REVIEW ARTICLE

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH GRAMMAR THROUGH MULTIMEDIA AT THE FIRST YEAR POST GRADUATE LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents the various challenges in Grammar Teaching Through Multimedia in the classroom. English Language Teaching concerns various issues that regular classroom teachers encounter on a daily basis. My paper, attempts to present certain practical ideas that can help in solving these issues. A teacher's actual experience of grammar teaching and classroom teaching strategies used are described in detail. Most teachers lack positive attitude towards grammar teaching and are unaware of the basic learning skills involved in the teaching of the English Language. Teachers are supposed to meet the academic and social needs of the students.

Teachers with emotional or behaviour disorders leave a negative impact on the students, who are gifted and talented. Teachers have to understand the culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds of the students. As a matter of fact teachers must take a risk to change students' attitudes towards learning. English grammar teaching Through Multimedia especially in- service teacher training programs must rethink their current theoretical and practical methodology of teacher preparation to help teachers, deliver effective English Grammar teaching instruction, and employ alternative strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners.

1. Introduction

The study in question involves first year post graduate students in Central University of Hyderabad. In spite of the long tradition of teaching English Grammar as subject in the elementary and high schools, and as a medium of instruction in colleges and universities in India, English Grammar performance of the students is poor.

This paper is an attempt to suggest practical ways in which the learning of a second language grammar can be facilitated in various situations in general, and in a regional medium context in particular. When learners do not have much exposure to the second language in their environment, it may be useful to help learners approach the second language from a holistic perspective. This could be done by exposing learners to English Grammar in natural contexts, based on the positive response received from students in a research study undertaken with the objectives mentioned above, a few activities that enable effective learning in the classroom are outlined and discussed in this paper.

Learners are rather poor at speaking, reading, writing, spelling, vocabulary, and grammar in short, all aspects of language. This is best done through understanding how methodology is translated in the classroom through the use of appropriate materials and advanced educational technology.

2. Effective strategies:

"You can teach a student a lesson for a day; but if you can teach him to learn by creating curiosity, he will continue the learning process as long as he lives." – Clay P. Bedford

In the Indian context every teacher should adapt his/her own strategy to develop their learners' abilities, enhance teacher's language teaching skills. What is strategy? Mc Donough (1995) defines strategy as an articulated plan for meeting particular types of problems. Bialystok (1990) says that strategies are related to solutions in specific ways and they are productive in solving the problem for reasons, which theorists can articulate. She further says that strategies are systematic because the learners uncover the strategy from their knowledge of the problem and employ it systematically. According to H.H. Stern (1995) strategy is a plan for action. He further says that good language learning needs strategies of experimentation and planning with the object of developing the new language into an ordered system and revising this system progressively by constantly searching for meaning and willingness to practice. A strategy is therefore a tool, plan, or method used for accomplishing a task.

Here are some useful strategies for teaching English Grammar, there are two main strategies that are useful in the teaching of English Grammar.

1. Motivational strategies
2. CALL strategies

1. Motivational strategies

The impact of multi-sensory learner motivation

We need look at learner needs, what are their problems related to language learning? Where does the problem exist? Does the teacher have the knowledge to recognize the problems and needs of learners? Is the teacher knowledgeable enough to diagnose the defects of the learners? Etc. It may be at word level (word formation), word meaning (semantics), pronunciation level (Phonetics), small chunks, small phrases, or sentence stage, listening or speaking, reading and writing so on and so forth. We have closely observed these facts and understood the significance of learning through sensory experiences. Language learning/teaching should aim to constantly activate all of the senses as far as possible.

Although the word 'intrinsic' was first used in the this sense in English at the end of the 16th Century (Shakespeare, Henry IV. 2) the concept had a much earlier origin Thomas Acquinas had said,

There are some things, which act not from any choice, but as they are moved and made to act by others; Just as an arrow is directed to the target by the archer. Others act from some kind of choice, but not from free choice, such as irrational animals, for the sheep flies from the wolf by a kind of judgment where by it considers it to be hurtful to itself; such a judgment is not a free one but implanted by nature. —Robert C 1967

How can we motivate learners?

Teachers always try to motivate learners by doing some kind of activity in the classroom, i.e. especially things that cater to all the senses. They try to observe how well learners grasp these things. One of these dimensions is covered with recognition of ones achievement by others, the desire to be better than others in competitive situation and the desire for high status job (extrinsic motivation); Joan M. Whitehead. (P: 287-309).

Motivation also activates the neurological system. Now a days teachers and researchers are adopting new methodology in teaching English such methodology is NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming). NLP is a collection of patterns and strategies based on a series of underlying understandings of how the mind works and how people act and react. NLP's main concerns are neurological processes called states. According to Neuro-Linguistic Programming a desired state of mind, when learning occurs naturally, could be induced through relaxation techniques such as breathing exercises and training, which render learners emotionally calm and mentally alert and, at the same time, help break down their ego boundaries. Research shows that having students relax at the beginning of each teaching session will increase their learning by 25 percent (Bolstad 1997). Once equipped with these skills he/she can teach well, if they have little exposure towards the concepts in and related to psycholinguistics, mind and cognition, teaching becomes all the more effective. This process of language function starts by listening and memorizing and conceptualizing the idea of language.

Therefore what seemed lacking in such a context was 1. Motivation on the part of the learners to learn the English Grammar. 2. Conducive environment for the learning of the second language 3. Tasks and activities suitable for the learners. In this context some of the activities and tasks planned

for specific purposes mentioned above are the focus of this paper. Based on the theory of the whole language approach these activities were chosen with an objective to give learners a comprehensive feel of the language and not just separate items such as vocabulary, grammar, and language learning skills etc.

Whole Language proponents have claimed that one way to increase learner awareness of how language works is through a course of study that incorporates language skills such as literary study, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, listening, reading aloud and writing learner collaboration. These aspects are closely related to the concept of action research. Action research or practice-based research, as it is sometimes called, is a form of applied research that helps change practices in teaching and learning, where the teacher is actually the researcher. Simply put, action research is the study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of teaching.

Teaching English grammar through multimedia:

The teacher needs to have several strategies to teach English Grammar skills effectively at any level. Leonard depicted it as "intermedia," which is "the simultaneous use of various media to create a total environmental experience for the audience." Meaning can be communicated not only by coding ideas into abstract literary language, but by creating a more emotionally real experience through the combination of various multimedia components.

Media: Telephone, wireless, Radio, Television, public address system cable net work, inter net, cable cast, newspapers, magazines, journals reviews; media involves in print media and non print media. Correspondence or written communication through these aspects epistle, note, picture, post card, letter circular, mail, air mail, post mail, e-mail, special mail, priority mail, such circumstances need suitable English grammar required to fulfil the academic and non academic existence.

But that changed with the 20th-century development of electronic transmission of audio and pictorial information. A person no longer has to be print literate to participate in cultural communication and knowledge. As English teachers we have always been occupied with the verbal language component of multimedia communications.

Use of Multimedia Technology

The level of the technology used in the lab sessions varies for each task. One popular lab task, planned as part of a series of short vignettes focusing on culture, combines audio and video by creating a situation in which students "converse" in English. Using only a series of prompts, students spoke about a variety of topics, including their background, their experiences, and their perception of several similarities and differences concerning daily life situations. The students' audience have to carry out a variety of activities based on the video, including listening comprehension, speaking, and writing tasks; other activities focus on developing cultural awareness.

To begin with, we need a working definition of the term "multimedia" for English teachers. *Media* can be defined broadly as any device that man uses to communicate any message, all the way from clothing to computers, but I think English teachers are most concerned with media that include verbal communication. The term multi-media include *all* of the print-verbal and audio, pictorial, or audio-pictorial media. A medium may be used by itself, or media may be used in any combination. Multi-media have created a network of communications that include magazines, books, newspapers, radio, phonograph records, tape recordings, telephone, movies and television.

Activities in the Multimedia Lab

To date, these lab activities have been used for two semesters. Language learning tasks are fun and interesting, help them learn about others, and afford them a chance to use English without any hesitation. Numerous comments also highlight the effectiveness of these kinds of tasks in helping students acquire language skills.

Personally encounter with English grammar teaching in language classroom. Using advanced technology in the universities, engineering colleges, colleges are quite common. If teachers, Lecturers, Asst. Prof. or Professors have minimum knowledge about multimedia, it helps to the teacher as well as the learner. This paper deals with following aspects. What are the strategies teachers have to adopt in these circumstances, in engineering

colleges? Particularly university teachers and engineering college teachers have to aware of advanced technology and its use in the language classroom. This researcher taught for post-graduate students at the University of Hyderabad for two semesters across the university. We offered courses like Basic English, Communicative English, as well as remedial English. These courses have offered to all the students for different departments, like English, Telugu, Hindi, Philosophy, Applied Linguistics, Urdu, Sociology, Economics History, and Political Science. Etc. It is interdisciplinary course.

Teaching parts of speech: I do have the habit of reading old news papers. I don't know why? I am interested to read old stuff. I do watch English movies occasionally. When I was watching a movie called Notting Hill, I was impressed. It's really a wonderful and fascinating movie. The protagonist of the story used casual dialogue "Today's news paper is tomorrow's waste paper". But heroine takes very seriously. This statement has completely against her willed. It wouldn't be waste paper; it is a historical evidence for making news story. She explained how news paper journalists make a news item more interesting, they always refer the library for old news papers to quote in the present context. It has gone in so many directions. I started teaching English on July, 2004; I randomly selected the text from old news papers. Precisely my concentration is on teaching grammar through multimedia. Particularly, for teaching parts of speech I used concordancer. Concordancing is software, which will parse sentences into words, and lists word category like noun, verb, adj. adv. Pronoun and gives an account of word count on word repeated in a given text. Etc.

Primarily, text given for silent reading, before parsing the text. After parsing the text, the handout in the text is divided into words in two columns. Words are sorted alphabetically. Students are supposed to read the text from the handout, and categories the word, besides indicating noun, verb, preposition, adv. and Adj. so on and so forth. Then categorization is over each word spelling, meaning, synonyms, or antonyms, pronunciation, with the help of electronic dictionary. Finally they are able to make their own sentences using the words.

Parts of speech

Word	Count	Part of speech
30	1	
55	1	
7	1	
8	1	
A	1	Article
Alias	1	Noun
All	1	pronoun
Alwal	1	Noun
And	3	conjunction
Around	1	preposition
At	3	preposition
Away	1	adverb
Bathroom	-con,	noun
Before	- 1	preposition
Being	- 1	verb
Bhaskarapatla	-1	noun
Blood	- 2	nouns
Broken	- 1	verb
But	-1	conjunction
Call	- 1	verb
Called	-1	verb
Came	- 1	verb
Chandramouli	-1	noun
Colony	- 1	noun
Dead	- 1	adjective
Door	- 4	nouns
Downstairs	-	adverb
Early	- 1	adv, Adj
Else	- 1	adverb
Families	- 1	noun
Father	-2	noun
Finding	-1	verb
First	-2	adv, pro
Floor	- 2	nouns
Force	-1	verb
Found	-2	verb
From	-1	prep
Getting	-1	verb
Grill	-1	noun
Guruswamy	-2	noun
Have	-1	verb
He	- 3	pronoun
Her	- 1	pronoun
His	- 5	pronoun
House	- 3	nouns
Hyderabad	- 3	nouns
In	- 4	preposition
Indicating	- 1	verb
Light	- 1	noun
Lived	- 2	verbs
Locked	- 1	verb
Morning	- 1	noun
Mother	- 1	noun
Murder	- 1	verb
Must	- 1	auxiliary
Nagole	-1	noun
No	- 2	noun
Noticed	- 1	verb

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Of	- 2 preposition
October	- 1 noun
On	- 7 preposition
One	- 1 nou/adj/pro
Open	- 2 verb/ Adj
Over	-1 pre/ Adj
Overcome	- 1verb
Parents	- 1 noun
Place	-1 noun
Pm	-1 adverb
Police	- 3 nouns
Presuming	-1 verb
Priest	- 3 nouns
Pujari	-1 noun
Rajarajeswari	- 1 noun
Reddy	- 1 noun
Response	-1noun
Retired	- 1 Adj
Returned	- 2 verbs
Room	- 1 noun
Said	- 2verb
Servant	- 1 noun
Some	- 1pro
Son	- 1 pro
Stricken	- 3 nouns
Stains	- 2 noun/verb
Struggle	- 1verb
Temple	- 1 noun
That	-1 conj
The	-17 article
Then	- 1 adverb
There	-2adv
They	-2pronoun
To	-4 preposition
Told	1 verb
Tried	- 2 verbs
Tuesday	- 1 noun
Unsuccessfully	– 1 Adj
Up	- 1preposition
Upstairs	- 1 adverb
Wake	- 1 verb
Was	- 5 auxiliary
Wednesday	- 2 noun
Went	- 1 verb
Were	- 1 auxiliary
When	-1 conjunction
While	-1 con
Work	- 1verb/ noun
Younger	- 1 noun

News story for teaching parts of speech

Hyderabad. October 7: The priest of the Rajarajeswari temple in Guruswamy colony was found murdered at his house on Wednesday. Alwal police said Bhaskarapatla Chandramouli alias Guruswamy, 55 lived on the first floor of the house while his younger son Srikant told police that he returned from work at around 8-30 pm on Tuesday and went upstairs to call on his father. But finding the grill door on the first floor locked he returned presuming that his father must have retired early. There was no one else in the house, his mother being away at her parent's place in Nagole. The murder came to light on Wednesday morning when the family's servant Reddy tried to wake up the priest. Getting no response, he called Srikant and they tried to force open the door, unsuccessfully. They then notice some blood stains on the door. The door was broken open and the priest was found dead in the bathroom. Police said there were blood strains all over the room indicating a struggle before the Pujari was overcome. (Hindu news item)

In the beginning of classes some of students are afraid to use of computers in the multimedia lab. Then few sessions later students interested to attend the sessions regularly even they are ready to spend more time in the multimedia lab. Students' feedback has also been very encouraging. Students are enthusiastic about attending lab, and that they not only become actively involved in the tasks, but also communicate willingly in English.

Conclusion

Teaching of English Grammar through multimedia, as carried out at the Central University of Hyderabad at Andhra Pradesh, has shown one of the ways, students create a positive learning environment through their participation. As a result of using English for purposeful, interaction in the class, students are more motivated to prepare their assignments. They also take a more active interest in both acquiring and improving essential skills of LSRW.

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