

ESL Classrooms: Teacher, Technique And Tools - An Emerging Demand

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Abstract: Quality initiatives that are being taken throughout the academic year to improve the language skills do mean a lot in transforming today's school age children to fix themselves as better citizens of the twenty first century. English language practice, in the English as a Second Language (ESL) classroom in its true sense is an emerging demand today. Teacher, technique and tool play central roles in establishing the collaborative ESL classroom environment. There are a few other factors such as proficiency in imparting language skills, effective monitoring and constructive feedbacks are also essential in enabling children to acquire English language. Being a universal and link language, English has become a want in all walks of life and that too for the forthcoming generation English is becoming an ultimate demand to proceed globally in future.

Adopting effective teaching processes to teach English as a Second Language in the classrooms will considerably narrow down the prevailing gap between students at elementary level in government schools and their peer group in private schools. The main objective of teaching English as a second language is to enable students to use the language effectively. ESL classroom has to facilitate pupils to acquire English as a mode of communication, as a record and expression of literary and cultural values. If the teaching of English in India has remained unsatisfactory it is largely because of not approaching the language as an unavoidable and useful mode of communication that to be learnt entirely on practical consideration and not clouded over by emotion. English for communication could be easily caught and experienced in childhood days, better with the assistance of teachers. From those days onwards many methods and approaches are being introduced and adopted to teach English in the classroom.

Among the English language teaching (ELT) and learning resources, teacher, technique and tools do play a significant position. Each component carries sufficient weight in imparting English language instructional system. Among the resources, teacher is the most influential one as s/he has the

persuasive powers to help students acquire the language skills at stress-free and cozy atmosphere. Teacher with a smile would be the welcoming milestone. Teacher's proficiency over the English language and knowledge over student psychology would profoundly contribute towards better language skill acquisition, as it involves two major components teaching and learning. Teaching English is different from teaching other subjects. The notion of treating teaching English and other subjects equally needs modification as language acquisition is not merely an understanding of a pack of information. English is a set of discourses that involve a learner to use the same for expression and communication. In the ESL classroom the teacher's part is bit much challenging in involving a learner's participation in language learning.

The instructional hours may be at greater extent utilized in establishing opportunities to listen to day to day expression, common greeting, commands and requests, display charts, audio-visual aids and so on. Thus the language teachers are to create an atmosphere to use plenty of language chunks and expressions inside the classroom. Teachers need to plan and proceed with the innovative language activities in allowing the

students experience the language. The English language teachers may have a set of queries ahead such as:

- ✓ Would I be able to use English throughout the instructional hour?
- ✓ Could I provide convincing answer to my students' doubts?
- ✓ Will I be able to follow the lesson plan as such within the stipulated time limit?

Teacher's knowledge over student's Second Language Acquisition (SLA) helps him/her design need based lesson plan and remedial measures. The quality of language teaching depends ultimately on the quality of the people who provide. The ability of the English language teachers has therefore a direct responsibility on the effectiveness of language skills practised in the classroom. Provision of periodical in-service trainings to attain language proficiency would definitely help teachers use English confidently inside the classroom. Besides, such trainings do also extend a teacher's knowledge on the following areas:

- ✓ Multiple use of ELT aids
- ✓ Effective utilization of instructional hours
- ✓ Executing well-planned and student-focused activities
- ✓ Adopting collaborative approach that would largely eliminate the inhibitions in using English
- ✓ Providing better platform for learners to use English in their day to day communication practices
- ✓ Shifting from culturally narrow classroom techniques

The impact of innovation in education and modernization of the society multiply and diversify the roles of a teacher. As a counselor, a teacher motivates steadily the learner on acquiring new language skills and encourages parents to motivate their wards on same path. Teacher is a designer during ESL learning sessions, learning programmes and assessment schemes.

Large target group is one of the major issues that the teacher faces in the ESL classroom. Such type of setbacks may disturb the student's individual participation and also slows down the learning process at greater ratio. Sufficient in-service trainings to the English language teachers may guide them at difficult circumstances.

So far many techniques have been adopted to teach English in the ESL classroom. The teaching of any subject matter is usually based on an analysis of the nature of the subject itself and the application of teaching and learning principles drawn from research and theory in educational psychology. The result is generally referred to as principles together with a body of classroom practices that are derived from them. The field of teaching methods has been a very active one in English language teaching since the 1900. New approaches and methods increased quickly throughout the twentieth century. Some achieved wide level of acceptance and popularity at different times but were then replaced by methods based on newer or more appealing ideas and theories.

Despite the changing status of approaches and methods in language teaching, the past and present teaching methods continue to form various innovative techniques to make ESL classroom situation a purposeful one. Most of the language teachers today are familiar with the phrases of 'oral practice' and 'Communicative English language teaching' on which in recent years, ESL text books and courses have been shaped.

Here language teaching begins with the spoken language and materials taught orally before it is presented in written form. The target language is the language of the classroom. New language units are introduced and practised situational. Grammar units are graded following the principle that simple forms should be taught before complex ones. How can children access stories, poems and other texts if their minds and imaginations not fully engaged? Immersing children in a range of creative activities before reading derives them towards the journey ahead of them. Through pictures, painting, a film project, in role-play, the children would have a chance to share vocabulary, ideas and concepts which gives their reading fresh meaning and purpose. Thus the method of teaching English in a Second Language classroom is to be innovative and it has to consciously provide platform for learner's creative and constructive involvement.

The role of instructional materials is also one of the most significant components besides teacher and technique in the instructional system. What is specifies with respect to objective, content, learning activities and learner and teacher roles suggest the function for materials. The teaching and learning materials contribute considerably in acquiring speaking, listening, reading or writing skills. The instructional materials further specify subject matter, content and also define the learning objectives of the day that collectively constitute the goals of the syllabus. Some authentic materials turn the learning in ESL classroom into competency based, content-based, task-based and cooperative and some are designed to replace the teacher, so that learning can take place independently. Some materials direct various interactional patterns in the classroom whereas there are also materials that require specially trained teacher with near-native competence in the English language especially with respect to certain English language units such as accent and pronunciation.

The role of instructional materials inside an ESL classroom will reflect matters concerning the primary goal of materials as follows:

- ✓ To present subject matter
- ✓ To practise content
- ✓ To facilitate communication between learners
- ✓ To encourage learners to practise content without the teacher's help
- ✓ The form of materials
- ✓ The connection of materials to other sources of input and
- ✓ The abilities of teachers

A specific pattern for an instructional system may involve a particular set of roles for materials in support of the syllabus and the teachers and the learners. For instance, the role of instructional materials for functional or communicative method will focus on the communicative abilities of interpretation and expression. The materials will focus on exchange of information rather than on presentation of grammatical form. It also involves variety of texts, media and technology which learners can use to develop their competence through different activities and tasks.

The use of aids helps English language teaching and learning in the following ways:

- ✓ Significantly increases and reinforces learning
- ✓ Provides more space for individual experience

- ✓ Stimulates the imagination and develops the power of observation

To encourage our children to discover new texts, genre and authors, pupils can choose from an exciting array of reading material; newspapers, classic texts, reference books as well as the children's own published stories are just a few examples of what book corners might offer. Grammar concepts are taught productively in the aid-assisted instructional system. Exploring the text and embedding them creatively, is how the learning takes place. The prime requirement regarding the utilization of instructional materials is a proper understanding of the purpose of the aids in developing different competencies in the ESL classrooms. The usage of authentic instructional materials would better supplement the English language learning as it creates the inspirational learning environment.

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