RESEARCH ARTICLE

EXPLORING CLASSROOM PRACTICES IN STIMULATING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
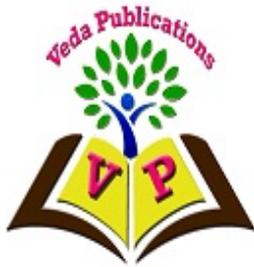
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ABSTRACT

English Language is no more a foreign Language in India. However, the apprehension and disinterest towards English Language Learning cannot be ignored. One needs to focus on motivating learners as it plays a major role in language learning process. The paper has discussed the role of Language Learning Motivation (LLM) Theories at the undergraduate level. The paper has referred to the innovative classroom practices that can change the learner's lackadaisical attitude into stimulated one. The Paper also showcases innovative activities carried out by the students of BS c-I

INTRODUCTION

Practitioners involved in the process of teaching English Language increasingly draw this conclusion that the learners are often not interested or not serious about learning English Language. In India, though English Language is not considered as a Foreign Language, one finds disparity to this claim. The truth is the students, who enroll for undergraduate courses like BA, BCOM and even B.Sc. is unable to comprehend, write and speak in English. Surprisingly the students from English medium background also are included in this group. English for them is still a foreign language which they need to understand from the basic. However, the undergraduate teachers do not teach basic of any subject and directly focus on the syllabus. This pattern of teaching makes the subject incomprehensible to the learners and as a result they turn to autonomous learning. They find no innovation in the learning process, augmenting their absenteeism in the class. Thus, it is the need of the hour that some innovations in the teaching process should be explored thereby stimulating the learners to participate in the learning process.

LEVELS OF LEARNING
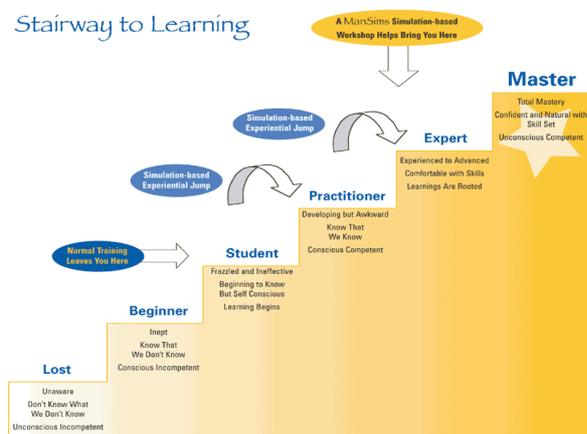
The Diagram clearly indicates the different stages involved in learning process. As a matter of fact a conventional teacher skips the first two stages of learning and directly starts teaching students, who actually are at the 'Lost stage'. The teacher then wants the students to learn from 'Students Stage 'and achieve the Master Stage'. Contradictorily, it is the task of the teacher to begin at the 'Lost stage' and reach to the 'Practitioner', because once the students reach this stage, they automatically will become Experts and a Masters.

CHARACTERISTICS OF LEARNING:

3.1 Learning has a purpose: For each learner the purpose of learning is different. The responsibility of language teacher is to convince the learner that understanding the language is of prime importance before understanding the subject matter.

3.2 Learning is a Result of Experience: A learner can learn pottery by making a pot or a learner can learn singing by singing a song, similarly a learner can learn English by actually writing, speaking English. It means it is very essential for a learner to use the language after it is taught. Only theory of language learning will not suffice.

3.3 Learning is Multifaceted: Learning cannot take place in isolation. It can be done on various parameters such as verbal, conceptual, perceptual, motor, problem solving, and emotional. A mixed ability class may pick up any of these and thus a teacher should be open to use innovative techniques in order to reach to every learner.

3.4 Learning is a Continuous Process: A learner is continuously learning although the process of learning for each may be different. The teacher should involve student in learning process through various activities so that the learner is active and

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thus learning.

MODEL OF SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY OF MOTIVATION

It is highly essential, in this context to motivate learners to learn, as according to Gardner motivation is a 'combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning the language plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language' (ibid:10. It was in early sixties Gardner and his associates with the most influential model of Language Learning Motivation (LLM) which was called a Socio educational Model (Gardner, 1985). However, he has to face the major opposition as he suggested learning language through the members of the target language. This theory was ruled out, India being a country of non-English speakers and the next theory in motivational psychology was put by Dornyei, 2003. The Theory developed by Dornyei and his associates accords that '[t]o be self-determining means to experience a sense of choice in initiating and regulating one's own actions' (Deci, Connell, & Ryan,1989:580). The Self Determination Theory categories two kinds of motivations: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation emphasizes on internal rewards such as joy, pleasure or satisfaction and needs individual motivation to perform a particular activity. Whereas in extrinsic motivation the individual expects an extrinsic reward such as good grades or praise from others. Malone & Lepper state that students' curiosity (which translates into motivation to learn) is awakened by an "optimum level of informational complexity" (Deci, Rayan 1985). The paper involves several classroom experiments conducted in the English Classroom which have proved to be intrinsically and extrinsically motivating, leading to better learning and improved participation.

INNOVATIONS IN CLASSROOM TEACHING

1.1 Blended Learning: A blended learning approach combines face to face classroom methods with computer-mediated activities to form an integrated instructional approach. In the past, digital materials have served in a supplementary role, helping to support face to face instruction. Visuals and You tube Videos were used a Blended Learning Platforms to teach some drab and dull prose.

Teacher's Task: Technical or scientific Essays were taught through Visuals whereas Short Stories can be caught live through Videos which serves the purpose of Edutainment.

Student's Task: The students presented posters and recited stories based on the topics covered.

1.2 Experiential Learning: Experiential learning as the name suggest can be defined as learning through their experience, discovery, creativity and interaction with the world around. Experiential learning activities include playing outdoors, imaginative or pretend play, creative expression through art, music and dance, exploration of nature and the learner's surrounding environment.

Teachers Task: The teacher conducted Vocabulary Games such as Dumb Charade**,** ABC Race and Draw what I say. The words included in the games were selected from the syllabus.

Student's Task: The students used antonyms and synonyms and parts of speech and as a result their vocabulary and grammar improved.

1.3 E-Learning: E -learning refers to learning supported by the Web. It can be used as an

innovative teaching methodology and a support to conventional teaching. This kind of learning can be done inside classrooms or also as virtual classrooms, in which the entire coursework is done online and classes do not meet face to face, and thus can be a part of distance learning. Learning Languages through Technology reflects the many teachers are currently using computers and Internet that provides a rich resource of learning platforms for both novice and expert educators.

Teacher's Task: The teacher conducted-learning sessions using Computer Assisted Language Learning Programmes with the help of grammar and Vocabulary CDs. The teacher used a social networking website 'Edmodo'. Edmodo is a website similar to Facebook wherein the teacher can post assignments, quiz and polls and the students have to solve them online.

Student's Task: The students solved CALL exercises in their tutorial classes and Edmodo exercises online from their PC, Mobile, Institute's Network Resource Centre or Internet Café.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION :

Till 20th Century the learning process was considered as a one-way process. In those days teaching was emphasized. However, in 21st century the learners are the centre of learning and take the front seat. Therefore, it is at most necessary to motivate the learners in order to help them learning. Motivation seems to be probable dominant force which governs the student's progress and ability to learn. Pedagogical implications on the basis of Language Learning Motivation theories can help a teacher to increase the number of learners in the classroom. If the teacher is motivated, the learner is automatically motivated which is the first step to positive change. It is highly recommended that innovations in teaching should be adapted instantaneously to curb the problem of absenteeism.

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