

Teaching Methods Practice in English Medium School of Dhaka

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Teaching Methods Practice in English Medium School of Dhaka

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Abstract

This report presents the experience of using different approaches in the class room to help beginner level students learn English as a second language (English). It focuses on the way in which the surroundings of a learner makes him/her motivated or unmotivated to learn a second language and evaluates how important is for a learner to be exposed to different teaching techniques. This report includes class experiences and different methods that were followed by the teacher. The institution that I worked in was Maple leaf International School which is an English medium school. The classes that I took were play group and nursery with the age level of four to five. This report also includes some possible solutions to the problems that I faced during my internship.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

No one can deny the fact that during the past decades English has been playing a crucial role in all spheres of life for people around the world. Globalization has made English an important factor for the development of all countries in terms of economy, information technology, politics, education and cultures (Carter & Nunan, 2001). In many countries, in addition to their own languages, English is used as a second language (ESL). Acquiring English varies from person to person and age to age. It is believed that young children are more likely to adapt to sound systems and acquire phonological patterns of a new language than adults (Lee & Azman, 2004). In order to implement the suggested teaching methods effectively and successfully in an EFL primary classroom, a basic knowledge of child development and learning needs to be insightfully related to EFL pedagogy.

This report tries to explain what different methods an English medium school follows to teach the students English and how different methods like CLT, GTM or Audio Lingual actually help the students to learn English as a second language in Bangladeshi context where Bengali is the first language of all people.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

English language education is developing constantly. In order to implement the new rules the teachers need to have a clear idea about the language itself, children's psychology and what techniques help them the most in order to learn the language. The age level of my students were between four to five years so this chapter reviews and presents the current understanding of second language learning for students and teachers, communicative language teaching, Audio lingual method and Grammar translation method.

Second Language Learning For Students and Teachers:

Children are able to learn a second language effectively when they have specific purposes for learning the language, and when they are provided with supportive learning conditions, sufficient motivation, plentiful time for learning, and adequate exposure to meaningful input (Moon, 2000).

Teaching children is not simple or straightforward. Rather, it is a complex task that needs skilful teachers who can understand children's worlds (Cameron, 2001). Primary school teachers should be more careful towards their students. As Moon (2000) states young children like to talk and experiment with language, interpret the meaning, imitate chunks of language, and join pleasant activities. Love is an important factor for a teacher because positive attitude can bring tremendous change in teaching young children. It opens the door to friendly interaction which brings a secure atmosphere in the classroom. A good teacher for a young second language class needs to possess the important fundamental qualities, such as love, language proficiency, and teaching proficiency (Cameron, 2001).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT):

Communicative language teaching (CLT) has evolved as a means of addressing the need to use language as a communicative medium in the globalised world. It has shifted focus to the use of language rather than the concentration on form (Harmer, 2007). The primary goal of CLT is to enable learners to use the language appropriately in real communication (Richards & Rogers, 2001; Gebhard, 2006). To be able to communicate successfully, the learners need to be equipped with four main communicative competences.

It is essential that communicative activities provided in an English class be meaningful for the students and to be embedded with communicative purpose. Students eagerly take part in communication when they have a desire to communicate something. Harmer (2007) stated that if students are involved in meaning-focused communicative tasks, then language learning will take care of itself" (p. 69). The communicative language teaching approach can be seen as having two versions: a weak version and a strong version (Holliday, 1994). The weak version focuses on learners practicing the use of language by following the models presented to them. In the weak version of CLT language models and communicative conditions are provided through three main phases: presentation, practice and production. In first two phases learners learn the forms and meanings of the language through the language models and then practice the language through different types of drills before they integrate these skills into communicative situations that are provided in the production phase.

Audio Lingual Method:

Audio lingual method came from Skinner's behaviorist theory. This method mainly focuses on conversational proficiency on any foreign language and its behavior. Audio lingual method uses

repetition, replacement and question answer drill to students speaking skill especially vocabularies. The philosophy behind behaviorist models is that learning takes place through interaction with the world through exposure to examples, positive and negative stimuli, and then trial and error rather than from any inner faculty (Hughes, 2002: 17).

Grammar Translation Method:

A grammar-translation method is a effective methods that focuses on reading and translating the sentences with accurate grammatical rules to acquire English properly as second language. This method was also used long time ago to teach other languages like Latin and Greek as a second language. After that it was not recommended for a while until it has been revived in the 19th century by German as a preferable method again. Schöffner (2002) lists the following benefits of translation: “(a) improve verbal agility, (b) expand the students’ vocabulary in L2, (c) develop their style, (d) improve their understanding of how languages work, (e) consolidate L2 structures for active use, and (f) monitor and improve the comprehension of L2” (p. 125).

CHAPTER THREE

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE-OBSERVATIONS

I started my class on fourteenth August 2016 till October 2016. The experience of these three months was exciting and challenging indeed. The students were four to five years old so the methods were not traditional because they had just started to read and write. They were more comfortable to learn from watching videos or watching their teacher imitate something or from listening to songs rather than reading books. They had English, Bengali, Math and Conversation. Conversation was all about teaching them the basic things like their parents name, country's name, their own full name, national flower, fruit etc. Every week they had short exams and after one month they had a semi final exam. Teachers gave home work on Thursdays so that students could do them over the weekend. Initially I had to observe a few classes and later on I was allowed teach some classes too. Every class had two teachers to control and monitor twenty five to thirty students in each section.

First and Second Week:

In my very first class I observed the whole class from eight to eleven thirty am. It was a nursery class with twenty minutes for each subject and they usually do Bengali, English, Math's and conversation in English. As I get to know that it is a class of thirty students which made me felt little bit anxious and difficult because they are only five years old. After entering into the class Sultana miss who is the class teacher of that section Blueberry without any delay introduced me. Then she started her class. At the very beginning of class Miss Sultana taught them how to pray and how to sing national anthem. Then the students began their daily activity like writing A-Z

and one to hundred. I noticed her to monitoring the class and helped students with different activities. If they made any mistake, the teacher corrected and clarified why they were wrong in a very fun way so that they can learn it while enjoying it as well. I amazed to see his policy how she interacts with his students, how he controlling over such big class. I saw all the students were active.

Third and Fourth Week:

My focus is how the learn English through different activities during their school time and after taking the classes I found audio lingual was one of the methods that they were following to teach the students English. When they were playing or in their break time they are given the chance to watch different age appropriate videos which are helping them to learn different topics through audio lingual method.

Fifth and Sixth Week:

There are so many activities like watching television where they see and learn how to pronounce alphabets and how to greet people. Another helpful activity I think is doing the oral activity where they are taught how to deal different situation in daily life in English and the teacher also acts sometimes to make the topic clear. Till now the classes that I have observed or took followed two different methods and those are Audio Lingual and CLT methods.

Seventh and Eighth Week:

While taking classes one thing I notice very much is that the new vocabularies or conversations that they are learning everyday is through practical things. When they are watching how to brush your teeth everyday or how to pronounce A for Apple B for Balloon in the television in their

Tiffin time that stays in their memory for a longer period of time. The vocabularies that they are learning became easy for them to catch if they watch it through a song or cartoon form. Another way I found out that they really like is to do draw and color books. While doing that they are learning new vocabularies too because when they are drawing a ball and then color it, then later on remembers that B is for ball that he or she has done in the class.

Ninth and Tenth Week:

In my ninth week I was able to take their monthly exam. Exam happened both in nursery and play group. Basically they had to revise everything that they were learning so far and the teacher will ask them something and make them write something in their class test copies. The exam was divided into two parts- one was vocabulary part and another one was written part. While taking their vocabulary tests one thing that I noticed was that, the things that they learned through watching something or by drawing something they were very much comfortable to say those things or they remember those things clearly and it was even easier for them to do the vocabulary part.

Eleventh and Twelfth Week:

In play group the syllabus were less than nursery classes so the activities were less. But in case of nursery classes the students had to learn 20 new vocabularies. In my opinion it was bit tough for them as they were only five years old. The best process they learnt the vocabularies were when they wrote it down several times and said it out loud in the class with the teacher. So when the repetitive method was combined with the audio lingual method the result was excellent. The students were very much comfortable with this process too. Learning English is not only about the methods that the teachers were applying, it is also about motivation. How the students are

motivated is also an important part of learning. Motivation either could help the students to learn more or it could do total opposite at the same time. Motivation works totally different when it comes to students who are four and five years old only and each and every student has different personality. Some of them were very talkative and some of them were very shy and introvert. In order to apply the methods to make them teach English teacher needs to focus on their personality first in my opinion and according to that they can use different methods.

Maple Leaf International School is one of the most prestigious English medium schools in Dhaka city. It follows the British curriculum. It believes in commitment to academic excellence, intellectual growth, art, athletics and community service. My internship was very exciting and challenging at the same time because it was my first ever experience as a teacher. After all the observation and classes that I took I can say that the methods that they used were very much beneficial to the students.

CHAPTER FOUR

IMPLEMENTATION OF THEORIES INTO PRACTICE

I worked in a school for three months as a trainee teacher for gaining experience to take a class in real life. In this three month I observed and took few classes. This implementation part is going to show how the methods that I learned in my courses are implemented in real life classrooms and especially which of the methods are being used the most in these classrooms.

I was assigned for play group and nursery. Both play group and nursery has four sections and they are named after different flowers and fruits. Both classes have English, Bengali, Math and Art as their subjects. The age group of the students is between 3-4 years old so the method that the teachers used a lot was audio lingual method and CLT.

Their aim is to develop children's love for English and positive attitudes towards language learning. The teachers created such an environment so that they can learn the language in an English-speaking environment which helps them to become confident users of English. Teachers use fun and interactive communicative activities such as games, songs, chants and stories. They try to engage children in structured and free play activities to practice what they have learnt in class. All the lessons are theme-based and focused on reading and communication through a range of activities including art and craft, show and tell, role-plays and experiments. Children often are motivated to work in small groups with the teacher, allowing the teacher to give each child more attention and help. Children also get group time with classmates who encourage development of social skills and use of English in a natural setting. Basically the activities in the classrooms activities support personal, social, emotional and physical development, problem

solving, reasoning and numeracy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Playgroup and nursery kids are very tender so they learn best through pictures, videos, sounds, music rather than books. But sometimes GTM which is grammar translation method were used too in classes and it occurs to me that this method was successful too.

Another main factor that I noticed for making class effective is active student engagement.

Children generally learn through the process of interactions between them and the surrounding environment. In order to engage students in classroom activities, the classroom needs to have

these factors- good relationships between teachers and students, effective organization of students and resources, effective communication between teachers and students, appropriate support for students' language learning, and interesting and stimulating learning materials and resources (Moon, 2000). Using interesting materials for classroom activities is another

important aspect that engages students in learning activities and assists them to learn language.

Besides traditional materials such as textbooks, workbooks, story books, videos, cassettes, pictures and real-life artifacts, recently, computer technology makes teaching and learning materials more interesting (Hanison-Smith, 2001). CLT can be implemented correctly when the teacher have good knowledge over English so that they can communicate with the students easily and can make them communicate with each other. In play group the students were 3 years old and had less studies so there was not that much student talk but in nursery class the age level was 4 years so the students tends to get the language more and were being able o communicate more and the use of CLT was more in nursery level classes. Both the nursery and play group level students tend to love watching videos of rhymes and educational videos so the audio lingual method was applied there.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATION

Overall observation leads to some problems that I thought was in the class and some actions could be taken as a part to improve the classes even more. Young learners are very unstable and get bored easily. So teachers can change the seating arrangements once in a while. Teacher should make the class more interesting by starting the class with a story and tell them that if they remain good throughout the class the teacher will tell them the end of the story later when the class ends. By doing this the students remain more focused throughout the class I think because they are young learners and they love to learn through stories. Seating arrangements can be done in such manners so that the teacher can move through the classes and observe the whole class at the same time. Seating arrangements are also beneficial if there are any less attentive students in the class. So the teacher can make the less attentive student's seat closer to the teacher. Sometimes different seating arrangements can be fun to, like circle and horse shoe. Children's learning and thinking advancement happen through the procedure of cooperation amongst them and the encompassing condition and other individuals in different social settings as clarified by Vygotsky's hypothesis (Berk and Winsler, 1995). Great connections in a classroom make students feel secure and certain. Such a positive environment urges students to participate in learning exercises and challenges them to go for broke in exploring different avenues regarding new dialect to associate with their companions or instructors (Savignon, 1983). In such a classroom, the educator is patient and gives adequate time to student's to complete their exercises. If the students confront a trouble with direction, the teacher can clarify again in various ways or by utilizing activities or visuals. Other than classroom climate,

suitably arranging students into class exercises is another method for capturing their attention. These exercises can be sorted out through combine work and gathering work. Moon (2000) states that combine work and gathering work are powerful when students are arranged deliberately, and when they comprehend an objective, methods and results of the exercises. Utilizing fascinating materials for classroom exercises is another critical angle that draws in students in learning exercises and helps them to learn new language. Other than customary materials, for example, course books, exercise manuals, story books, recordings, tapes, pictures and genuine curios, as of late, PC innovation makes educating and learning materials additionally intriguing (Hanison-Smith, 2001). Kids can work with multi-media material, for example, PC based dialect exercises, so they are offered more true contribution than utilizing other customary materials. The utilization of materials and learning exercises will be best in a class of youthful kids when they give suitable contribution to understudies, clear strategies and results, and an unmistakable part for the educator (Nunan, 1989).

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The methods that the teachers were following most of the time were CLT and Audio-lingual method but sometimes there was use of GTM (grammar translations method) which were in some case effective too. In conclusion I would like to state that the school that I did my internship was an English medium school and most of them were from very well maintained family that means they have the luxury to watch TV and have the excess to internet which influenced their speaking and acquiring English as a second language tremendously. The environment plays a huge deal learning any language. Some of the students even use English in their home from very early age and heard their parents and other members of the family use English too. So not only the methods were helping the students to learn English but also the environment played a huge role. Usually Bengali medium school's method differs from English medium school. English medium schools tries to follow CLT most of the time and Audio lingual method with some help with GTM. But in Bengali medium schools they mostly follow GTM and hardly follow CLT or Audio lingual method.

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