium. Through achieving these “4Ls” in ELT, the learners can find English Language as their second home language.

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