

USING PROCESS-ORIENTED STRATEGIES IN THE CLASS TO MAKE ESL LEARNING POSSIBLE

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ABSTRACT

English teachers from time to time have been trying multiple methodologies to teach ESL. They are ranged as Grammar Translation Method, The Direct Method, The Audio-Lingual Method, The Silent Way, Desuggestopedia, Community Language Learning, Total Physical Response, Communicative Language Teaching, Content-based to Task-based, and Participatory Approaches. These methodologies are based on both teacher centered approach and student centered approach. Larsen-Freeman views that methods serve as a foil for reflection that can aid teachers in bringing to conscious awareness the thinking that underlie their actions and also they are able to see why they are attracted to certain methods and repelled by others. But if we look into the outcome of the learning we feel and notice that the learning is not validated by these pedagogies and the learners are left to uncertain situation and are not sure whether they would ever learn ESL and use it in their daily life situations, perfectly and according to the context. This paper aims to discuss those strategies which the researcher has been using in her classrooms for past few years and found valid and outcome based. These class based methodologies have been termed as Process-oriented Strategies, are discussed in the paper and the outcomes are shown as to how the students actually learnt ESL and are effectively using that in their daily lives. To consolidate these approaches, a sample of twenty learners was randomly selected for this study to assess the outcome of the learning of ESL. The learner centered approach was adopted throughout the session. The result showed that through process-oriented methods learners were able to use English in their daily lives very effectively and spontaneously.

Keywords: *Process-oriented strategies, ESL, Methodologies, learner centered approach*

Introduction

Teaching ESL to the non-native speakers has always been a big challenge for the teachers of English and educationists; especially, when the learners donot have sufficient exposure to the target language which they are learning. They try to learn English language from different books of grammar. Since there is no trend of teaching English as a language in the public sector colleges of Pakistan therefore, students resort to different unauthentic materials and sources to learn English language. It is a known fact that English is the lingua franca among the different nations and the medium of instructions in higher education. It is the guaranty of getting attractive job and the means of communication among the higher authorities. Hence, the importance of English language cannot be denied as it is the demand of every department and field of any nation. It has shown its importance to the extent that every student is willing to learn it by all the means which are available to them.

Same is the case with Pakistani learners of the public sector institutions. In Pakistan English is taught from sixth grade and it is the time when learners have fully learnt their first language. In Pakistan English is third and sometimes even fourth language for the learners. Their first language usually is a regional language which they speak at home and they learn Urdu at school which is their nationallanguage, this way English becomes their third language which they start from class six. The methodologies which are applied in the classrooms are translation method and totally teacher centered. When they reach to 10th grade they are not familiar with English language. They pass the examination mostly by rote memorization and fail to use learnt language in their daily lives. Moreover, the teachers in public sector schools are not appointed on the basis of subjects needed in the schools. They are required to teach multiple subjects not specific one. Furthermore, no English language teachers are specifically

appointed to teach English language and hence no focus on English language learning takes place at elementary level. Therefore, this has become a big challenge for educationists and language instructors to devise strategies to make the language learning possible. Friederike Kippel (1984) adds that foreign language teachers should help students achieve some kind of communicative skills in the foreign language, all situations in which real communication occurs naturally have to be taken advantage of and many more suitable ones have to be created. The books which have been prescribed from 6th grade to 12th grade are mostly literature based and very little or no focus is given to real language learning. When they reach to 13th grade their syllabus and the examination paper requirements are totally dependent on English language. Therefore, on this stage the English teacher feels responsibility to fulfill the required criteria of the teaching and make target language learning possible. S/he invents and creates various devices to strengthen the target language in order to meet the requirements of the paper as the paper is totally English language based. This need of learners' evaluates teacher's expertise which results in the introduction and inventions of new strategies that are used in the classrooms to make the English language learning possible.

Literature Review

Before the teacher can start to consider planning in the class s/he needs to know a considerable about three main areas: they are the profession, the institution, and the students. Jeremy Harmer (1983). According to Littlewood (1984), a learner 'constructs' a series of internal representations of the second language system. This occurs as a result of natural processing strategies and exposure to the second language in communication situations. Provided the right kind of exposure takes place, the learner's internal representations develop gradually, in predictable stages, in the direction of the native speaker's competence. While Tony Wright (1987) reveals that classroom language learning is a group activity. The nature of the activity will vary according to several factors. These influence the roles individuals adopt (or are given) in the classroom language learning process and how they interpret their roles. These factors are individual's contribution to a learning group, their

activities in the group, and the effects of the group process on both individuals and group. Allan Cunningsworth () argues that even when the teacher is teaching English through text book the role of the book should be that of an 'ideas bank'. It should be based on the language learning procedures on models of actual communicative processes, make learning activities relevant and purposeful, meet the learners' needs, both external and psychological, and use models of real, authentic language. Littlewood (1984) suggests that a person's ability to communicate develops almost exclusively through the subconscious aspects of learning and our whole teaching effort should be directed towards creating contexts for language use in the classroom, by means such as listening and reading activities, discussion, communication tasks and role playing. He further views that these contexts should enable learners to construct their own representation of the language, in the same way as they would in a natural environment, and pass through the same sequences of the development as a natural learner. Since the learner's attention should be on entirely on understanding and expressing meaning through language, from-oriented procedures such as conscious drilling or correction should be avoided as much as possible. Tracy Terrell (1977, 1982) talks about 'natural approach' which helps to develop second language ability by teaching other material e.g. history, geography or science through English language. Jeremy Harmer (1983) views that the teachers should allow students to create language on the basis of rules teachers introduce to them. Students will be encouraged to use their new knowledge of grammar rules to make their own sentences and language. Friederike Klippel views that learning is more effective if the learners are actively involved in the process. The degree of learner activity depends on the type of material they are working on. He further adds that the students' curiosity can be aroused by texts or pictures. Bill VanPatten (2004) suggested Processing instruction which he termed as comprehensive-based learning. In processing instruction, learners are put in situations where they cannot comprehend a sentence by depending solely on context, prior knowledge, or other clues. Lightbown and Nina Spada view second language not simply a process of putting second language words into first-language sentences and that the learners may not always be able to take advantage of similarities unless they are pointed out to them. They also add that

the teachers should teach simple language structures before complex ones. Teachers should present grammatical rules one at a time, and the learners should practice examples of each one before going to another.

Rationale for using process-oriented strategies in the class

English language or any foreign language cannot be learnt in a non-linear way. There are some systematic steps which have to be followed to bring the learners step by step to the required structures of the language. If those steps are not followed one by one then the learners are prone to get confused and seem not to be learning those aspects of English language which can be used in everyday life situations.

Learners like to learn from simple based structure to the difficult one therefore this process totally comply with that procedure which starts with tenses and ends with cohesive devices which bind the structures altogether.

Teaching grammar in chunks is a common method applied by the teachers of English language. As a result learners know very well the structures of grammar and their conversion to different forms but they are not able to apply them into different contexts.

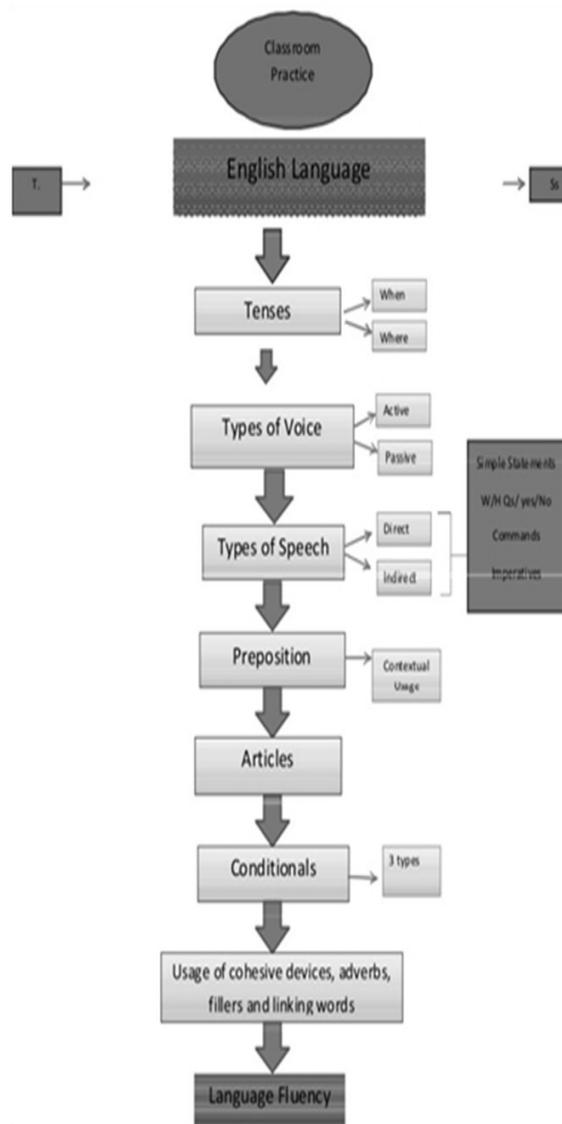
Most of the teachers spend time in teaching the grammar structures like: simple present and their conversion to past simple or active to passive and vice versa. As a result, students keep focusing on changing the structures and hence no focus on their use on daily life situations.

In the Pakistani context in public sector institutions teacher-centered approach is practiced. Toomuch time is devoted to teacher's lecture or presentations, leaving less or no time for the learners to interact in the class. Therefore, learners have no chance to learn and produce their own language in the class.

English class is the only domain where learners get exposure to the target language and if that time is utilized by the teacher's lecture and the learners are not provided enough time to interact in the class then there is no chance for the learners to speak and practice learnt structure.

Group activities play a vital role in enhancing oral communications. Learners feel comfortable interacting among themselves and this way a large amount of language practice takes place. They usually focus on fluency of speech and when fail to come up with correct

vocabulary or pronunciation of the words then some of their group members whose English is goop them in correcting those mistakes, they welcome it willingly and the learning becomes possible.



Role plays are also best means for eliciting target language from the learners. This activity enhances situational, informal, and contextual use of language which is used in daily life situations

Above all, learners should be made bound to speak in English in language class and outside the class as well as with their peers. This practice brings fluency in the speech and eventually accuracy occurs.

If above mentioned strategies are applied by both the teachers and the students themselves, English language learning will definitely take place very successfully.

Process-oriented strategies

Process-oriented strategies can be defined as a series of English language teaching rules which take a linear way of different language structures and practices that are started from a specific structure, taking on another one dependent on previous rules and finally on the particular goal which is set for the learners. For this study twenty randomly selected students were applied the strategies to assess the validity or outcome of this process. They had undergone process-oriented approach and were given cue cards having different situations written on that and were asked to speak on those situations. To further consolidate the outcome of this process they were put in groups and were asked to speak among themselves in English and were monitored by the teacher. The result was satisfactory and encouraging for teacher. This process-oriented approach can be described as under:

Teaching tenses

I always start my lessons with teaching tenses. While teaching tenses I don't just emphasize on its structure instead I focus on its usage as to where and when to use that particular structure.

Methods

Simple present tense

Students are asked to tell what they do daily in the morning. While they are thinking how to describe that situation the teacher herself tells them her daily routine after she talks about her own daily routine she writes the structure on the board describes it. Then the students themselves come up with their own experiences of daily routine using the earned structure. For example:

- *I get up early in the morning brush my teeth have my breakfast, take my bag and go to my college.*

They are asked to discuss among themselves their daily routine; their friend's habits, likes and dislikes.

Present continuous tense

They are asked what is happening right now.

* *The teacher is teaching and the girls are learning right now.*

* *The girls are roaming around and some of them are going to the cafeteria to have tea.*

Present Perfect Tense

The situation has just happened and its ef-

fect can still be seen or felt.

- *I have just had tea and I am full, don't need any more.*
- *I have learnt my lesson and the points are still in my mind I mean I still remember them.*

Oral discussion: ask them to discuss the things which they or any of their friend or parents have recently done and the results can be seen or felt.

Difference between simple past and simple present tense

I daily come to college with my dad (happens daily) but today I came with my brother (happened only once).

Difference between simple past and present perfect tense

*I learnt my lesson I have learnt my lesson
I forgot I have all points in my mind*

Direct Indirect Narrations

Process

- Simple statements
- Wh & yes/no qs
- Commands & requests
- Paragraph based narration

Active and passive

Instead of telling them how to change from active to passive and vice versa, I tell them why we change from active to passive.

Prepositions

Tell them the contextual use of the prepositions by creating small activities instead of just asking them to memorize the words.

Articles

- Usage of the articles
- I teach articles through activities.

Conditionals

Three functions of conditionals:

1. *If I work hard, I will pass the examination.*
2. *If I went to the cinema, I would waste a large amount of time.*
3. *If I had come earlier, I would have attended previous sessions.*

Use of cohesive devices, adverbs, fillers and linking words

Basically, actually, I am like, she is like, but,

that's why, therefore, hence, because, in spite of etc

Students tasks

Created multiple speaking activities and asked students to participate. In the first place they were put in groups and were asked to speak in the learnt structure among themselves this way their confidence level increased and they were able to practice and apply in real life situations. I let them make mistakes, corrected their mistakes in the feedback session without pointing out specific student.

Findings showed that process-oriented approach was a total success and this approach enhanced learners' language at utmost level. Those who were confused about the grammatical usages of the structures and didn't know when and where to use the particular structure were relieved of that trauma and started speaking English.

In the beginning the learners were reluctant to speak in English because of fear of making mistakes. They were put in groups and when they started talking with their peers they gradually became confident and went on talking and eventually got fluency of speech.

Since language is not fully learnt within limited time therefore, most of the students had gained fluency though not accuracy but it can be assumed and in fact believed that they will get full command on English when they keep talking in the target language.

They are also encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities in the college like: debates, comparing, speeches and other activities where English is used as target language.

Their understanding of English has helped them in understanding other subjects as well. They are of the view that understanding of English has facilitated them in understanding other subject whether of natural sciences, social sciences or commerce.

They can speak fluently without even thinking in their native or first language as they know the contextual usage of the grammar structure and vocabulary.

Functional usage of grammar should be applied throughout the process and instead of telling 'how' to use focus should be put on 'why and when' and in which context that particular structure should be used.

English teachers should act like mentors and role models. They should correspond in English inside the classrooms and outside the

classrooms. This way students can also improve and enhance their target language with correct pronunciation and accent.

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