



INNOVATIVE PRACTICES IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Article information

Received:02/1/2021
Accepted: 20/1/2021
Published online:21/1/2021
doi: [10.33329/ijelr.8.1.25](https://doi.org/10.33329/ijelr.8.1.25)

ABSTRACT

There is a great need of new teaching methods and pedagogies to meet the global challenges. Teaching and learning is all about creating an environment and providing opportunities for better learning. Each child collects and interprets information in a different way. Learning based on fear results into stress and panic. Therefore the teachers of English should manifest the behaviors, attitudes and emotions of students in learning process. In this process of learning, we need to change the teacher's role from a tutor to a facilitator. Deeper and integrated learning can be achieved by using different techniques. These techniques can be used for complex and complicated contents. It will also help students to generate their interest and eagerness in a conducive learning environment.

Keywords: facilitator, pedagogy, techniques

1. Introduction

The social and Cultural composition of present student is completely different than what we had before 30 years. In today's scenario the traditional methods turns inefficient. The time has come where we need the dynamics of diversified teaching and learning process by using some innovative practices so that better learning of language takes place. Only providing conducive learning environment is not enough but also understanding the student and developing the rapport is also equally important. As stated by Dimitrie Thanasoulas, "The efficiency of learning is influenced by the environment created by the teacher, and the respective approaches to teaching that they use. It is also apparent that different students have different learning requirements; hence, it is imperative that the teachers identify with the respective needs of their students."¹ The present paper focuses on using different innovative practices for language teaching. The methods we shall use are different for different situations. Bertrand Russell, while talking about methods of teaching says, "More important than the curriculum is the question of the methods of teaching and the spirit in which teaching is given."² In traditional teaching learning process students become merely passive receptacles of information from teachers and the textbook. Electrifying teaching learning environment and experiential learning is the need of the hour to hold the attention and interest of the students. The present endeavor places a pressure on the traditional models of language learning. These methods will help us to present amazing opportunities to redesign the way we teach and learn language.

2. Problem: In a traditional teaching method students are tend to become more passive listeners.

Method: Shadow Teaching

There is a need for the teachers to channelize students' fast thought processing brains. The concept shadow teaching benefits children with special needs i.e. slow learners. The teacher allots the topic to students beforehand for devising the topic. In case of any doubts or facing problem in comprehension, the students can discuss the topic with teacher. Students avail the liberty and use their own method of explanation which is accompanied with a question and answer session. Throughout this process the teacher plays the role of an observer and towards the end of the discussion teacher can ask open ended question to silent listeners. And instead of a tutor, can play a role of facilitator.

Benefit: This helps to improve the academic performance, psychological skills and interdependence of such children. This method will help an average performing student to build up his/her confidence and create interest. This activity will motivate students who are initially hesitant and will improve their academic performance too.

3. Problem: In this era of growing technology students have an inclination for electronic gadgets with less scope and interest for reading which results into lack of conceptual knowledge.

Solution: Read and Grow

The technique Read & Grow is a unique idea to propagate reading and developing language skills among young generation. A book, novel / play/ story is provided for reading. In between the students are asked to predict the text using clues .The next step is asking them to create questions about the main idea, message or plot of the text. Towards the end ask them to state the part that confused them or was difficult to comprehend. The process not only consists decoding of the text but also develops and reinforces reading comprehension skills for better language learning.

Benefit: Reading gives wings to their imagination and creativity and also enhances vocabulary. This will help them to develop a habit of interacting with the text and will facilitate the teacher to monitor their understanding. Though answering is a skill, even asking a question reflects better understanding and comprehension.

4. Problem: Present students focus on grade sheet, rather than long term learning, resulting into lack of conceptual knowledge. Hence, sometimes they face problem in interpreting difficult concepts.

Solution: Mind Mapping

To make students understand complex topics and to inculcate long term learning, we can make use of mind mapping method. The teacher provides specific content to the student in which he has to find a key concept/ word and has to break it down into sub categories using branches, colour and other visual support. Mind Mapping is a visual thinking tool that helps for structuring information, for better analysis, comprehension, synthesis and for recalling information. By breaking things down in smaller parts we can present complex ideas in simpler manner.

Benefit: As mind mapping is the mirror of your own radiant thought, presented in graphical form helps to unlock the dynamic potential of student brain. This leads to long term learning, improve memory and learning skills.

In a nutshell, teaching and learning is all about creating an environment and providing opportunities for better learning .Above methods will pave a way to change a teacher's roll from a tutor to a facilitator. Shadow Teaching, Read & Grow, and Mind Mapping will help in achieving deeper and integrated learning. With these methods complex content are conveyed effectively. It will help to develop a conducive learning environment by generating interest and eagerness. The ultimate output is making individuals feel unique in their own unique way and helping them being unique themselves.

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