

Strategies Under Communicative Approach for Teaching of English Language

Paper Submission: 01/12/2021, Date of Acceptance: 10/12/2021, Date of Publication: 11/12/2021

Abstract

This paper focuses on strategies under the communicative approach used by the teachers in teaching English in Odia medium secondary schools. Communicative approach has been commenced in secondary schools, in most cases pupils are not given enough time to use the language in classrooms as the teachers put more emphasis on teaching grammar rather than using different strategies of communicative approach in classrooms, which would help the pupils to become competent in speaking, reading and writing. Various strategies under the communicative approach of teaching English are discussed in this paper.

Keyword: Strategies, Communicative Approach, English Language Teaching, Language Skills, Secondary School

Introduction

Communicative approach has been discussed by many scholars like Widdowson (1978) and Littlewood (2013) as the best method for teaching of English language in Secondary schools. The introduction of communicative approach in the secondary schools of Odisha aimed at helping pupils to be competent in English. English language has been taught in the secondary schools of Odisha for many years now, but the capitulation in proficiency is a major problem mainly in government schools. Though a communicative approach has been introduced in secondary schools, in most cases pupils are not given enough time to use the language in classrooms as the teachers put more importance on teaching grammar rather than using different strategies of communicative approach in classrooms, which would help the pupils to become competent in speaking, reading and writing.

This article focused on strategies of communicative approach used by the teachers in teaching of English in Odia medium secondary schools. The effective use of strategies under communicative approach helps the students to have confidence in speaking; reading as well as writing English language, also the language skills acquired through such strategies make the pupils to comfortably communicate with others at home, at school or in working places.

Communicative Approach

The introduction of communicative approach in Odia medium secondary schools aimed at facilitating the pupils to be competent in English. Strategies under communicative approach used by the teachers in teaching English enables the pupils to have confidence in speaking, reading as well as writing English language. Communicative competence was developed by Hymes in 1972 in order to build pupils' communicative competence.

Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 90) describe Communicative Language Teaching as "An approach to foreign or second language teaching which emphasizes that the goal of language learning is communicative competence and it seeks to make meaningful communication and language use a focus of all classroom activities".

Pascal (2017) puts emphasis on debates, morning speech, pair/group work, the use of question and answers, storytelling, modeling, class presentation, dramatization, teaching vocabulary and pronunciation, comprehension questions and the use of teaching aids are some of the important strategies of communicative approach which the teachers use in teaching English, that are so influential in enhancing pupils' proficiency in English language.

"Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques" (Brown 1994:245).

Aim of the Study

The objective of this paper is to study the strategies adopted by English teachers for teaching English.

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Anthology : The Research

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| StrategiesOf Communicative Approach | Communicative approach is mostly student-centered rather than teacher-centered. The role of the teacher in English class is to lead communication between pupils via the effective learning task. Generally, pupils are allowed to have interpersonal communication, to exchange and share their contributions with each other. Some important strategies of communicative approach are discussed below. |
| Pre-instructional activities | Pre-instructional activities are the admirable way to get the pupils engaged with the content before starting the class. Pupils gain knowledge of the topic prior to engaging in the class discussion. |
| Repeat and Rephrase technique | The repeat and re-phrase technique is used in the classroom to promote, achieve, ensure understanding of a particular topic or question. For example, if pupils do not understand the question "what is the meaning of an adjective?" The teacher will help either by repeating or re-phrasing the questions to promote application of knowledge of the pupils. The question can be re-phrased as "what does an adjective do?" or asked in inverted interrogative form which helps the pupil to better understand the meaning of the posed question. The teacher exposes the pupils to new vocabulary by using this technique that can be connected with old one to acquire a meaning and the use of old vocabulary to form a re-phrased question to acquire new and better understanding. |
| Peer teaching | Peer teaching is an instructional strategy in which advanced learners teach other pupils, in which the first one is an expert and the second, is a novice, who is relatively slower in comprehension. Peer teaching is not a new concept. It can be traced back to Aristotle's use of archons or the pupil leaders and to the letters of Seneca the Younger. |
| Visual aids, realia, maps, pictures and multimedia | Visual aids, realia, maps, pictures, multimedia etc are useful in that they can provide a better grab of the concept to the pupils, than any other word. No matter at what level the pupils are, they can understand the new words or concepts. Language class becomes monotonous if repetition and writing is just followed. But, by using different teaching aids, the class not only remains focused, but also interesting. Multimedia can also be used to show language in practical use and audio samples can also be used in teaching sounds of letters of words. |
| Dictation | The aim of dictation is not to disrespect the learners by telling him what they have not mastered. It is only a diagnostic practice to the advantage of the teacher, who is in need of knowing where to reinforce the pupils. The aim of dictation is not only to increase the speed of writing but also it is an effort to develop the listening and writing skills, and helps the pupils in attentive listening, helps in distinguishing sounds, helps fix concept of punctuation, reinforcement of structures and vocabulary item already learnt and assist in self-evaluation. |
| Group and Pair work | One of the best ways to motivate the pupils to participate in the lesson is to use "pair work" or "group work" correctly. Language is best learnt through collaboration and communication among pupils. Research on second language acquisition has shown that students have differences in mastering skills. While one pupil is good in drawing and painting another can be good in expressing ideas verbally, a third student can be good at role play and imitation. Thus, involving all pupils in group work and pair work mostly contributes to language development. "Communicative Approach allows language learners to express their views through collaborative activities undertaken during classes" Alamri (2018). |
| Peer Correction /Feedback | Feedback plays a significant role in the process of writing. Feedback means giving comments and suggestions which help the writer edit his/her composition. Pupils can know what kind of mistakes they made through teachers' and peers' feedback and how to cope with those mistakes. Thus, if pupils can get "productive feedback", they can correct their own mistakes and avoid making similar mistakes in the later writing tasks. It is wise for the teachers to ensure students' responsibilities for their own writing performance and their peers' ones because of the strong effect of peer feedback on students' review as well as their |

writing skill. Thus, peer correction/feedback helps in improving writing skill in students.

Using Role Play, Dramas, Stories, and Songs in English teaching

Role-play is a way of bringing different situations from real life into the classroom. In role-play students perform. The situation is fixed but they make up the exact words to say as they go along with the activity. Role play provides practice to the learners to communicate in English. Drama is a technique that teaches the learners not only to transfer information from written form to spoken form, but also to practice the speech from the different characters. Dramatization enables the learners to memorize his lines and speak them confidently with proper accent and pronunciation. The student learns to place weak or strong stress at the right syllable and use the proper tone.

Stories are a great source of language acquisition technique. It is grounded in the learners' ability to create a story from their personal experience. In creating stories some issues are revealed such as: (a) fluency, (b) whether the learners have enough language to create the story, and (c) accuracy.

An enjoyable way of learning to say English words and sentences is through songs, chants and rhymes. Songs are able to teach vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and community building because songs work as a great motivational force. Teachers can elicit pupils' ideas about the song through activities such as mind maps, prediction, word splashes etc. Pupils discuss questions such as the feelings in the song, what will happen next, etc. and may write and present how the song makes them feel.

Use of mother tongue in ESL classroom

Use of L1 (mother-tongue) in the English classroom is a debatable issue. The general assumption that has prevailed for quite a long time that English ought to be learnt through English and not by the use of mother tongue (L1) is no longer valid. ELT professionals and several authors in the past wonder how pupils can acquire the target language if they continually fall back on their L1 and that L1 has no important role in ESL teaching; too much use of L1 might cripple learners to valuable input in the L2. But the arguments against use of L1 in ESL classrooms are not always based on empirical research and could not provide adequate reasons for avoiding it. Consequently some teaching methods and trends supporting the use of L1 as a helpful teaching and learning tool have emerged

Group Discussion

Group discussion is an integral part of a healthy classroom. They are necessary for creating motivation and interest, building background on specific issues and giving pupils a forum for exploring and expressing new ideas and information. But second language learners always try to avoid this exercise.

Role of language games

Language can also be learnt through play-way methods. Language games have both fun and excitement to serve the pedagogical purpose. It must be noted that language games would fail in their purpose, if they are not properly planned in advance and used methodically and carefully. It can introduce a healthy competition among the pupils in English classes. They are useful for improving the pupil's knowledge of grammar, vocabulary and language skills.

Dictionary work

A dictionary is a book specially prepared to give a list of words in alphabetical order with their meaning, pronunciation, derivatives, usage etc. For independent learning students must be trained in the use of a dictionary. Ability to consult a dictionary does not simply mean the ability to locate a word very quickly.

Home work

Giving homework by the teacher to students after teaching is over is an age-old process. Teachers should not overburden the pupils with homework. It should be reasonable and age appropriate. In elementary schools homework should be given lightly. It can be increased in secondary school on a sliding scale as the learners' progress through the school.

Reading technique

Reading is an important activity in our everyday life and a skill which has to be developed in learners, earlier in school. Reading is mainly a decoding process which is not of much value if it is not followed by comprehension. The encoder encodes the message while the decoder decodes it and understands the same.

Anthology : The Research

We read various types of materials in many ways to fulfill the purpose. There are many genuine grounds for reading. The single initial stage of reading is recognizing words in prints; however learners must have to be taught to read entire texts and not just words and sentences in isolation. The four main techniques of reading are:

- Scanning** Scanning involves glancing rapidly through the text to find out some specific piece of information or to locate information. This skill, like skimming, involves the ability to reject or pass over what one believes to be irrelevant. An example of scanning is looking for numbers in a telephone directory.
- Skimming** Skimming is sometimes referred to as gist reading in which we go through the text quickly in order to get the gist or the central idea of the content, understand its organization and comprehend the tone or intention of the writer. The reader does not look for minute details but frames an overall impression of the text.
- Intensive reading** Intensive reading involves approaching a text under the close guidance of a teacher or through a task that forces the pupil to pay attention to the text. It also involves a profound and detailed understanding of the text not only in terms of 'what' it says but also 'how' it says. An intensive reading lesson is concerned with developing reading strategies-judgment reasoning, interpretation, appreciation etc in the students.
- Extensive reading** Extensive reading is the non-detailed reading of text for pleasure and not necessarily for minute details. It is also a fluency activity in which the learners can read on their own. Example of this type of reading is reading an article in a newspaper or periodicals or journals or reading a full length book. Extensive reading can lessen the teachers' burden if he encourages the pupils without his help
- Conclusion** Teachers are responsible for facilitating the teaching and learning process by advising the pupils on what to do in the classroom. Communicative strategies enhance proficiency in English among the pupils. Thus, teachers should adopt the right strategies for developing communicative competence among the pupils. Language is a means of communication and communicative approach may enable the pupils to communicate effectively in real life situation, and also fulfill the actual goal of teaching English language to improve pupils' communicative competence
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