

Importance of ABL Techniques in the Changing Learning Scenario in India

Abstract

Roger Asham rightly states that "As a hawk flieth not with one wing even so a man reacheth not to excellence with one tongue" Moving further, Pendergrass (2001) also emphasized that English is an essential tool in engineering education & therefore "integrating English into engineering is an effective way to improve the performance of students in oral & written communication".

This paper discusses the possibility of activities that can be used in communicative English grammar or classrooms for learners. Activities can create curiosity in learners & this will lead to an interest towards learning communicative English grammar. The activity based learning methods have advantages as it appeals to a wide range of different senses & also appeals to individuals varied learning styles. It makes easy to learn English for communication point of view because acceptability of English as a second language in India from the view point of its utility has become rightly unquestionable. To cope up with the fast growing global economic arrangements what seems essential for a person to acquire is a workable knowledge of the medium of its communication.

Through different types of activities one can easily learn English & also communicate with others.

Keywords: Activity Based Learning, Skills, Phobia in Learners, Importance Advantages of ABL.

Introduction

Acceptability of English as a second language in India from the view point of its utility has become rightly unquestionable. But what is distressing is that this language has its access only to the privileged classes & what is even more distressing is that the number of these classes is very less. If India has to compete with the other developing countries of the world in matters of technological industrial and other advancements then it will have to ascertain for all its citizens the learning of this formidable means of world communication.

In the present education system, the position of English as a global language is being strengthened day by day with the advent of modern communication systems & the concept of globalization gaining ground in the recent past existing learning theories such as behaviourism, cognitive & constructivism, has been in vogue before technology like computer & internet had come now. The role of the teacher now is of a facilitator, innovative methods are employed to make learning more interesting. The activity based learning methods allow the learners learn in an optimum environment as Nunan (1995) has described activity.

Based Learning as a range of work plans which have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning from the simple or brief exercise to more complex or lengthy activities.

An Overview of Activity Based Learning Methodology (ABL)

In a native or first language situation a child learns to speak his mother tongue fluently without any knowledge of grammar or the technicalities of it with age, he builds his power of expression depending upon the vocabulary which he acquires through constant contact & experience with his mother tongue.

To create an interactive atmosphere a language teacher can use varied activities in the classroom & this will make teaching & learning of language easy & spontaneous. In ABL method the learners have the opportunity to construct their own conceptualization & find solutions to problems. In ABL method the teacher acts as a facilitator of learning who creates an environment for learners to question exchange personal views & critically evaluate other views & ideas. Here the role of the teacher in activity based learning is to develop the strategy of education.

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In ABL method the learners have an opportunity for interactive learning, participate in educational objectives collaborate with others to develop good organizational skills, demonstrate enthusiasm for seeking new knowledge.

The learner is expected to develop skills & be prepared to deliver extempore skills which will help him in pursuing courses of advanced proficiency without adequate help from the teacher. Different activities can be identified & can be exposed to speaking skills there by developing their confidence levels, independent learning, enhances creativity, flexibility assertiveness, leadership, team work which demonstrate a practical integration of knowledge, skills & aptitude.

Advantages of ABL Method

It helps learners to focus more & increases attention & create an optimistic environment to respond to the educational settings for this different activities. Self study method & self learning gives real opportunities where the benefits of the teaching learning situations in their future lead to the strengthening of the independence.

Brainstorming activities give students the confidence to believe in themselves & their ability to speak english independently.

Phobia in Learners

Learning of English Grammar Creates Phobia in Learners in most of the Indian schools with the teaching of English language. One is made to learn the basics of English grammar first here. This exercise exerts so much pressure on one's mind that one develops the phobia of using the language incorrectly; if at all one would use the language. One begins to hesitate & finally accepts one's failure to learn the language. What has to be understood here is that the "prime need of most learners is not for a theoretical or analytical knowledge of target language but for an ability to understand and be understood in that language within the context & constraints of peculiar language using circumstances"

Apart from this group of learners who become afraid of learning English language & adopt a hostile attitude towards learning it, there are others, who have learned to produce grammatically correct sentences but are not able to perform a simple communicative task. These structurally competent & communicatively incompetent learners know the rules of grammar but lack the ability to be appropriate as well as fluent. Perhaps the reason may be that their mind fails to draw the right coordination between the rules grammar already present in the mind & the content of speech.

Conclusion

The needs of the learner are changing day by day. Technology & traditional way of learning has to be clubbed to get desired result. The theoretical approach should not be adopted.

For language learning Learners should enjoy, understand for complete learning to take place. When learners are a part of learning process the results will be good. The learning of any language requires constant practice. Patience in a teacher is essential & especially when he is teaching a foreign language.

Reading skills have its own importance in language learning. It can be defined as a "decoding process", but is not of much value if it is not followed by comprehension. Instead of concentrating on grammar all the time. We as teachers should, attempt to engage the student's language activities. Similarly writing is also important for language learning good writing is an expression of clear & coherent communication can be achieved through proper sequencing & organization of ideas. Such writing skills could be developed by encouraging the students to write description of persons, things, place & events through social & friendly letters.

Teachers of English language should make special efforts & adopt communicative approach to facilitate learning for both type of learners. Communicative language teaching (CLT) advocates "the extensive use of Role Play, Simulation, Dialogues, Group Work & language games techniques & the focus of teaching is on linguistic appropriacy, fluency & feasibility of expression.

Samuel Jhonson Observes : "nobody can be taught faster than he can learn. The speed of the horseman must be limited by the power of his horse." Samuel Jhonson also speaks of language as "the dress of thought" And also Sir H.Davy who elaborates stating that "language is not only the vehicle of thought; it is a great & efficient instrument in thinking".

Reference

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