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Innovative Trends in English Language Teaching

Abstract

Change is the law of nature. 'There is nothing permanent except change' says Heraclites, the pre Aristotelian Greek philosopher. An inclination is the common penchant or direction towards change. A number of educational options accessible before the present generation learners, the newer trends seem to have emerged in the field of education that have entirely changed the facet of traditional system of education. Recent trends, methodologies and development depict the essential role of education zone in general with its internalization of the education process, stress on quality above quantity, increase in the adoption of technologies, necessity for professional talent etc. The theories and methods are determinedly increasing in the field of ELT also. This Research paper presents the distinguished trends in the ELT that have been used practically in recent times in the entire world with specific reference to the trends prevalent during the previous decades.

Keywords: Trends, Methods, examine practice, innovative devices, ICT, pedagogy, learning procedure, CALL, CLIC, supportive learning, Neuro-linguistics.

Introduction

In the last two decades, so numerous books have been published in English about English language in common and English Language Teaching in particular. These books view the subject differently by presenting a plethora of voices trying to liberalize themselves from the clutches of traditional methods of teaching. The modernization that the researcher talks in the paper pertains both to methodology and materials used in language teaching. Moreover, this article brings out the restrained dissimilarity between the intellectual shrewdness of language as treated in research and pedagogy. The squabble advances as the document proceeds with trends of teaching with precise reference to the Indian scenario, methodologies adopted, the bygone methods, the peer practice, the present trend, new education design, new strategy, the need for change, the ICT and English language and also the CALL.

General Trend

English language teaching has undergone incredible changes over the years, particularly the last ten years. Students are hampered with studying, learning and grasping the materials, and of course, lectures with the collection of relevant information from prescribed texts. Many career alternatives once regarded inconsequential are gaining significance at present such as communication skills, soft skills, technical skills, interpersonal skills, ICT literacy etc. The need for chiseled graduates to unite successfully in the tough competition of endurance in the global market is in great demand nowadays. For this, a change in the trend in particular the teaching learning process of English language has to undergo a evolution for the betterment. Seasons change, fashion changes, attitudes of human beings change but it is overwhelming to note that in the last century English prospectus has scarcely undergone any change.

The Indian Scenario

There had been much of changes in the approach of people as to what they distinguish to be a language. When the Indians were tutored by British masters, they were exposed to native language in every intellect of the word. The methodologies adopted were also analogous to that of what was accomplished in English speaking countries. After their retirement, the glory, prosperity, depth and immensity of the language started desertion in India little by little and it has come to a stage wherein educationalists and language experts flourish hard to choose the best out of the immeasurable accessible methodologies. The existing trends of teaching English, especially in India, lacked both in quantity and quality or may fail to obtain a universal appeal. Firm curriculums and huge syllabi continue to threaten students who speak regional dialect but love to excel in English.

Methodologies Adapted During The Previous Years:

Communication is the groundwork based on which any idea can enhance and develop into a full fledged one. Without that, nourishment in any field is impossible. Some of the (recent) trends in the ELT are quite perceptible while the others are still to make their presence felt. Some are yet to come into subsistence and therefore subject to evolution and change. During the last decade, various crucial factors have combined to affect the current ideologies of teaching of English such as the hopeless methodologies, unsuitable materials, integration of contextualized teaching, over prominence on multi language skills etc.

Teachers who practiced Grammar Translation method during the previous decade exclusively relied on black board as the pertinent tool to teach communication skills and

the nuances of English language. Later on, over head projectors, acted as another medium for the teacher subjugated class room. Such teachers believed in the aphorism of drill and practice. Such as, audio tapes acted as medium of Audio-lingual method. In the later on years of 1970's, audio lingual method fell into disregard. During 1980's and 1990's, there was a sweeping change over the accessible trends then, and more prominence was laid on dependable and meaningful contextualized discourse.

Theories of the Past Decade

A few theories and trends that shaped the ELT during the past decade include Gardener's Theory of Multiple Intelligence (1993). The same was practical to language teaching as well. This has paved a way to focus the intrinsic skills, preference and abilities of students. TG grammar of Noam Chomsky gave an in-depth scrutiny of language learning vs. language acquisition. His observation of B.F.Skinner's Theory of Learning brought a rebellion in the principles of language learning as well as language attainment. Moreover, Krashen's theory of Second Language Acquisition added zest to essence. The Total Physical Response Theory of V. Asher focused on a successful adult second language learning as a parallel process to a child's first language accomplishment. Besides, the general educational trends like Whole Language Approach, Cooperative Learning and Neuro Linguistic Programming have influenced language teaching and learning significantly. With the initiation of e-communication, it has been made possible for the English language teachers to enhance their profession. Distant from this, the Special Interest Group (SIG), support group discussion and chat room have also enriched their profession.

Modern Trends of Teaching English

Deena Boraie places of interest that there are eight trends in teaching of English as discussed further. “Change is the Goal of Teaching English” says Boraie “In my belief there are two key changes in the purpose of teaching English. Firstly, as Penny Ur (2009) noted, the goal is to formulate fully experienced English knowing bilinguals rather than simulation of native speakers. The purpose is not to aspire to become native speakers of English because we are already native speakers of our own but to focus on English as a means of communication. Secondly, English is not viewed as an end in itself but as resources to learn contented such as science and mathematics”.

Content And Language Integrate Learning (CLIC)

The CLIC is an approach where the English teacher uses cross curricular content and so the students learn both the content and English.

Early Start of Teaching English

Several countries have started teaching English in earlier grades at school. For example, since 2011, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam have introduced English from Grade-IV. Also in 2011, Japan introduced English in the primary stage and in 2012, Dubai introduced English in the KG stage instead of Grade-I.

Change in the Approach to Teaching Culture

Together the local or native and international culture dominates in English language classes. There are fewer hubs on teaching the culture of native speakers of English except there is a specific purpose for doing so.

Changing the View of an English Teacher

It is ever more being well-known that the eminence or proficiency of teachers is obstinate by their linguistic, teaching and intercultural competence rather than their being

native speakers of English.

Change In Teaching Content And Test Design

Teachers use a series of local texts or English translations of literature in the classroom. The use of language as healthy as the use of a variety of accents in listening activities or tests is expectant in the English language classroom.

E-Learning

With the propagation of tablets and smart phones, it is believed that textbooks will disappear in a few years. Furthermore, the access to knowledge in terms of elasticity and mobility has changed considerably.

Strategic Teaching and Learning

Teaching in English language classes focuses on nurturing the students' thinking as well as language content, outcomes and learning activities. There are considerable and multifaceted student- teacher interactions inside and outside the classroom. The ramification of learning is emerging as a way to make language learning more engaging and relevant to the younger generation.

Teachers as Lifelong Learners

In a correlate based society and to stay competitive and employable, teachers are expected to engage in a continuous professional development or the professional learning activities from the beginning to the end of their careers. As with any other profession, teachers are also estimated to assume a greater responsibility for their own professional learning, continually developing their knowledge and skills.

Apart from the above mentioned items, Andrian under Hill lists out the following as the recent trend which are very much ubiquitous in English language teaching. They are

1. Networking, interest and support groups.
2. Learner centeredness and learners needs.

3. Reflective practice and teacher learning.
4. Portfolio development for teachers.
5. Syllabus design /materials development.
6. Criticism of published materials.
7. English as an International language.
8. Corpora.

The Present Trend

All over the world, the student centered English language teachers seem to have realized that gone are the days when teachers reined their class with all domination where the students remained as passive. Rethinking pertaining to the emergent significance of implementing the basic educational goals Larsen Freeman (2007) asserts that it is the fifth skill of language that enables the competence to use grammatical structures with accurateness. Academic qualification alone may not help teachers to grow professionally; on the other hand, they need to be prepared themselves with the current practices. The training materials that are being used in our country are almost made available all over the world. At present, the era of method is over and the ELT as of the current scenario is in „post method thinking“.

English Teaching and the ICT

The third dimension of globalization which is indivisible from English teaching is an encroachment of Information and Communication Technology [ICT]. The field of the ELT has been deeply pervaded by the ICT. The easy way in to technology has made information possible for enhancement of learning program and about 80% of it is in English (MC – Crum. R. et al., 1986). At the beginning, the English teachers regarded

internet as one of the alternative media to teach language (Warschauer,1995). The followings are some of the ICT enabled teaching activities.

Computer Mediated English

English has been undeniably the lingua franca of the internet. The Computer Mediated English uses the language as per expediency and not by convention. For example, using a single letter or number for a word. For instance „c,“ for „see“, „u“ for „you“ and „2“ for „two“; the use of acronyms like FYI (for your information)PFA (Please find the attachment) ; using asterisks“ *” for prominence and emoticons for smile, for frown etc. Realizing its significance source of communication, the linguistic elements and exposition of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) need a stern concern.

Computer Assisted Language Learning [Call]

Computer Assisted Language Learning is yet another materialization of Computer Mediated Language Learning. The first segment of the CALL was conceived in 1950 and was implemented in 1960s and 1970s. In this method, the computer gives an enticement to the learner by being not a sheer tool but also a teacher.

Web Based Learning

A web based learning also called technology based learning/distance learning/on line education/e learning is one of the fastest developing areas. It renders opportunities to produce well–designed, learner–centered, affordable, and interactive. There are thousands of English web based classes that offer trainings for a variety of basic language skills such as Learning, Speaking, Reading and Writing and are made interactive in a variety of ways. Some of the common technologies accessible for encouragement of education are as

follows:

E-mail

The students can correspond with native speakers of the target language using e mail by creating a personal email account (g-mail, yahoo, hotmail, etc) which is free. The students can mail their home work to the teachers concerned and get it corrected in turn. The teacher can also provide revisions, feedback, suggestions for the betterment of every work and send them back.

Blogs

A blog is a personal or professional journal repeatedly updated for public disbursement. The blogs enable uploading and linking the files which is very much suited to serve as on line personal journals for students. Pinkman (2005) indicates blogging becomes communicative and interactive when participants assume multiple roles in the writing process, as readers/reviewers who respond to other writers' posts, and as writers-readers who, recurring to their own posts, react to criticism of their own posts. The readers in turn can observe on what they read, even though blogs can be placed in protected environments as well.

Skype :

Every internet service has audio functions, and scientific instruments like laptops with cameras. The students are able to communicate with their teachers and friends who are far away. Similarly, they could very well converse with the speakers of native language and get their pronunciation checked so as to progress their speaking.

Mobile Phone

Learners can search for new words using dictionary option in the mobile phones and enhance their vocabulary. They may authenticate the spelling, pronunciation and usage of the explicit word they searched for. Moreover, they can use Short Message

Service (SMS) to send queries to their instructors and get their uncertainties unfurnished.

Ipods

Ipods, one of the multimedia devices, improve the users to create, deliver, exchange texts, image, audio and video scripts as per the constraint. The students can read and answer to them the teachers by sending text messages. In accumulation to this, the students can record and listen to their speeches, poems, news, short stories etc. Thus, ipods give an opportunity to the learners of English to improve their listening, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and also writing.

The New Age Devices

This year, the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) which was held at Las Vegas, gave a glance of ground contravention devices merely meant for students. These „showpieces“ ranged from 3D printers to smart watches. The youth“s necessities are matched by a new age device, be it studies or social media, travel or portability. The media streaming devices like the Google chrome cast and the Rokku make group studies become interactive and presentations surprisingly fulfilled one. One has to torrent the media on to a smart TV using s dongle. A different blessing is the e-reader for the on-the-move generation. The all new- kindle paper white is a boon. Students can just tuck in the e- reader for easy reference. The portable document scanner like the Doxie Flip Cordless Flatbet Photo and notebook scanner are used to get the notes sorted.

Language Teaching Design

Geetha Nagaraj says „A essential development in the area of language teaching design is the Council of Europe“s- A Common Frame Work of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching Assessment, now mostly known as CEF/CEFR is a document consisting of nine chapters and four apprentices and is available on the Council of Europe website: www.coe.int. The CEFR aims to afford a common basis for the elaboration of

language syllabuses, curriculum... what learners have to learn... skills they have to widen so as to be competent to proceed professionally...."Morrow (2004) identifies four core areas in the CEF (Council of Europe's Common Frame Work of Reference for Languages)

The Learner

The CEF analyses the factors that go to make up personality differences.

The Language

A clear portrayal of the content in terms of linguistic competency, sociolinguistic competency and pragmatic competency constitutes a language.

Levels of Performance

Using descriptor scales, learners' expertise is deliberate. Descriptors consist of a sequence of „can do“ statements which established a great deal of concentration.

Teaching and Learning

The learner's contribution and teacher's empowerment are hassled during the teaching and learning processes.

The Transition of Focus on the Learner

The conservative method of teaching wherein the teacher enjoys the control of teaching occasionally even obliterates the pressure of the learners. It is Dewey (1938) who originated the term „learner centeredness“ which has gained reputation in the ELT. The Humanistic Approach which was developed during the second half of the Communicative Language Teaching, urbanized in the 1960s and 1970s was an outcome of the desire to make language teaching more bendable and more approachable to students (Tudor 1996,

7).

The Role of a Modern Teacher

Dornyei and Murphey (2003, 109) have distinct the term „role“ as a technical term which originally comes from sociology and refers to the shared prospect of how an entity should perform. a number of methodologists like Little Wood [1981], Richards and Rodgers [1986], Tudor [1993], Harmer [2001] have evolved different roles for a language teacher.

Richards and Rodgers envisage a teacher's role as a part of „design“, module of a method. Little Wood conceptualizes the role of the teacher as a catalyst of learning, an overseer, a classroom manager, a consultant or adviser and at times a co-communicator with the learners. To Harmer, a teacher plays the responsibility of a coordinator, organizer, appraiser, advertiser, contestant, resource, tutor and observer. Tudor also perceives the role of a teacher in the learner centered classroom.

Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT), the current archetype is basically an off shoot of Communicative Language Teaching. Nuan (2004,12) points out „experiential learning or learning by doing“ as the main abstract basis for the TBLT. The TBLT breaks down the barriers of the traditional classroom, because in the TBLT, the role of the learner is extensively distorted. The teacher becomes a true spur of learning for the language learners, entirely by means of dialogic communication (Vygotsky, 1978).

Conclusion

The traditional method lays more prominence on a teacher himself and is teacher centered. Wilkins (1976,2) calls a synthetic in which different parts of the language are skilled separately and step by step so that attainment is a process of measured accretion of

parts until the whole composition of language has been built up. The tyrannical or the realistic role of the teacher which pertains to the long esteemed conception depends on how verbosely a teacher teaches. It is essential to understand the current trends and evaluative methods of the ELT. The theories and methods are persistently developing in the ELT. The teachers of the ELT are aware of the best practices in teaching and learning English and how they can be made beneficial to the students. It is probable for every child to learn English in the most enjoyable manner if it is supplied with the right kind of materials and pedagogy produced by one's own native wisdom. A beautiful amalgamation of art and science, with a fine tune of as many tools as possible to the repertoire can help an ELT to excel in his/her field.

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