

TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE: PRINCIPLES & PRACTICES

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Abstract:

In the context of language learning, the role of a language teacher is extremely influential in students' achievement. They must have intensive knowledge and thorough understanding of the general and psychological principles that govern students' nature and behavior especially in relation to the students' learning experience. While teaching, they must keep in mind the mental ability and the grasping capacity of the learners. Effective teaching of a language is based on certain principles. The paper deals with the relation between teaching principles and learning abilities and also deals with the impact of motivation on learner's achievement.

Key words: Principles, teaching, learning, students, language, classroom.

Introduction:

English is a global language spoken by 700 hundred million people in the world after Chinese language. It is officially recognized all over the world. It is interesting to note that it is a language of library, language of media, language of trade, internet, commerce, business, international negotiations and higher education. It is the link language in India. The correspondence between two countries and the two states happens only through English. Since English is a language of International communication, learning English Language is a common goal for many people.

The aim of teaching English in India is to enable the students to get command over the language. To enable the students to read, write and speak English fluently. But it is evident that most of the learners are not attaining their goal. Students are able to succeed in examination but they do not remember anything that they learned in their language classes nor do they get practical command over the language. Like history and science English is not knowledge subject it can't be learnt simply by memorizing the words and rules of grammar. It is a matter of practice. As Thompson & Wyatt stated that the power of expression in a language is a matter of skill rather than of knowledge. It is a power that grows by exercise not by knowing merely meanings or rules. Just as painting and dancing language is a skill subject that can be mastered only by continuous practice. To teach English language effectively, the teacher should keep in mind the following principles of language teaching:

Principle of definitive aims & objective: The teaching of English language becomes fruitful only when the teacher is aware of definite aims and objectives. In the absence of aims and objectives teaching may not remain purposeful activity. According to Thompson & Wyatt(1952) the teacher should remember the four specific aims while teaching English to students. They are:

- i. To understand spoken English
- ii. To speak English
- iii. To understand written English
- iv. To write in English

Thompson & Wyatt(1952) also remarked that "it is necessary that Indian people should not only understand English when it is spoken or written but also he should himself be able to speak and write it".

Principle of planning: Effective teaching requires proper planning. Principle of planning is a significant element of teaching learning system. Effective Planning involves five basic components: well designed curriculum, learning objectives, teaching and learning activities, assessment mechanism, and evaluation methods to check the student understanding of the topic. Principle of planning provides structure for essential learning so that the teacher cannot deviate from the main topic. It helps the teacher to know aims and objectives of the course in advance so that the teacher can be organized to complete the syllabus in the given time frame. It can also help the teacher in timely preparation of the lesson and confidence in delivery.

Principle of motivation: The most important factor in second language acquisition is motivation. The success of a student depends on the rate of teacher's motivation of students. Language teachers cannot teach language effectively if they do not understand the relationship between motivation and its impact on language acquisition. So the teacher's job is to create a friendly environment in which all the students feel recognized and valued. Motivate the students by providing previous year students' achievements. Language can be quickly learned if curiosity is created in it. Encourage the students to set short term goals and help them to achieve particular goals. By knowing students by names teacher can personalize classroom environment. Motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic is of supreme important in the success of students of all stages. Teachers' supporting environment, unbiased feedback, friendly atmosphere have great impact on language acquisition of students.

Principle of creativity: Creativity makes difference in the classroom. In the process of teaching learning the teacher should encourage creativity in the classroom. Creative class rooms provide environment where students are encouraged to express their

ideas and think out of the box. In the world of internet teachers can incorporate creative learning by creating captivating lessons on various topics that boost students' ability to come up with imaginative ideas.

Principle of feedback: Feedback is an essential element of improving the learning process of the students. Feedback is acknowledged as a vital approach to facilitate students' development as independent learners in order to monitor, evaluate and regulate their own learning.(Ferguson,2011). It has been proven that feedback enhance learning and improves students' outcomes. Giving feedback is an important skill for teachers in higher education and has a major influence on the quality of the students' learning process (Hattie&Timperley,2007). Feedback can be delivered oral or written and it can be given to individual student or to the whole class. Through proper feedback students are able to get guidance and opportunities for improvement by acknowledging their drawbacks.

Principle of variety: Variety is also one of the most influential factors to enhance teaching learning process. Conventional methods of teaching are outdated now. The teacher can bring variety in the class room by using different learning activities, feedback techniques, resources, and various teaching approaches to make the classroom lively and interesting.

Principle of sympathy and cooperation: Teaching learning is a cooperative process. Teacher should provide encouragement and promote courteous behavior in the classroom. In case of classroom disagreements teacher should cultivate unbiased outlook and makes a decision based on the best interests of all.

Principle of self learning: Spoon-feeding through dense lectures has been the traditional method of teaching in the class room (Boyer,1987).Spoon-feeding type of teaching primarily consists of teacher centered style of instructions where the instructor provides the students with all of the information they need to know for the course resulting in curbing independent thought and action.(Collins American English Dictionary online, n.d.).In spoon feeding type of learning the instructor express exactly what he wishes to teach. Students all to do is to take copious notes, memorize the material and they will be able to pass the test with a reasonable grade (Dehler,2014). In spoon-feeding type of teaching students become passive learners and they do not take any responsibility for their own learning and eventually forget what they learned when the course is completed. In student centered learning environment the teacher can lay the foundation for independent thinking and problem solving skills.

Principle of group dynamics: Teacher should encourage students to participate in group activities and group assignments that promote competitive spirit, mutual understanding and fellow feeling. Principle of group dynamics stimulates enthusiasm in group activities so that students get more language practice as most of the activities are done in pairs or in groups. These group activities also develop confidence and independent thinking skills among students.

Principle of drill & Practice: As Palmer says, language learning is essentially a habit forming process, a process during which we acquire new habits. When students are learning a foreign language they need sufficient practice and drill to do away with mother tongue since the sounds of the new language is different from those of mother tongue. So it is important for teachers to help the students to master the structures and sounds of English Language.

Principle of Repetition: Repetition is also one of the basic language learning techniques. Habits are formed through repetition. In the process of learning students tend to forget things with the passage of time. It has been proven that things often repeated are best remembered. So it is the duty of the teacher to apply the concept of repetition in the process of learning.

Principle of activity (Learning by doing) In the traditional classroom students are only passive recipients of information. Now the concept of teaching learning has been changed from teacher centric to the student centric. Activity based learning implies that students learn by doing various activities. The role of a teacher is not simply restricted to be a teacher they need to play different roles such as classroom manager, a facilitator, a mentor, communicator and monitor to make the students actively involved in various types of activities that foster all round development. Activity based learning encourage the students to be independent thinkers. The activities not only build students' self confidence but also develop healthy relationship between students and students and teachers and students.

Principle of context and situation: The main objective of teaching English language is to enable the learner to use it. Since the purpose of the language is to enable the learner to use it then it must be practiced in suitable realistic situations or imagined situations. Language learning is not so easy unless it is connected to practical life. Literal translation, mechanical drilling of words and structures not only boring but also makes the language learning ineffective. In situational language teaching all the words sentences grow out of real situation so students can apply that knowledge in day to day life situations.

Principle of rest &Recreation: Nowadays Technology has become an integral part of current generation. They have become addicted to a new method of online communication through social media, twitter or they are likely to be seen watching T.V programmes or playing videogames. There is no scope for rest and recreation that refresh both mind and body. Teachers should take responsibility for arranging recreational activities for students. Recreation activities like hiking, tree plantation, painting, drawing, organizing school events, dramas, plays and sports not only refresh the mind but also develops the rapport between the teachers and students. These recreation activities reduce stress and help students to feel more energized to become a better student.

Conclusion: The paper throws light on the teaching principles and the role of a teacher in process of active learning of students. It has been proved that teaching principles are important tools in order to enhance students' participation in language learning activities. Teaching English Language has undergone tremendous changes in the past two decades. New trends and methods have been worked out in the field of teaching English. Yet students are facing so many challenges in communication. The most common challenges are: Problems in pronunciation, Problems in understanding and grasping, poor listening skills, problems in expression and writing, and problems in interaction has great negative impact on academic success. In the context of these problems the role of a teacher has become very crucial in language learning. It is the duty of the teacher to identify the basic relationship between the principles of teaching and the language learning ability and to apply them to enhance learning skills.

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