

# Upskilling Mechanism for Second Language Learners

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## **Abstract: -**

Learning English requires a lot of practice and the necessary environment. Hence, keeping this in mind a single strategy will not suffice wherein every student has a different learning capability. In lieu of this a set of standard mechanism needs to be adopted for enhancing this language for speakers of other languages.

## **Introduction: -**

It would be a bliss for the learners of English if they reside in English speaking environment. This environment put the learners into continuous practice for the language they have acquired. Some of the learners continuously practice this language at work. However, some only get an opportunity in their language classes only. We know as children the native language we have learnt without any input from the books. As a child we have imbibed our native language through continuous exposure and practice. The same method of procuring is somewhat tedious for second language learners.

In order to make the second language learners well equipped with English certain methodologies need to be adopted. These methodologies need to be in practice with training activities designed around them only then the results will be fruitful. There are multiple factors that influence the language learners e.g. age and the psychology of language learning. A list of methodologies that may be adopted are specified below: -

## **Grammar Translation Technique:**

This method involves the translation from the native language into the target language i.e. English. In this the learners are trained in their native language with a minimal usage of target language. Learners are skilled for vocabulary in isolated words and a detailed explanation of the grammar is given. Reading of tough texts begins early. Pronunciation was paid less heed along with the context of the text. Learners came across exercises of translation from the target language disconnected sentences to their native language.

In this technique the teacher gives learner the exercises to translate into the target language post explanation of the grammar rules. However, the thing that needs to be taken utmost care is that the teacher themselves know the native language.

## **The Direct Method:**

This technique involved a handful of oral interaction for second language learners with nil focus on translation to first and second language. It involved the training in target language with more focus on everyday vocabulary and sentences. It implemented modelling and practice through oral communication

exercises in question and answer format. Learners imbibed vocabulary through demonstration of objects and pictures. Prime focus was given to pronunciation and grammar through speech and listening comprehension.

### **Audio-lingual Method:**

This technique as the name suggests involves repetition of sentences enabling the learners to understand the correct usage of language. This involves training of words and phrases in a repetitive format and the material is given in a dialogue format. Learners are motivated to speak in target language aiming at an error free pronunciation. Usage of language labs, visual aids and tapes is done to meet the requirement. The trainer needs to design the activities in the form of dialogues, role play etc which involves the usage of communication in dialogue format.

### **Communicative Language Learning:**

In this method prominence is given to learning basis communicative interaction in the target language. Learning of the language function happens through interaction in the form of agreeing, inviting, suggesting etc. The teacher engages the learners in variety of activities like role plays, simulation etc. This method is applicable to all the four skills of language. The CLT framework mainly focus on learner centred teaching, cooperative learning, interactive learning and whole language education.

### **Community Language Learning:**

This approach mainly focuses on student centric learning. This learning is quite flexible from a student standpoint as they have the opportunity to choose the topic in regards to the language. Since the students play an active role the teacher may intervene if any assistance is required. Here teacher play the role of the counsellor promoting interpersonal learning. Generally, in this methodology the students are made to sit in a circle around the tape recorder to listen to the recording. The students are given an opportunity to record their sentences whenever they feel comfortable. This activity is continued till the time all the students in a group have recorded their conversation. The students are also requested to share their observation about the conversation where in teacher also participates for sharing the areas of improvement in aspect of grammar.

### **The Silent Way:**

In this technique the teacher's input is to the minimum. The students get maximum opportunity to speak and enhance enabling them to come across new sentence construction in a conversation apart from the one being taught. Physical objects are used in context to the language learning making learning a simplified approach in the form of problem solving.

### **Suggestopaedia:**

This technique aims at creating a comfortable environment where music plays a central role. Previous lesson is reviewed which is turn is followed by the presentation and discussion on a new language. Involvement of music gives them a real time experience. The learners are asked to imagine themselves in an environment basis the music and in turn they are asked to create dialogues basis their assumption. This involves free flow of ideas through a relaxing ambience.

### **The Lexical Approach:**

This technique involves the usage of words and phrases which in turn form the foundation of language acquisition. The central focus is paid to communication rather than grammar. In this technique the learners are provided with the words and the phrases by the teacher which is tested in the form of questions designed around them. In this technique much emphasis is given to the receptive skills i.e. listening and idioms play a central role.

### **The Natural Approach:**

This method aims at developing the communication in a stress-free environment. The learners are provided with a benefit to participate in the activities designed whenever they are ready. This method normally encourages Total physical response in the beginning and normally considers everyday life scenarios. This approach normally comprises of three stages i.e. pre-production stage involving the development of listening skills through listening comprehension. Then early production stage during which the learner makes mistake while struggling with the language. Lastly production of tough and complex discourse e.g. role plays, dialogues etc. This technique aims at developing the fluency.

### **Implementation of the techniques:**

Finding out the best technique out of the above stated method is very difficult to say as the sole usage of the techniques is circumstantial. While training the learners the learning outcomes need to be kept in mind. The selection of method will depend upon the learning need and the cultural diversity. Every method has its own pros cons but still there are certain things that need to be kept in mind. Learners exposure to the language is must as constant practice is the key to success. Teachers involvement and input is required to bring out the desired results. The goal of effective language learning may be achieved through a stress-free environment. Vocabulary and grammar both should be given an equal weightage.

We need to ensure that in order to meet the desired outcome there are certain things that need to be kept in mind e.g. best practice, student needs, self-managed learning, communication skills and interpersonal skills.

### **Conclusion:**

The most accepted approach is communicative language teaching owing to its extensive variety of application. In this technique the grammatical and socio-linguistic components are at its best. We need to understand one thing that while designing the activities for the learners a lot of factors need to be taken into consideration e.g. age, culture, language level and motivation. The learners come from a diverse culture therefore a single technique might not work for everyone. Hence, a teacher's experience as a learner, teacher, observer, reader and specialized orientation in same field matters. As a teacher you should be able to identify whether a student is reflecting a keen interest in listening, asking questions, accepting the errors and willingness to learn something new. Only if you are cautious in identifying them you will be able to map the learning activities with the needs of a learner. The responsibility lies on the shoulder of the teacher to identify them and encourage these attributes in the classroom. It's a dual responsibility and yes, the lever needs to be in the hand of the teacher directing the learning to the right course. A continuous practice and the environment play a vital role in language learning. A teacher needs to test and try the above stated methodologies to identify which one works the best. If the technique does not bring the desired results it needs to be replaced with another. Since the learner will be of varied age and language level the activities designed should keep these factors into consideration along with the culture and language. The classes need to be interactive and engaging and the learners should feel themselves comfortable and open to learn.