

Innovative Methods of Teaching English Language to School Students Using Teaching Aids

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Abstract:

Language is a complex specialized skill which develops in a child spontaneously without conscious effort or formal instruction deployed without awareness of its underlying logic. So language teachers have some strategies to teach effectively. Apart from it, English language teachers need to employ innovative ideas in their teaching because in our country most of the students learn English as a second language. The poor performances in English language in most schools are due to the fact that the teaching of it is textbook based. Teachers do not have regular supply of the teaching aids and where they are available they are inadequate and obsolete. This paper stresses the need for making English language lessons easy and enjoyable through the use of instructional aids/improvisations. It presents innovative methods and techniques to teach English language by using teaching aids, it also aims to make English teachers aware of the strategies to use it in an effective manner.

Introduction:

Language, which has been considered man's most remarkable achievement, is so much a part of our lives, like the air we breathe, that very often we take it for granted and as often are not aware of its characteristic features. There are many things about language that are still a mystery and will probably remain so. However, there are aspects we do know. The past several decades have seen tremendous developments in linguistics offering a description of its basic characteristics. Language is a system. It is not a random collection of items. Patterning is all important. Each language has its own structure, its own system. It has its own unique way of organizing its units into an internal structure.

Teaching Aids:

Teaching aids reinforce the spoken or written words with concrete images and thus provide rich perceptual images which are the bases to learning. When these materials are used in an interrelated way,

they make learning permanent. They provide for a great variety of methods. They bring the outside world into the classroom and make us teach efficiently. In order to derive the advantages of using teaching aids, a teacher needs the knowledge of different types of teaching aids available, their place in the teaching learning process and the methods of their evaluation. Teaching aids supplement the efforts of the teacher and they do not supplant him. The aids alone cannot accomplish the task of education and the teacher always remains the main pivot of all teaching. While using teaching aids the teacher should be clear about the objects of instruction and thus make the right use of the right material at the right place and at the right time.

Advantages of Using Teaching Aids:

- Adds interest, involvement and brings the world into the classroom;
- Makes learning permanent;
- Develops greater understanding;
- Stimulates self-activity;
- Fosters continuity of thought;
- Makes teaching effective;
- Helps in overcoming language barriers; and
- Provides a great variety of methods.

Classification of Teaching Aids:

All teaching aids can be classified as under:

- Audio-Visual Aids: Language Laboratory, Smart Board, Television, LCD Projector, Sound Motion Picture, Record Player, Tape Recorder, Compact Disc Player.
- Visual-Activity Aids: Pictures, Photographs, Flash Cards, Poster, Charts, Diagrams, Graphs, Maps, Cartoons, Demonstration Programs.

Audio-Visual Aids:

In modern teaching trends, it is advisable for every school to have audio-visual aids at secondary and higher secondary level for teaching and learning. It includes language lab and smart board with a variety of audio and video materials.

The Language Laboratory:

Technological aids in language teaching are a major force today, and among these aids, the language laboratory occupies the most prominent place. The language laboratory is very useful for assessing students' speech. It provides students with the technical tools to get the best samples of pronunciation of the language. The electronic devices used in the laboratory will stimulate the eyes and ears of the

learner to acquire the language quickly and easily. The laboratory's collection is designed to assist learners in the acquisition and maintenance of aural comprehension, oral proficiency, and cultural awareness. The language laboratory offers broadcasting, television programs, web-assisted materials and videotaped off-air recordings in the target language—English.

Advantages of the Curriculum of Language Laboratory:

- Avoids the monotony of theory classes.
- Language lab develops phonetic and spoken English skills with RP (Received Pronunciation) among the students.
- Develops the technique of accent, speaking with clear syllable division.
- Enables the students' spoken skills with proper stress and intonation.
- Develops students' abilities in making the conversation and dialogs, and in participating in role-play activities.

The Smart Board:

The Smart Board is an interactive whiteboard that uses touch detection for user input (for example, scrolling and right mouse-click) in the same way as normal PC input devices.

The Smart Board interactive whiteboard operates as part of a system that includes

the interactive whiteboard, a computer, a projector and white boarding software—either Smart Notebook collaborative learning software for education, or Smart Meeting Pro software for business. The components are connected wirelessly or via USB or serial cables. A projector connected to the computer displays the desktop image on the interactive whiteboard. The whiteboard accepts touch input from a finger, pen or other solid object. Smart Board interactive whiteboards are also available as a front-projection flat-panel display—interactive surfaces that fit over plasma or LCD display panels.

Advantages of Smart Board:

- Using Smart Notebook software, teachers can record each step of a lesson activity for students to review at a later time;
- The Smart Board allows users to work with large amounts of information; it offers an information space that invites active collaboration; and
- The work produced is often 'dynamic and contingent'.

Visual-Activity Aids:

Resource Center:

In this computer age, language resources become necessary and inevitable for the successful classroom management and effective interaction. So, every school

should have a resource center at primary level for teaching, learning and self-learning. A resource center must have many teaching learning materials. Teachers can interact with students by speaking, reading or asking details about the different materials. They are:

- Paper-bag puppets;
- Hand puppets;
- Finger puppets;
- Class mascot, toys;
- English corner for speaking;
- Picture cards with different items;
- Word/Sentence cards for display and for flannel graph;
- Calendar for birthdays and important days;
- Clock for interactive or individual practice task;
- Maps, graphs, pictures, diagrams, posters, etc.;
- Weather chart with different types of days (rainy day, cloudy day, etc.);
- Books display;
- Newspapers, Magazines in English.
- Borrowing cards;
- Building blocks, etc.

Suggestive Learning – Teaching Strategies:

The training, which learners receive, should prepare them to direct the course of their

own learning, that is, it should take them from their states of varying degrees of dependence

to the state of the greatest measure of independence or autonomy, which is possible in a

given set of circumstances. If this is to occur, then the learner must acquire a number of

relevant learning techniques or strategies.

Learner strategies refer to language learning

behaviour that learners actually employ to learn and regulate the learning of English (as a

second language in this case).

- Cooperative learning;
- Puzzling out things;
- Self and peer correction;
- Choice of activities;
- Troubleshooting sessions;
- Confidence session; and
- Extensive language activities outside the classroom.

Cooperative Learning:

- Pair work;
- Group work; and
- Role play

Pair Work:

- Provides a lot of oral practice.
- Gives learners a chance to work independently.
- Prepares learners for group work.

- Provides an opportunity to talk face-to-face, which reflects real-life situations.

Group Work:

Pair and group work differ in:

- Time set
- Nature of the group work
- Type of activity

Role Play:

- Students play imaginary characters in given situations;
- It brings a wide variety of language experiences into the classroom;
- It gives an opportunity to use language as used in real-life situations; and
- It helps in better self-expression (as it is full of fun and enjoyment).

Role of the Teacher:

The main objective of language teachers is not to inform students about the language but

to develop their ability to use the language for a variety of communicative purposes.

The

teacher plays different roles at the three stages of the learning process.

Presentation: When a teacher introduces something to be learned.

Practice: When a teacher allows the learners to work under his/her directions;

Production: When a teacher gives them opportunities to work on their own; and
The teacher's main task is to serve as a kind of informant.

Conclusion:

The importance of teaching aids/improvisations cannot be overstated in teaching and learning process. It is not enough to be merely a teacher who wears a 'know all' mask, but he/she should be a facilitator who understands the students, empathizes with him/her, and in fact joins them in the search for knowledge and wisdom. One of the advantages of systematically incorporating into one's teaching these how-to-learn tasks is that learners became aware not only of their own preferred ways of learning, but also the fact that there are choices, not only in what to learn but also in how to learn. The nature of the traditional classroom is going to change beyond new trends.

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