

## INNOVATIONS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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In recent years a lot of research is done in the field of English Language Teaching. As English is the need of the hour, students and teachers have been concentrating on English. Students have been trying to get mastery over English and teachers have been exploring different innovative and effective English language teaching methods. English has emerged as a world language today. It has not at all remained the language only of a single country, England. It is used as an official language in almost 54 countries and there are more than 1500 million users of this language. However, when it comes to classroom situation of teaching English, the scenario, at times, quite disappointing. English has become an integral part of India and in most of the countries in the world we find the demand for learning English as an important foreign language. English is a language rich in literary, humanistic, scientific and technical fields. The present paper focuses on innovations in English language teaching.

The innovative approach of communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has brought about a revolution of thoughts and ideas in the field of teaching English. It has become a challenging task for linguists to understand it in the right perspective. Some linguists have tried to prove that all our past efforts of teaching language have been failures just because of our misunderstanding of the notion as well as the functions of language. Let us try to know the way English is being taught in India. To begin with, teaching of English at present at all levels is either limited to structure or grammar or translation method. At the primary and secondary school levels, structures and vocabulary are taught through a structural syllabus and grammar translation method. It is believed that this would help the learners construct correct English sentences with the help of structures learnt over the years. At the higher level these structures are revised and more exposure to English is provided with the help of literary texts.

In India, teaching of English is more or less content based, not skill based. The four fundamental language skills namely Listening, Speaking, Reading and writing have been generally neglected. This is the reason why we find our students weak at Writing. At the secondary school level, students remember by heart leave applications, stories, essays,

paragraphs and get through the final examination but later on forget most of the things they learnt. In schools students are taught through the Grammar. Translation method and sometimes through the structural Approach. But we know that after completing school education, a person is required to write in English social letters, applications for jobs as well as leave applications. He has to write invitations, greetings and good wishes, complaints, diary etc. Sometimes he has to write minutes of a meeting, appointment - letters, office orders, notices, telegrams, description etc. It has been generally observed that such forms of writing are not taken care of in schools and colleges. Therefore our students fail to communicate with the society in which they live in. Writing which is an important skill has been neglected in teaching English at school and college level.

There is a wide gap between what is taught and what is required in society. It is also observed that our students are not able to see the difference between the spoken and written and formal and informal forms of language. Students, even after several years of learning through the existing approaches, fail to import and seek personal information such as describing where they live, expressing likes and dislikes, requesting others and expressing agreement or disagreement etc. They fail to communicate what they really want to do, not because they lack ideas, thoughts and feelings, but because they have not been taught so for how and when these communicative tasks and acts are performed. Consequently they are not able to communicate and whatever they communicate is enough proof that their communicative competence needs to be developed.

Noam Chomsky's views on communicative competence are very significant. Discussing Chomsky's view of communicative competence, W.M. Rivers *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* writes, "To Chomsky, competence was internalized knowledge of the system of syntactic and phonological rules of the language; and performance was language in use by the individual." (Rivers, 1983,p.131). Clarifying the concept D.L. Freeman in *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* writes, "Communicative Competence involves being able to use the language appropriate to a given social context". (Freeman, 1986, P. 131).

Thus communicative competence means effective use of language in social context. It is the ability to use the language appropriate to a given social context. It is the ability to produce sentences for communicative effect. It is also the ability to be appropriate, to know the right things at the right time. It is a kind of knowledge which is different from linguistic competence. It is the internalized knowledge of the system of syntactic and phonological

rules of the language that the speaker listeners or readers, writers possess. It refers to the ability to write or express ideas, thoughts, feelings, emotions, information, notions etc. which is linguistically, grammatical, correct and accurate, structurally, situationally, functionally and socially appropriate, fluent, semantically intact, sensitive, consummate, and formally feasible. It also involves the ability to use linguistic forms to perform communicative functions and tasks.

The prominent approaches and methods of teaching English include the Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method, the structural approach, situational. Approach, Bilingual method, the Audio lingual Approach, substitution method and the communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Approach.

The Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), is based on the concept of competence which is an expansion of the early definition of competence given by Noam Chomsky in the year 1965. The term originally introduced by Dell Hymes in the year 1971, includes knowledge, skills and abilities in the concept of communication. The CLT approach makes us more strongly aware that it is not enough to teach learners how to manipulate the structure of the foreign language. They must also develop strategic for relating these structures to their communicative functions in real situations and real time. In Communicative Language Teaching students use the English language a great deal through communicative activities such as games, role plays and problem solving tasks. The CLT gives stress on the use of authentic materials. It gives students an opportunity to develop strategies for understanding English language as it is actually used by the native speakers. Thus, the CLT encourages us to go beyond structures and take account of other aspects of communication. It can, therefore, help us to match the content more closely with actual communicative uses that the learners will have to make in the foreign language.

The teacher's role in the CLT is very important. The teacher has two main rules : the first is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom, and between these participants and the various activities and texts. The second rule is to act as an independent participants within the learning teaching group. A third rule for the teacher is that of a researcher and a learner. The other rules assumed for teachers are needs - analyst, counsellor and group process manager. In communicative activities, the teacher will need to provide communicative feedback. The learners rule is also important in the CLT. The students are, above all, communicators. They are actively participated in negotiating

meaning and trying to make themselves understand even when their knowledge of the target language is incomplete. They learn to communicate by communicating.

Now-a-days Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is advocated in English Language Teaching. The teaching - learning is now learner - centered. Hence, the teacher must be competent, skilled, enthusiastic, open-minded and familiar with the innovative aspect of teaching. He should adopt innovative techniques for teaching and enhance communicative skills of the learners. He must encourage students to participate in group discussion, topic-development, paragraph - writing, mimicry, enactment of drama, role-play, word prompt, extempore, quiz competition, recital of poems, imitation of dialogues. The learner should be encouraged to read newspapers, magazines, comics, short stories, novels etc. The focus, therefore, is on CLT. The goal is to teach communicative skills through various modern tactics. Thus by the application of the method CLT the teaching becomes resourceful, effective and promising.

#### **References -**

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