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Competence Required of Teachers to Teach English in Secondary Schools

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Since Indian Independence a growing number of reformers of education, policymakers and researchers have been arguing that many of the well-publicized shortcomings in school education system of our country, to an important extent, are due to 'incompetent teachers in the system, inadequacies in the classroom conditions, and poor resources and the support afforded to school teachers.' The key to improving the quality of schools lies in upgrading the competencies of the teacher, their status, training, and working conditions, that is, in furthering the professionalization of teachers and teaching.

Keywords: Competence, Children, Language and Teaching.

Introduction

In spite of the recommendations of all the committees, commissions and POAs, it is seen that, the curriculum of teacher education and the general curriculum as a whole, remain still silent and vague about the exact nature of competence to be developed in children and in teachers for its transaction. Some of the broad conclusions in respect of teacher education in the country are as follows:

- The professional commitment and overall competence of teachers leaves much to be desired.
- The quality of pre-service education has not only improved with recent development in pedagogical science, but has actually shown signs of deteriorating.

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Competence Required of Teachers

- Teacher education programmes consist mainly of pre-service teacher training, with practically no systematic programmes of in-service training facilities which are lacking.
- There has been an increase in sub-standard institution of teacher education and there are numerous reports of gross malpractices.

The NCTE documents points out: ‘teacher education programmes shall focus on competencies and commitment in much greater magnitude. It calls for bringing out a transformation in teacher preparation strategies as well as in behavioural challenges in pupils under their charge. It also emphasizes the need for quality teacher education in terms of competency based and commitment-oriented teacher education.’ The National Council of Teacher Education emphasized the need for quality teacher education in terms of competency-based and commitment-oriented teacher education programmes. The NCTE has pointed out in its *Competency Based and Commitment Oriented Teacher Education for Quality School Education -Initiation Document* that ‘teacher education programmes shall focus on competencies and commitment in much greater magnitude’.

Teachers of English need the minimum levels of competence to teach English effectively in Secondary School classes. The emergence of English as a global language has put enormous pressure on the teaching profession worldwide. Demand for English language teachers in both public and private sectors far outstrips the supply. When the language of education is not the mother tongue, the role of the teacher as facilitator of learning, demands that the teacher not only possess specific second language teaching competencies but a very high sense of personal linguistic proficiency as well.

Main Objectives of the Study

To identify the minimum levels of competence required of teachers to teach English in secondary schools of Kerala Competencies. It is a measurable learning objective written in a functional life skills context. Competencies specifically address essential skills for life and work. Competence, according to Richards and Rodgers (2001), comprise essential skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors required for effective performance of ‘a real-world task or activity.’ All teachers must develop ‘comparable standards of outcomes in order to be successful in one’s job.’ The minimum levels of competence can be specified in a variety of ways as that of the expected outcome.

- Identification of competencies required of secondary school teachers of English to teach English effectively.
- Construction of competency rating scale.
- Discussion with referees and experts in the field of ELT.
- Administration of the Tools.

The first step initiated by the investigator was to identify the competencies required of teachers of English to transact the curriculum in English for secondary schools of Kerala. The competencies required of teachers were identified:

- by analyzing the revised curriculum in English for the secondary schools of Kerala.
- by reviewing the available literature and net-search.
- by seeking the opinions of experienced teachers, resource teachers and experts in English language teaching.

In addition, literature review and net-search were undertaken to get an overview of what was relevant both in India and overseas regarding language teacher competencies, their development and the different dimensions of language teacher competence. The researcher's experience as a teacher of English and as a teacher trainer, and the exposure he had in the development of training materials, gave the researcher deeper insights into the problem under study. However, information obtained from the discussions with curriculum framers and experts was used to supplement the formulation and framing of competencies.

Accordingly, nearly 84 competencies were identified which are found required of teachers for teaching English in secondary schools, and connected to teacher-quality in one way or the other. After a careful editing the required competencies (n=55) were presented as Competency Statements. Only those items pertaining to the teaching of English in the context of the revised curriculum in English of Kerala State were considered and selected for

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inclusion in the Competency Rating Scale. Also, care was taken to word the competency statements in comparatively simpler terms so as to avoid ambiguity.

The competencies were classified under different competency domains, namely Subject-specific Teaching Competencies, General Teaching Competencies, ICT Competencies, Assessment Competencies, and Professional Competencies. A Competency Rating Scale that consists of a total of 55 competencies which are found relevant to and required of secondary school teachers of English to transact the curriculum and syllabus in English in the State of Kerala was developed.

The sample of teachers (high school and higher secondary) and Experts selected for validating the competency statements were requested to indicate their extent of agreement against each competency statement on a three-point scale: [to a Great Extent (GE), to Some Extent (SE) and Not at All (NA).

Ratings of the Competencies

The ratings given to the competencies under various domains by the sample were analyzed to know whether there was any significant difference between the ratings pattern (sub samples: type of respondents and experience).

The findings indicated that though all the competency items under the domain Subject-specific competencies gained comparatively higher scores; there exists variation in the scores given by the samples in some of the competencies. The test of significance for the difference between mean ratings of the sub-sample (Type of respondents, namely teachers of high school, higher secondary and experts) showed that in general there was no significant difference between the ratings given by the sub samples to the Subject Specific Competencies, except for the competencies D1-3, D1-5 and D1-II.

The test of significance for the difference between the mean ratings of the subsample showed that there was no significant difference between ratings given by the sub samples to the 'General Competencies.' This indicated that irrespective of their category all the sub samples had more or less the same levels of agreement to the competency items given under the domain.

The test of significance for the difference between mean ratings of the sub-sample showed that there was no significant difference between the ratings given to ICT competencies, except for the competency D3-9. This indicated

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that all the sub-samples had shown more or less the same extent of agreement to all the competency items under the domain 'ICT Competencies.

The test of significance for the difference between mean ratings of the sub-sample showed that there was no significant difference between the ratings given to the Assessment competencies, except for the competency D4-8. This indicated that all the sub-samples had shown more or less the same level of agreement to all the competency items under the domain 'Assessment competencies.'

The test of significance for the difference between mean ratings of the sub-samples showed that there is no significant difference between the ratings given to the 'Professional Competencies.' This indicated that all the subsamples had shown more or less the same level of agreement to all the competency items under the domain 'Professional Competencies.' This also indicated that irrespective of their category all the sub sample of teachers had the same extent of agreement to the competency items under the domain 'Professional Competencies.'

Competencies Identified in the Study

The study identified a total of 55 competencies which are found relevant to and required of secondary school teachers to transact the curriculum and syllabus in English of the State of Kerala. They are given below under different competency domains.

Domain: 1

The Subject-specific Competencies

- Competency in planning and using integrated language activities that help learners develop real-life communication skills.
- Competency in helping a learner use language to construct different discourses for different communicative purposes considering learners' multiple intelligence level.
- Competency in selecting and using instructional strategies, materials, activities, and models to develop learners' receptive skills and provide them with opportunities to engage in such activities.

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- Competency in providing language experiences that develops learners' productive skills (speaking and writing) and helping them to improve oral and written language proficiency.
- Competency in selecting instructional strategies/ materials/ activities to help learners to recognize high-frequency words and to promote their ability to decode increasingly complex words.
- Competency in helping a learner use dictionaries, glossaries, and other sources to determine the meanings, pronunciation, and derivations of unfamiliar words and thereby developing their reference skills.
- Competency in adopting different levels of reading comprehension techniques and developing in them factual, inferential, and evaluative comprehension skills.
- Competency in providing explicit, systematic oral language instruction and supporting learners' learning and use of oral language through meaningful and purposeful activities.
- Competency in planning and providing activities in which learners use the language freely without worrying about errors, focusing on fluency rather than accuracy.
- Competency in analyzing learner errors, providing focused instruction and giving learners opportunities to recognize errors to correct them.
- Competency in providing students opportunities to develop spelling skills in the context of meaningful written expression.
- Competency in using writing conventions and appropriate grammar and usage and providing students with direct instruction and guided practice in those areas.
- Competency in creating an environment in which learners are motivated to express ideas in writing, and making writing an enjoyable activity and a tool for lifelong learning.

The General Competencies

- Competency in finding out the needs, interests, and language difficulties of the learners and the nature of their learning process.
- Competency in facilitating different patterns of interaction viz., teacher-learner, learner-learner and learner-material interaction, (eliciting from class, pair work, learners presenting to class, learner interaction with society).
- Competency in identifying learner levels, individual differences, needs and requirements and facilitating English language development in multiple contexts.
- Competency in helping slow learners and learners with learning difficulty.
- Competency in supplementing and adapting textbooks and planning activities related to learners' interests, prior knowledge and experience.
- Competency in analyzing learner errors in speaking, reading, and writing, and responding to individual student's needs by providing focused instruction.
- Competency in developing teaching learning aids and programmes to facilitate learning.
- Competency in breaking down functions, genres and skills into smaller components/ parts in order to present realistic 'chunks' of the language for learners to process.
- Competency in providing multiple opportunities for learners to read and respond to a wide variety of children's and young people's literature and to think critically.
- Competency in applying appropriate instructional strategies for enquiry based, cooperative and collaborative learning.

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- Competency in helping learners to interpret information presented in various formats (e.g., maps, tables, graphs) and how to locate, retrieve, and retain information from a range of texts and technologies.

Domain: 3

The ICT Competencies

- Competency in doing basic hardware and software operations, productivity applications software, web browsers, communications software, presentation software, and management applications.
- Competency in using ICT to support the development of learners' knowledge construction skills and their continuous development.
- Competency in using technology to promote learners' language literacy to access a wide range of appropriate narrative and expository texts.
- Competency in applying the benefits of technology for teaching of writing and writing for publication, and providing instruction in the use of technology to facilitate written communication.
- Competency in providing learners with opportunities to use English language to interpret events and ideas based on information from maps, charts, graphics, video segments, and technology presentations.
- Competency in providing students with opportunities to use technology to produce various types of learner products viz. class newspapers, multimedia reports, etc.
- Competency in deciding where, when (as well as when not), and how to use technology for classroom activities and presentations.
- Competency in finding a variety of subject specific tools for language learning, and the ability to use them in a variety of problem-based and project-based situations.
- Competency in using network resources to help students collaborate, access information, and communicate with external experts for guidance.

- Competency in developing Multimedia-enabled language learning modules with the help of resource teachers and instructional designers.

Domain: 4

The Assessment Competencies

- Competency in applying different means of learner assessment, recording and reporting.
- Competency in planning and using assessment activities that assess not only what learners know about language, but also what learners are able to do as speakers, listeners, readers and writers.
- Competency in teaching learners how to assess themselves and their peers (self-assessment, peer assessment etc.) so that they are aware of their progress.
- Competency in using effective techniques to build learners' self-confidence giving feedback to them on their work in an encouraging way.
- Competency in using informal and formal oral language assessments and using continuous assessment strategies to evaluate learners' oral language skills.
- Competency in selecting and using appropriate informal and formal assessments to monitor and evaluate students' reading comprehension.
- Competency in helping a learner use meta-cognitive skills, including self-evaluation and self-monitoring skills.
- Competency in assessing learners' use of writing conventions and using continuous assessment strategies for monitoring students' development in this area.
- Competency in using informal and formal written language assessment strategies and assessing continuously learners' writing development.

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- Competency in assessing learners' learning regularly using a variety of assessment activities, both informal activities (e.g. monitoring during activities and peer/self-assessment) and formal ones (e.g. tests, presentations and projects).

Domain: 5

The Professional Competencies

- Competency in developing one's abilities continuously and showing inclination to research, experiment and to innovate.
- Competency in using technological skill and knowledge of Web resources to acquire additional subject matter and pedagogical knowledge in support of professional development.
- Competency in using ICT avenues to create professional knowledge communities.
- Competency in reflecting on one's own performance to further develop as a professional
- Competency in collaborating and sharing ideas with other professionals, seeking new ideas, and accepting and offering constructive criticism.
- Competency in having an awareness of the need for continuing professional development.
- Competency in designing activities around learners' interests considering local and regional specific needs rather than responding to an externally mandated curriculum.
- Competency in getting professional orientation and developing professional culture to know recent changes in pedagogy by attending seminars, discussions etc.
- Competency in engaging in pedagogical discussions with other teachers including informal observations of each other's teaching.

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- Competency in involving in peer professional leadership activities, sharing common beliefs about school goals and priorities.
- Competency in acting as a member of collaborative community of professionals who are continually learning themselves.

Conclusions

The study identified the competencies required of teachers to teach English in secondary schools were identified. It is recommended that the competencies identified by the study shall be used for accrediting short teacher development programmes and also to serve as a benchmark for accreditation of individual teachers, based on performance. It is recommended that the English teachers' competencies shall be reviewed consistently in tune with the changes and reform in the field of language education. The teachers need new competencies to cope with changes and to cater to the differing needs of the learners. This necessitates redefining the roles and competencies required of him from time to time.

The English teachers' need for acquiring a repertory of teaching strategies, techniques and tactics, and the need for improving teaching skills have to be strengthened through continuous teacher empowerment programmes. With regard to teaching English there needs to be a clear in-service education policy and perspective at all levels especially with the introduction of new curriculum.

English teachers must be offered a variety of routes to further their professional development and higher status within a framework of lifelong learning. The new methodological trends in English language teaching and the current tendency of the exclusive demand of the language call for readjustments not only in the way of teaching and learning, but also for changing teacher's role.

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ICT Based Innovative Practices in Classroom Management

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Education is like an engine for the development and improvement of any society. It does not just impart knowledge and skills, but it is also responsible for building human capital which breeds, drives and sets technological innovation and economic growth. Both the policymakers and teacher need to understand how technology and the education system interact with each other. The integration of ICTs in higher education brings many opportunities and also causes more challenges; that is why it is very important before implementing the use of ICTs to make sure that suitable levels of investment is in place, adequate training, good policy, careful planning, restructuring the teaching process, and a systematic approach also are required when integrating ICTs in education in order to achieve maximum educational benefits. It is also vital to think carefully about purpose of education or the context in which the ICTs can be used before implementation. ICTs are simply tools that help us achieve a purpose of education. In educational settings, this purpose will be linked to improved teaching and learning for students. ICTs do not in themselves improve student's learning opportunities; but educators who use ICTs thoughtfully do. It is the contextualized teaching and learning needs that ought to drive the ICTs intervention, rather than the technology itself.

Keywords: Multimedia, Transmission, Technology and Teaching.

Introduction

Experience is said to be a great teacher and this experience may be gained by the learner through direct and indirect means. Consequently, most of our learning is based on second hand experience in the form of

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information received by us about the objects, places, persons, ideas or events. This information provides a base for our knowledge. For this purpose the learner must be able to learn the art of getting information, store and make its use as and when desired. However the uses of such information as well as access to such information remain incomplete without the involvement of the involvement of the art of communication.

Globalization and technological change processes that have accelerated in tandem over the past years have created a new global economy powered by technology, fueled by information and driven by knowledge. The emergence of this new global economy has serious implications for the nature and purpose of educational institutions. The international labour organization defines the requirements for education and training in the new global economy simply as a

- Basic education for all
- Core work skills for all
- Lifelong learning for all

In this connection, Information and communication technologies (ICTS) which include radio and television, and the Internet - have been touted as potentially and powerful enabling tools for educational change and reform. When used appropriately, different ICTS are said to help expand access to education, Strengthen the relevance of education to the increasingly digital workplace, and raise educational quality by, among others, helping make teaching and learning into an engaging, active process connected to real life.

Definition of ICT

ICT is a type of technology employed in the shape of tools, equipment's and application support which help in the collection, storage, retrieval use transmission manipulation, and dissemination of information as accurately and efficiently possible for the purpose of enriching the knowledge and development communication, decision making as well as problem solving ability of the user. The emergence of this new global economy has serious implications for the nature and purpose of educational institutions. "ICT implies the technology which consists of electronic devices and associated human interactive materials that enable the user to employ them for a wide range of teaching - learning processes in addition to personal use."

Characteristics of ICT in Education

- ICT in education is any hardware and software technology that contribute in the educational information processing. In the context of present era, ICT mainly comprises of Computer technology with its hardware, like, Personal computer machine, infrastructure required for setting up Internet facility and also software like, CD ROM including various programme packages, E- learning strategies etc.
- ICT in education is any Information Technology that focuses on the acquisition, storage, manipulation, management, transmission or reception of data required for the educational purpose.
- ICT in education is any technology that deals with the exchange of information or in other words communication in the teaching learning process.
- ICT in education is any educational technology that is applied in the educational process. It encompasses Hardware approach like use of machines and materials, Software approach like use of methodologies and strategies of teaching learning and Systems approach that uses the management technology that deals with the systematic organization of the hardware and the software.
- ICT in education is the support material in the hands of the human resource involved in the educational process in order to enhance the quality of education.

Role of ICT in Classroom

ICT can provide situated learning, meta cognition, higher order thinking and a social basis for learning. It helps for the breaking of subject boundaries and for the development of project based and real world learning. The scope of ICT in the classroom is very wide. The uses of ICT in classroom are mentioned below.

Higher Order Thinking and ICT

The impact of ICT and new technologies is the shift of emphasis from teaching to learning and from the product to the process of learning. Castro claims that using ICT in classrooms has great potential to develop student's higher order cognitive skills.

ICT for equal opportunities

ICT helps the teaches to give equal opportunities for students according to individual difference and even the students with special educational needs. The students with special educational needs normally experience difficulties while engaging in ordinary learning. But ICT can help the students with special educational needs in the following ways:

- Learners who are dyslexic can use voice – activated computers
- Learners with cerebral palsy can use tablets.

ICT and Pedagogy

Schools exist to promote learning; it being their primary purpose. If this function is to be satisfied ICT will have to extend and improve the quality of student learning by making the related pedagogy dynamic. The ICT has successfully brought about many desirable changes in Pedagogy in several areas. A few among these are:

- Approaches to teaching and learning
- Teaching and learning style and behavior
- Context in which teaching and learning take place

The tendency is to move away from teacher-centered instruction towards the facilitation of learning with ICT, particularly through group work and student – centered learning. Teachers and learners are partners in the co-construction of knowledge.

A Course Management System (CMS) is a collection of software tools providing an online environment for course interactions. A CMS typically includes a variety of online tools and environments, such as:

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- An area for faculty posting of class materials such as course syllabus and handouts.
- An area for student posting of papers and other assignments.
- A grade book where faculty can record grades and each student can view his or her grades.
- An integrated email tool allowing participants to send announcement email messages to the entire class or to a subset of the entire class.
- A chat tool allowing synchronous communication among class participants.
- A threaded discussion board allowing asynchronous communication among participants.

In addition, a CMS is typically integrated with other databases in the university so that students enrolled in a particular course are automatically registered in the CMS as participants in that course.

Technical Tips

The CMS will likely not only have different modules, but also allow the user to select which of these modules they want to use in the class. If a particular module is not going to be used (e.g., if the online chat is not needed during the course), that module should be turned off so that it doesn't distract students

Multimedia Approach to Teaching Learning Process

Multimedia

Digital integration of Text, Graphics, Animation, Audio, Still images, Motion Video.

Nature of Multimedia Approach

Multimedia Techniques or Methods

- Multimedia approach uses a number of medias, devices, techniques in the teaching learning process.
- Multimedia approach can convey vast information and provide many sources from which student can access the information.
- Multimedia approach will improve the teaching learning process.
- Multimedia approach is not restricted to a single type of learning style. It can provide the support of a wide range of activities.
- Multimedia approach aims at providing meaningful learning experience via a mix of media in order to achieve predetermined objectives.
- Multimedia approach provides the opportunity to gain mastery of competencies and skills.
- The choice of the media has to be done carefully so that one does not hamper or reduce the effect of the other. That is each media must complement the other.
- Multimedia approach will enable the learner to get access to information in dynamic environment.

Procedure for Adopting Multimedia Approach

The following are the six steps to be followed while adopting the Multimedia Approach.

First Stage

- In this stage the teacher initiates the teaching – learning activities.
- Teacher delivers a well prepared lesson based on the objectives formulated.

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- Teacher uses a variety of media for his presentation.

Second Stage

- Teacher demonstrates a specific and specialized unit using a mix of media.
- The teacher may provide learner with programmed learning materials, cassettes and CDs.

Third Stage

- This is a preparatory stage for the learner before he starts independent learning.
- The student discusses with peer students and teachers his plan of action.

Fourth Stage

- In this stage the learner actively participates.
- He uses variety of media and materials in his self-study.

Fifth Stage

- In this stage the learner integrates theory and practice.

Sixth Stage

- In this stage learner finds that teaching – learning activities have to be organized on a higher level.
- The student involved in critical analysis, critical evaluation and exchange of ideas.

Role of Teacher in Multimedia Approach

- Teacher has to adopt a number of methods and techniques.
- Teacher has to be aware of the different available media and their availability.
- Teacher should be competent to use and demonstrate the use of the different media.
- Teacher should be skillful enough to make a judicious choice of media and competent enough to mix them sequentially and in an orderly manner.
- Teacher's role is that of a facilitator or manager of activities.
- Teacher has to lead his student for independent, individualized learning.

Prerequisites for Developing a Multimedia Instructional Device

Planning

- Express the idea and purpose
- Develop the objectives
- Consider the learner
- Find related material
- Prepare the content outline

Designing the Multimedia Device

- Identifying the factors or criteria for media selection
- Select the media
- Make a story board
- Develop the script

Production of the Multimedia Device

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- Take the picture and keep a record
- Process the picture
- Edit the picture

Edit the Narration and Captions

- Mix sound
- Prepare final copies

Follow-up

- Use the materials
- Evaluate for future use
- Revise the materials
- Obtain the copyright for the materials

Advantages of the Multimedia Approach

- Multimedia approach enables the student to represent information using several different media.
- It can arouse the curiosity among the learner and provide them vivid impressions.
- Multimedia can take into account different learning styles – some pupil learns by interpreting text, while others require more graphical representations.
- Can develop a positive attitude among the learners towards the teaching-learning process.
- Multimedia Approach allows for self-pacing

- Technique of simulation can be effectively applied through the multimedia approach.
- Helps in development of higher order thinking skills.
- Multimedia approach provides the student the flexibility of 'anywhere', 'any time' learning.
- Helps in developing group and interpersonal skills.
- Effective remediation programmes can be implemented through the multimedia approach.
- Multimedia approach can bridge language barriers since audio is not the only means of communication.

Disadvantages of the multimedia Approach

- Requires highly sophisticated infrastructure facilities, which may lead to heavy financial burden.
- Expertise and skill are required to operate the multimedia devices, which will lead to the problem of non-availability of human resources.
- Not feasible in the all topics of study.

ICT for Assessment

Traditional assessment quite often degenerates into testing of recall, memorization and factual knowledge. Students sometimes have to wait for several days or, in the case public examinations, months for feedback in the form of a simple indication of the grade reached. ICT, however, has the potential to develop and use alternative strategies for more fruitful assessment. Assessment using ICT, acts as a spring board for learning, having a strong formative potential. It provides a move to strengthen the links between assessment and learning.

ICT in Administration

Schools use the ICT in a variety of administrative matters. Teachers can use the ICT to streamline record keeping and related administrative tasks. With the ICT, reports become more reliable, updated, timely and easy to retrieve and read. This results in a reduction in the need to sort through files

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of documents. Also, statistical and comparative analyses can be made available immediately. Further, through the ICT, teachers and head teachers become more accountable, s achievements, complaints about teachers, deviation from curriculum planning and time tables. In short administration becomes more transparent.

Simulation and Game

Simulation is a quantitative procedure which describes a process by developing a model of that process and then conducting a series of organized experiments to predict the behavior of the process over time. The use of simulation is powerful technique which exploits some of the unique features of the computer as an aid to learning.

Game is also a powerful learning material. It promotes discovery learning. Games and simulations have considerable acceptances as interesting as pedagogical tools. Computer games and simulations can:

- Improve the speed and quality of learning and performances
- Stimulate and develop motivation and curiosity
- Enhance learning through visualization, experimentation, prediction, manipulation and logical thinking.
- Enable students to experience success and sense of achievement.

Conclusion

ICT plays very important role in classroom. The main advantage of ICT is that it has liberated human beings from tedious tasks and work which needs great physical effort. In the digital age bank dealings, medical assistance, learning and travel can all be controlled and managed by computer networks. Everyday human life is being altered in accordance with the advancement in science and technology. Our increasingly technology-rich world raises new concerns for education while also expecting schools to become the knowledge societies.

Firstly, technology can provide the necessary tools for improving the teaching and learning process, opening new avenues and opportunities. In a

knowledge economy driven by technology people who do not master these competencies may suffer from a new form of 'digital divide' that may affect their capacity to fully integrate the knowledge economy and society. Students are taken to a world of virtual reality where they simply conceive things without a second thought. No communication occurs when the child is left in the hands of these digital monsters. Science has proved the lack of sustained attention among students, trained in modern educational system since they are not made to think with their brains.

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New Dimensions of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the 21st century: A Review

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Communicative language teaching began in Britain in 1960s to teach English as a second or foreign language. This paper was designed to describe the advantages of CLT in L2 learning classroom in secondary schools of Ethiopia. It focused on the learners' opportunity to practice speaking for communication than mastering language structures. In Ethiopia, English is taught and learned as foreign language. The learners are expected to improve not only their linguistic competence but also their communicative competence. So learning English is not only mastering of structure, vocabulary and pronunciation, but also to improve the ability of speaking. Language learners who learn English intensive, the student should be able to interact orally; however, most of the students in Ethiopia secondary schools do not speak English effectively during communication. And also the researcher observed similar problems in Halale secondary and preparatory school at Kindo Didaye Worada in Wolaita zone. The aim of this study is to address that classroom activities maximize opportunities for learners to speak English in communicative way for meaningful activities in real world. The study used interview, questionnaire and CR observation and data was analyzed by using both quantitative and qualitative methods. English teachers and 30 students participated in this study from Kindo Halale secondary school. The study concluded by forwarding possible conclusions and recommendations.

Keywords: Communication, Understanding, Observation and Activities.

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Introduction

Oral communication is activity involving two or more people in which hearers and speakers have to react to what they hear and make their communication. Howe (2003), speaking is extremely important, it is a voice in to students' writing, it helps them to develop and make sense of their reading, it also wonders for their self-esteem, and builds confidence for outside world. Therefore, more of one's daily social life communication takes place through speaking. CLT is used to enhance communication in a foreign language within real life situation.

English is one of the foreign languages in Ethiopia context. It is taught as a subject from very beginning of KG. Besides, it is used as medium of instruction of all subject matters both in secondary and tertiary levels of education. It is one of the compulsory subject in matriculation. The Ethiopian ministry of Education mentions the importance of English language as follows. In Ethiopia, there is a large demand for good English command, it serves as a medium of instruction at secondary and higher education level in Ethiopia". (MOE, 2005). In special case in SNNPRS, the primary education (grades 5-8) English is used for medium of instruction for all subjects. And in Addis Ababa city administration and Gambela region it begins at grade 7 (Abiy, 2005). The learners may be good at grammar structure, but they may fail to communicate orally. Therefore, learning a foreign language does not mean only mastering its structures, but also developing communication abilities of every day in the real world. To do it the foreign language learner is needed to speak which fosters communication ability rather than mastering its structure.

Basically, speaking is human verbal activity takes place between pairs or groups through oral presentation to communicate ideas, thoughts, facts, opinions, wishes, desires, and so many day to day social life activities. It is part of the daily involvement of most people with language activities and the prime motor of language change. It also provides our main data for understanding the message through language contact. Everybody in the world carries out different activities through speaking in order to have transaction function (conveying message) or interpersonal function (making good relationship between people). As it is quoted from Howe (2003), in the back ground of his study, speaking skill is extremely important to students. It gives sense for the rest language skills and builds students, confidence for outside world.

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The main goal of teaching speaking skill is in order to enhance learners' oral communicative competence in their real world life. Murcia (1991). States the good of teaching speaking in class as the way of promoting the acquisition of communication skill and fosters real communication in and out of the class. Harmer (2007), mentions three reasons why students should speak in class. First, it is with the reason that speaking provides opportunities for learners to internalize the linguistic patterns.

Second, it is because with the speaking tasks students try to use feedback from their teachers to improve their speaking ability. Third, speaking provides the opportunities to activate various language activities which make them to interact each other. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), communicative language teaching start, with a theory of language as tool of communication. The classroom goal of instruction is focused on developing learners' communicative competence. Nunan(1991) states, there are five features of communicative language teaching;

- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- The introduction of authentic texts in to the learning situation
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus, not only on language but also on the learning process itself.
- An enhancement of the learner's personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.
- An attempt to link classroom language with outside the classroom.

Speaking can be learned by interacting. In CLT real life circumstances are used and that necessitates communication. With the use of LCT, Learners will have chances to speak and interact in target language. Teachers should provide opportunities for communicative activities (Kayl, 2006).

When students interact one another among them, they develop speaking skill as well as self-confidence. Several roles are assumed for teachers in communicative language teaching, the importance of particular roles begin determined by the view of CLT adopted. Breen and Candlin (1980), describe the teacher has two main roles the first role is to facilitate the communicative process among all participants and the various activities and texts.

The second role is to act as an independent participant with the learning-teaching group. According to Richards and Rodgers (1986), in communicative language teaching, the following roles are assumed for a teacher a teacher is a facilitator of the communication process, be analyst, counselor, and process manager. His/her responsibility is determining and responding to learners' language needs. The teacher would them provide many artificial contexts in the classroom by using students and items from there, famous people, or anything within the normal daily life of the students, to create an understanding of the use of the student. The students eventually practice the structures in meaning full way in groups or pairs (Goner, Phillips, and Walters, 1978). The learner's own personal experiences are regarded as important contributing elements to classroom learning. They respond to each other directly or indirectly.

They work out interpretations of the meaning of the issue through communication that always or commonly understand in the context the given situation (Brown 1994). According to Nunan(1991), students can learn with an emphasis on communicating through interaction in a foreign language. Hiu(2005) proposes that the roles of student in CLT classroom are supposed to the negotiators for meaning, communicators, discovers, and contributors of knowledge and information. The study it deals with how the article conducted, who the Participants of the study were, low the data was collected and analyzed, advantages of CLT in L2 classroom and ways to be effective in L2 communication.

Participants

Secondary school has 26 sections, 1,569 students and 6 EFL teachers. 160 students participated in filling questionnaire in 32 groups of 5 members. Three EFL teachers interviewed among the six. The information obtained related to advantages of CLT in L2 classroom. It was conducted to four sections.

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Discussion

Which one is more important? (Authentic context)

Activities	Frequency(groups)	percent
Group discussion	32	100%
Writing notes and lecturing	8	25%
Pair interaction	24	75%
Silent observation	0	0
Role play	32	100%
Democratic dialogue	32	100%

Table: 1: selected classroom activities in CLT class

As it can be seen from table 1 above, 32 groups (100%)

Of the students proved that group discussion, Role play and democratic dialogue must be fully selected class room activities during CLT class and the rest are not more effective activities for the matter. This indicates that the student considered the main tools to implement communicative language teaching to teach speaking skill.

In communicative language teaching approach, an emphasis is given to communication through interaction in the target language. The responsibility of the teacher is to facilitate the situation that help the learners to communicate each other (Richard and Rodgers, 1986). According to them. The primary function of language is to allow interaction and communication.

Learning to communicate

Why do you learn English?	Frequency	Percent %
To pass class exam	40	25%
To have better result in higher commission entrance	48	30%
It is subject matter like other subject	25	15.62
To communicate with other	22	13.75

To get good job and increase chances of promotion	25	15.62
	160	100%

Table: 2: The Purpose Why Students Learn English

A language learner is expected show the significance of change on his/her communicative competence. The goal of teaching spoken English is to on prove students, oral conversational abilities and to foster international competitiveness in the real world life (shin, 2007). But the students' immediate goal world English language learning is not matched with the goal of learning a language for a means of communication.

Table 2 shows that the majority of respondents responded that they learn English in order to pass the exam (25%) to have better result in entrance exam (30%), because it is given as a subject matter like other subjects (15.62%) and to get good job and increase chances of promotion (15.62%) and at the last the least number of respondents (25 or 13.75%) learn English to communicate with others. As it is possible to realize from the above table 2, the learners themselves give attention for the exam rather than communication. The researcher interviewed all the ELT teachers, most of them responded that entrance exam is the only thing that decides the students, future life. It causes failures or joining university to better education and have better career in their life. Not only the learners but also the teachers themselves focus on the language parts which are frequently appeared in written exams. Speaking a language in everyday life situation to develop oral communication is not targeted during classroom teaching- learning and in assessment.

Nagata (1995), states testing speaking skill becomes avital part of all examination in the all schools which gives English as a foreign language. The principles of CLT approach lies on the fact that learners learn a language by using it for different purposes. The purposes are real purposes in everyday life or the artificial purposes created in the classroom. In communicative syllabuses needs of the learners in different situations are considered. And appropriate language for these purposes or situations are learned or taught. English for Ethiopia student text book grade 11 is well designed to implement communicative language teaching approach to teach speaking skill, but the need for learners is not matched with the text book; because the learners as well as their teachers focus on the part that frequently appeared in exam rather than focusing on how to facilitate the situation to emphasize communicative language teaching implementation in teaching speaking skill. The CLT implementation in L2 classroom. Providing opportunities for learners

Problems learners face in spoken English class	Frequency	Percent %
Lack of opportunities to practice speaking skill	60	37.5
Using other languages	54	33.75
The teacher centered teaching method	46	28.75
Total	160	100

Table3 Contextual Problems Students Face in Spoken Class

In communicative language teaching method, the teacher has to put the language patterns first. Then, the learners have to practice it with guidance and counseling of the teacher.

The above research information reveals that the learners have no opportunity to practice the language patterns, the teacher doesn't create artificial situation as the researcher revealed in the above point. Therefore, the learners have no motivation to be taken part in learning process. Effective learning frequently involves learners in exploration of new linguistic train, and interaction can often be the medium for providing the stretch that is necessary for ongoing language for development ----to take advantage of language learning opportunities outside the classroom (Park and Lee, 2006)

Focus of the teacher		
On what components does your teacher focus	Frequency	Percent %
Language forms	96	60
Meaning	28	18
Pronunciation	36	22
Total	160	100

Table4 The Focus of Teacher in Teaching Speaking Skill

In the above table 4, the respondents said that (96 or 60%) their teacher focuses on language forms (28 or 18%) their teacher focuses on meaning and (36 or 22%) their teacher focuses on pronunciation. The main

objective of communicative language teaching is to prove classroom learning process. It maximizes learners' opportunities of speaking in the target language in communicative way to transfer meaning. Its primary focus is on helping learners create meaning rather than helping them develop perfectly grammatical structures and pronunciation. The emphasis is given to meaning rather than the language forms. However, as the above data indicates, the least consideration was given to meaning.

Major Findings

- Based on the main focuses of the study, the following major findings were drawn.
- There had found that in communicative language teaching approach the emphasis is given to communication through interaction in the target language and the main tools should be considered to implement CLT in classroom.
- The problems of teachers focusing on grammar based teaching for examination by neglecting CLT approach
- Accordingly, English instruction is mostly limited to traditional large-group instruction where grammar is given alight significance while oral skill (speaking) which is the only means for oral communication is neglected.
- Student learn English teaching practices are shaped according to the exams, which are mainly focus on written grammar vocabulary and knowledge of language components rather than speaking it for means of communication to transfer and /or receive meaning.
- There are no opportunities for learners to practice to enhance communicative competence, they face English only in classroom.

Conclusion

This study focused on the advantages of CLT and its implementation problems in L2 classroom in Kindo Halale secondary school at Wolaita area, southern Ethiopia. The study came across low CLT helps L2 learners if it's implemented well, problems concerned with students, teachers and both

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students and teachers commonly. It used questionnaire, interview and classroom observation checklist to collect data for finding out the results. All collected data through questionnaires were analyzed by tabulation and charged in two percent based on five features of CLT of Nunan (1991). Observation checklist and interview were conjugated with questionnaires which match in idea on discussion. The data was analyzed and interpreted in descriptive method.

There are problems that hinder learner's communicative ability. Such as lack of opportunity to practice language components, interaction in target language is not more practiced, shortage of introducing authentic context in to classroom situation, less participation of the learners, lack of consideration of students, personal experience enhancement, lack of attempt to link classroom language learning with outside activities, other language interference during classroom teaching learning process. Therefore, the study shows the implementation of CLT in teaching speaking was not effective in the selected schools.

Recommendations

- Both teachers' and student's attention should be shifted to CLT in teaching L2 classroom. From this perspective, student oral communicative abilities can be improved more effectively. In case reform would result in positive changes in both teachers and students' motivation towards teaching and learning English through CLT method. If the motivation of both teachers and students once aroused, CLT method would simply be implemented in teaching speaking L2 classroom.
- In the process of effective implementation of CLT in teaching speaking skill in the selected school, special attention should be paid for student's opportunity to practice language components for purpose of oral communication rather than mastering the forms.
- Authentic context and artificial social situations should be created to practice speaking.
- Essential and useful way to implement CLT is to provide in-service training for teachers with opportunities to retrain themselves in CLT method with special manual and have regularly schedule time.

- It is also important and better solution if the school community specially language teachers and language department organize event where English is used such as English-speaking days, singing, writing and reading poems, preparing and reading news, and literature competition

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Virtual Reality in Education

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Virtual Reality (VR) is a real – time manmade environment created with the help of a computer software and hardware which gives a live experience in learning, gaming, architectural walkthrough, advertising, movies and many others. It creates a major platform for education, where those which are impossible or extremely hard to be taught in a natural environment are made possible in this manmade environment. It is a latest technology which is creating a platform for itself which is also a boon in electronic learning (e-learning). It attracts the audience of all age groups with its three – dimensional presentation which includes text, image, audio and video. This paper focuses on the usage of this new technology in the field of education by elucidating its purpose, usage and future.

Keywords: Virtual Environment, Virtual Reality and Latest technology.

Introduction

The rapid growth in Technology is creating a challenge each day, for the teachers to use innovative and attractive facets for teaching so that the students get fully involved in the learning experience. Also, it is the biggest challenge for every teacher to teach a toughest subject in an easier way. Virtual Reality paves the way for helping each teacher in this process for a better teaching – learning experience. Virtual Reality (VR) is a 3D technology which is

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created with the help of three - dimensional aspect creating softwares and supporting hardware in order to create a live experience to the audience. It is of great help in the field of education as it creates an easy learning experience for even the toughest subjects by providing a practical way of learning.

This practical way of learning is made possible in a Virtual Environment created with the help of any 3D editing software which is experienced by using a head mounted virtual device in an in-built virtual space. The Virtual Reality Modelling Language (VRML) helps in the creation of this Virtual Learning Experience which is a computer programming language which facilitates this technology. This technology is widely used in military training for new cadets who get a live experience of a battlefield and get trained to face all tough situations and save their country and their own lives. The feedback is positive as the cadets who are been trained with this technology are more efficient than the others. Also, this technology helps in training pilots to handle aircraft which helps them easily handle when they are into direct training sessions. In the field of medicine, this technology is used to train junior doctors for facing complicated surgeries which is very hard to teach while handling one such, but a video of the same could be showed. The VR training is more powerful than learning by watching such videos. This paper portrays how virtual reality technology is been used in education, its supporting devices, environments along with its purpose and future.

Virtual Reality Devices

The hardware and software component devices used for the working of virtual reality are as follows:

Hardware

The major hardware needed is a computer, either a PC or a smart phone. Then the following other devices are also used.

- Joy sticks, Force balls/ Tracking Balls, Controller Wands
- Data Gloves, Track pads, Magnetic Trackers
- On - device control buttons, Motion trackers
- Body Suits, Tread Mills

Virtual Reality in Education

- Motion Platforms (Virtual Omni)
- MIDI Keyboards
- Shutter Glasses
- Head Mounted Displays (HMD)
- Cave Automatic Virtual Environment (CAVE)
- Binocular Omni - Orientation Monitor (BOOM)
- Visual/ Auditory/ Haptic Displays
- Projection Screens

Software

The software components are:

- An app or program running locally
- Web services
- A content server
- A 3D software (3Ds Max, Maya, Soft Image, etc.)

Virtual Reality in Education

Virtual Reality can be used in Education with the help of these four types of Virtual Reality Environments in the following ways which are clearly discussed below:

Immersive

Immersive Virtual Reality environments gives a learner experience where the learners feel that they are really present in the environment with the help of wearing the Head Mounted Displays (HMD), in a CAVE environment, where everything appears very close to the eyes of the learner as a 3D object. This helps in understanding about a subject more clearly as it explains with live diagrams as shown in the below figure. It also helps the learner to keep in mind the learnt content for a very long time as they are given hands on experience on it. To put it clearer, with the help of Immersive Virtual Environment students can be taught in depth as what are the parts of a human body, how it functions with the help of a live diagram, by observing all parts in

a closer view to the eyes which is impossible in a real – time world unless each part of the human body is cut open and explained.

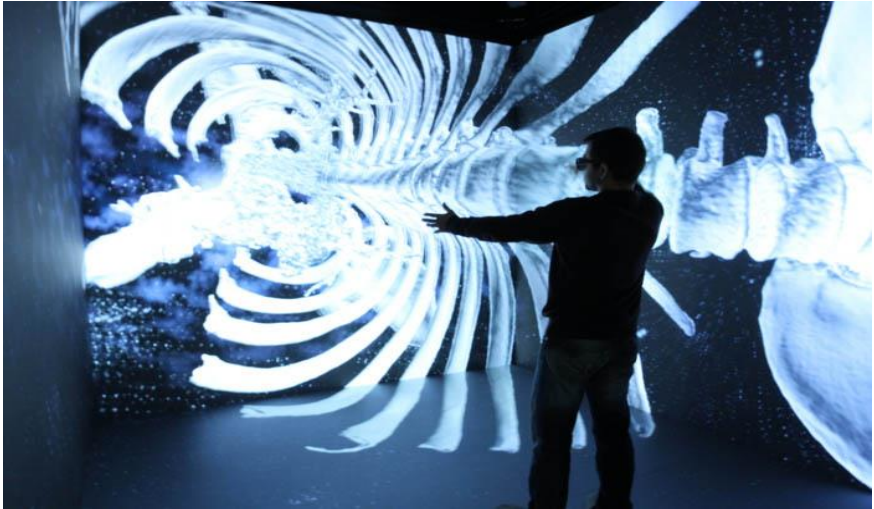


Fig. 1: Cave Immersive VR Environment

Non – Immersive

A Non – Immersive Virtual environment is just the opposite of immersive type whereas the learner gets an experience at a distance where they are not fully into the Virtual environment which is created. This type of environment is accessed with the help of keyboards, joysticks, track balls, mice and other external hardware. This experience is just like watching a video or a tutorial on a computer or a smart phone but it is accessed with VR hardware as we see in the below figure as how the learner by wearing VR hand gloves and accessing non – immersive virtual environment studies the human body parts.



Fig. 2: Non - Immersive VR Environment

The difference between immersive and non-immersive could be clearly understood through these two figures where the immersive attracts more rather than the non - immersive but both have its own advantages and disadvantages depending on their functions as sometimes some learners would not be that dare enough to have an immersive experience to study the parts of a human body whereas a non - immersive will be much more suitable. But when it is training on a recent device like using a professional camera, the immersive way will be more pleasing rather than a non - immersive form.

Semi - Immersive

A Semi - immersive Virtual environment is a latest technology which gives a partially immersive experience as the name suggests. A suitable example would be teaching a subject by showing it with large projection screens. It gives an experience as like learning through a projector illustrated PowerPoint presentation. The following picture gives in more insight regarding semi - immersive environment where a professor in engineering gives a

practical exposure to the students on recent mechanical equipment which is designed in a 3D environment and projected as like projecting in a screen with the help of a computer and projector. The appeal of the new technology is more eye catchy than the former one which we use.

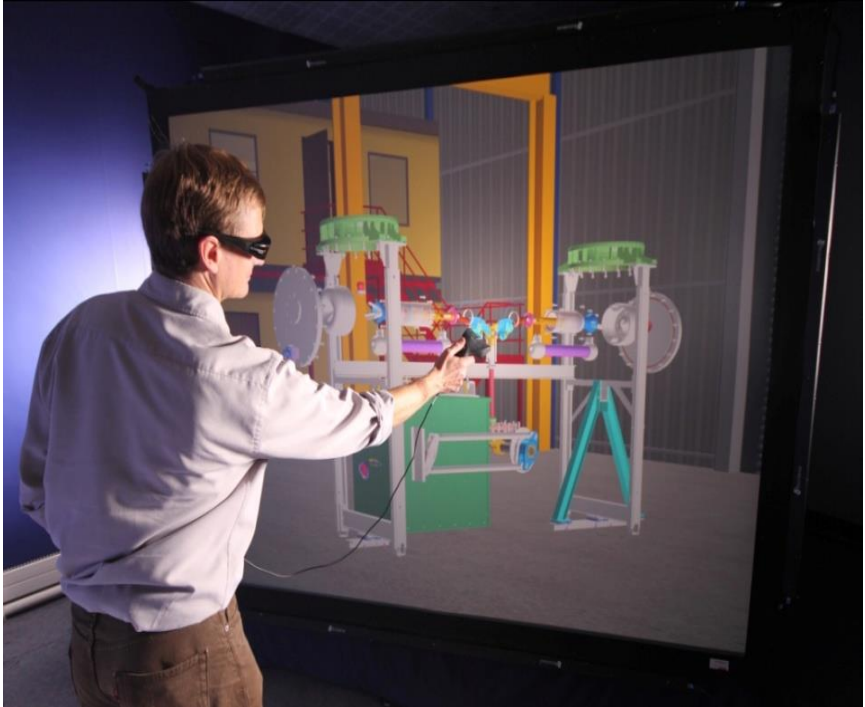


Fig. 3: Semi - Immersive VR Environment

Collaborative

Collaborative Virtual reality environments gives a multi learner experience where many learners can be involved to have a combined learning experience as like Collaborative learning using a video conferencing or a chat forum. The VR also provides opportunity for such unique learning experience. The following figure explains as how it is connected as like a Chat Forum where the learners can move around the Virtual Environment discussing about the subject and have a wonderful learning experience.



Fig. 4: Collaborative VR Environment

This figure puts in light as how constructing a site as an engineer and working for a project can be prepared as a group which is being practiced in this Virtual Collaborative Immersive Environment.

Conclusion

Education is stepping into a new era where the technology is making the work of a teacher even easier that even a student who takes time to understand and is differently – abled could also learn like the other students and come out in flying colours. Also, teachers should take concern to include such technological aspects in their way of teaching and necessary training must be given to them so that they themselves can handle this technology and teach easily. At present in India, Virtual Reality Technology has been used in Medical, Military, Navy and Air force Training. But still it hasn't come into importance in school and college education. But, in foreign countries, they

have made a trial with this technology in education which has become a great success and they have implemented it in their course curriculum. In the coming years, definitely this technology will create a platform in India too.

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Effective Speaking and Effective Listening

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Listening, speaking, reading and writing are the four skills in learning a language. Speaking is considered by learners as the most desirable skill for communication in the globalization era. However, it is high time the learners realized what the answer to the questions is such as what do the aspirants of the language have to do before they speak? What does a child learn before he talks? What do the speakers do before chatting? Etc. The most essential thing is listening. Children, naturally, begin listening to their parents when they are babies. They are often greeted, spoken to and admired without expecting any response. Nobody knows if the baby understands the spoken words yet the process continues. Children automatically acquire such language over some time, and later on gradually produce it through actual experience. The production of the words, sentences may be incomplete at first, but successful at last. That leads to speaking skill which is quite applicable to daily conversation. In learning English, listening can help improve speaking considerably. Although it is the first of all skills, it is neither the easiest nor the most meaningless. One has to hear various types of English repeatedly and continuously if he wants to communicate properly, meaningfully and naturally. This paper deals with the effect of listening to speak English as a language unconsciously.

Keywords: Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing and Language.

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Effective Speaking and Effective Listening

Introduction

It is a wish of everyone to speak English fluently with great foreign accent but not everyone knows the easiest and simplest way to do so. English skills can be acquired by using different methods. For example, reading newspapers and magazines, listening to English music and news channels, watching English movies and dramas, and for some with vigor getting admission in an English language center. Of all, the most important thing needed for one aspiring to improve his English-speaking skills is being in an English-speaking environment.

If an English-speaking environment is created, communication will take place effectively. Continuous hearing and speaking helps to improve the language skills unconsciously. New idioms, structures, phrases can be learnt if an interaction with people is done in an English-speaking environment. The learners get more confidence and gradually become less hesitant in such kind of environment. Discussion of ideas with the people having same interests is possible which motivates making friends. The practice becomes far easier and fun to improve the speaking skills.

Making an English-speaking Environment

The best way to have an English-speaking environment is to create an environment so that one will be bound to speak only in English. Hours and hours of speaking and listening to English will have a great impact on the English skills and the mind of the learner will automatically set itself to this new environment. For learners of English as a second language complaining about not grasping the language as expected or targeted, they can make friends with other learners or aspirants as a group with willingness to improve their English-speaking skills.

This method will not only improve the English-speaking skills but also the knowledge of the learners. The conversation may be on different topics to discuss. The place of meeting can be anywhere like parks, restaurants, movies, dinner, picnics etc. It is not necessary to have a particular place for this group

but needs to be the one making you have a relaxed environment. When a learner plunges himself in English speaking environment, he will find that he is learning English easily and quickly with a lot of fun which also makes him become more confident in speaking English and interacting with people.

The real problem with everyone aspiring to speak English as a second language is the practice of old conscious way of learning English. They use their conscious brain to analyze English grammar, memorize English vocabulary, and translate English messages. This is the method they used and were taught in school. They consciously studied the mechanics of English, as if it was a car.

Learning the language unconsciously

Languages should be learned unconsciously, not consciously. This paper reveals that unconscious learning of English is much better than consciously “studying” the language. Students who learn English unconsciously learn faster and better than students who use traditional, conscious, analytical study methods and it is proved in countless studies. The result of conscious study of a language is that the learner knows a lot about English grammar rules and translations but he can neither speak well nor understand native speakers.

Unconscious methods are more effective. These methods provide understandable English input to the brain of the learners and then the unconscious brain does all the rest of the work. English stories, articles, conversations, movies, and novels can be enjoyed consciously without thinking about grammar rules and hence the need of attempting to memorize words does not arise. Basically, the brainy system leads to “subconscious” learning method. Grammar is learnt by listening to many crazy Mini-Stories and grammar patterns are repeated during the story not bothering about any rules. The brain learns English grammar unconsciously when the story is just listened and enjoyed consciously. In this way, the grammar is actually used and the spoken and written English grammar is also improved tremendously without any stress. It is like an automatic process-just saying and writing

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things better and with the effortless feeling. The learners never think about rules at all.

The most important thing is that the learner has to trust himself. Generally, many learners are afraid to use unconscious methods because they do not trust their own brains. They are afraid to relax and enjoy English learning and so they do not let the learning happen naturally and effortlessly. Unfortunately, these students almost never learn to speak English well because of their fear. It is good not to be one of those students. By changing the way of learning, the language can be acquired unconsciously and spoken excellently.

The unconscious mind is a powerful tool, though the system of education rarely gives it sufficient attention. The subconscious mind has not been well understood even though its creative potential is much greater than the conscious mind. Many psychologists have started to study the unconscious state of mind to understand its importance in human life and they have found that the unconscious mind contributes greatly for learning anything, including language. It is a vast reserve of energy and creative power.

Numerous scientists, scholars, writers and artists all use their unconscious mind to understand and create which is the matter of a subject for learning. The final thoughts are brought into unity and clarity through a sudden insight, unexpected inspiration or daydream realization. The learners can remember stories, visual images, and emotional phrases more easily than grammar patterns and dry explanations because they speak to the whole brain, not one limited part of the brain. An overly logical approach to language structures keeps English from soaking into the unconscious brain where it can be converted into a larger whole.

Educational psychologists and neurological researchers know that different brain functions occur on different sides of the brain. The left side of the brain is used for logical, sequential, rational, analytic, and objective matters or thoughts. That is not a bad place to start for learning, but the other side is equally important because it is where another aspect of learning takes root. The right side of the brain is in charge of the larger whole, the big picture. It

works in a more random and chaotic fashion, remaining intuitive, holistic, synthesizing and subjective. It is where the pieces of information, image are brought together into a whole. When these two sides of the brain are considered, it is easy to understand that the system for studying English in the present system of Indian education is almost entirely left brain oriented.

The learners need to work on grammar for tests under pressure as they are all with left-brain concerns that emphasize logical thinking, analysis and accuracy. Most learners in India do not think in English because the right brain's processes are not sufficiently enacted. The learners have to dream in English as it is a sign that a larger unity is being established in their minds which rarely happens when cramming for a test, though students might dream about their test anxiety.

Listening is an essential exercise for developing the speaking skills that too in a subconscious way. Teaching the techniques of listening is not an easy task and it is the most challenging skill for many second language learners to obtain. Listening is the principal means by which learners expand their knowledge of spoken forms of the second or target language provided the listening activities should be monitored by conducting class discussions on their comprehension and on the recordings of the spoken texts they have listened previously.

Active Listening Skills

Active listening is an essential skill. One of the most common mistakes the learners make is getting confused between 'hearing' and 'listening'. Hearing is merely noting that someone is speaking whereas listening is making sense of what is heard which requires the individual to pay constant attention, interpret, and remember what is heard. Hearing is passive; listening is active and so a passive listener is considered to be a tape recorder. If the speaker gives a clear message, the listener will probably get most of what is said. For learners of English for communicative purposes, this is not enough. They must be active listeners. Active listening requires the listener to hear the words and identify the feelings associated with the words.

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Learning individual words is not a prescribed way of language acquisition. The system of learning phrases encourages the language learners to master the language more quickly and has much better grammar. The system of effective listening implies the fact that speaking has closer relationship to listening than reading. The learners have to listen much to the speech of others or reading of a text. Listening should be slow and deep during initial period of learning a language as it helps the learners to get deeper into their brain. The real conversations of native speakers and materials can be taken for practice as they serve the purpose of improving grammar. For learners, listening should be done repeatedly and intervention is not at all appreciated.

Retaining what observed is an important step in the listening process. Memory is considered to be essential factor to the listening process because the information the listeners retain when they involve in the listening process is how they create meaning from words. Every one depends on the memory to fill in the blanks when the process of listening is done. Everyone has different memories and so the speaker and the listener may attach different meanings to the same statement. However, the memories are fallible and the people cannot remember everything that they have ever listened to.

There are many reasons for everyone to forget some information that one has received. The first is cramming. When one crams there is a lot of information entered into his short-term memory. Shortly after cramming, when the information is not needed anymore, it is purged from the brain before it can be transferred into the long-term memory. Yet another reason is that proper attention is not paid when the information is received. Alternatively, when the information is received, importance may not be attached to it, so it loses its meaning. At the time the information was received, motivation might be lacked to listen carefully to better remember it. Using information immediately after receiving it enhances information retention and lessens the forgetting aspects. Retention is lessened when one engages in mindless listening, where little effort is made to listen to a speaker's message. Mindful listening is active listening.

Conclusion

The four interconnected activities are essential to the process of listening. They are sensing, which is the actual reception of verbal and nonverbal messages. Interpreting which is the practice of understanding the message. Evaluating which refers to the process of sorting facts, information that can be verified, from opinion. Evaluating which also involves concurring or rejecting the speaker's message and responding which is the process of reacting with verbal and nonverbal cues to the message. While hearing can be measured with audiometric instruments, listening is a largely subjective experience. Thus, the first three steps of the listening activities cannot be directly evaluated or examined, as they are hidden from our view. Because most listening behaviors cannot be measured, the last, responding, becomes essential for the speaker to determine if he or she has been successful in getting his or her point across.

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Parental Involvement in Education

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The present study is intended to focus on the involvement of parents in the education. The education plays a vital role in the development of the country. The progress of the country depends on the wellbeing of the students who carry the potentials of all the development of the nation, so the involvement of parents in education. Parents are the sculptures of young generation, they develop the cognitive skills of the children, so their involvement in education should be the remarkable one. This bring crucial changes in the progress of the nation.

Keywords: Finnish Education, Cognitive Skills, Progress and Late Bloomers.

Introduction

Education is the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs, and habits. Educational methods include storytelling, discussion, teaching, training, and directed research. Education frequently takes place under the guidance of educators, but learners may also educate themselves.^[1] Education can take place in formal or informal settings and any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels, or acts may be considered educational. The methodology of teaching is called pedagogy. A fundamental goal of education is to make an individual perfect

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and reasonable. It makes an individual civilized and refined. Cultured and modernized. It is the only mean for a civilized and socialized society. It is the key to solve various problems of life. As students of the modern era digital natives, they should be taught through techno-based instructional aids.

Finnish Education

This Education system is implemented in Finland. In which parents are the first teachers. They were given maternity package of three books for each parent and one for the newborn baby. So, the parents are instructed to involve themselves in Education. They focus on the quality education and the self-interested learning. So, the parents can give much importance to the children who takes long phase in learning. The children learn on their own interest though they lag in Education.

Late Bloomers (LB)

A slow learner initially wants to learn, but has a problem with the process. A reluctant learner is not motivated and can also be passive aggressive, creating more problems for teachers and parents through non-cooperation. Reluctant learners seldom have slow learning problems. Actually, slow learners are normal students but the problem is that they are simply not interested in studying under traditionally accepted system of education.

Cognitive Skills

‘Cognitive skills’ refers to the abilities to gain meaning and knowledge from experience and information. Cognition is more than just learning information, it's the ability to think about new information, process and speak about it and apply it to other, previously acquired information.

Cognitive skill development in children involves the progressive building of learning skills, such as attention, memory and thinking. These crucial skills enable children to process sensory information and eventually learn to evaluate, analyze, remember, make comparisons and understand cause and effect. Although some cognitive skill development is related to a child's

genetic makeup, most cognitive skills are learned. That means thinking and learning skills can be improved with practice and the right training.

Parent- Teacher Association

This may include being a school board member, a participant on a parent advisory committee or a local school improvement council, or an active member of the PTA. Areas in which parents may be helping to make program decisions include goal setting, development and implementation of program activities, assessment, personnel decisions, and funding allocations. This area of parent involvement is one of the most controversial. Surveys show that most parents would like to play a more active role in this type of involvement, whereas most school administrators and teachers exhibit great reluctance to encourage parents to become partners in governance.

- The elimination of mistaken assumptions parents and school people may hold about one another's motives, attitudes, intentions and abilities.
- The growth of parents' ability to serve as resources for the academic, social and psychological development of their children--with the potential for much longer-term influence. (because of continued interaction with their children over time)
- The increase of parents' own skills and confidence, sometimes furthering their own educations and upgrading their jobs, thus providing improved role models for their children.
- The increase in parents serving as advocates for the schools throughout the community.

Review of Related Literature

"Parent Participation in the Schools." *Phi Delta Kappan* 67(1986): 442-446. Describes the changing relationships between schools and communities and discusses the critical role of parent involvement in education. Presents detail on parent involvement programs in New Haven, Connecticut elementary schools programs which resulted in the schools' moving from being extremely low achieving to universally high achieving.

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A Review of Research and Principles of Successful Practice. Urbana, IL: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education, 1984. (ED 247 032). Reviews research on parent involvement and presents extensive information on the elements of successful parent involvement programs. Identifies research findings regarding the role of the family in determining children's abilities and achievement, the effects of parent education programs on student outcomes, parental practices which promote reading success, and the role and potential of parent involvement in enhancing school-family relations.

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Research Synthesis. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 1982. (ED 235 397). Reviews 18 studies on the effects of parent involvement in instruction on the achievement, attitudes, and behavior of elementary and secondary students. Found such involvement beneficial, especially when parents receive orientation and training for helping their children.

Role of the Parents

Parents can support their children's schooling by attending school functions and responding to school obligations (parent-teacher conferences, for example). They can become more involved in helping their children improve their schoolwork--providing encouragement, arranging for appropriate study time and space, modeling desired behavior (such as reading for pleasure), monitoring homework, and actively tutoring their children at home. Outside the home, parents can serve as advocates for the school. They can volunteer to help out with school activities or work in the classroom. Or they can take an active role in the governance and decision making necessary for planning, developing, and providing an education for the community's children.

Training to the Parents

A word of caution about training activities for parents: While research indicates that orientation/training activities are beneficial, those researchers who have looked at the extent of training have found that a little is better than

a lot. That is, programs with extensive parent training components do not produce higher student achievement than those with only basic training, and they sometimes experience considerable attrition--presumably because their time and effort requirements overtax the willingness of parents to stay involved.

Suggestions and Recommendations

- Communicating to parents about their involvement and support makes a great deal of difference in their children's school performance, and that they need not be highly educated or have large amounts of free time for their involvement to be beneficial.
- Encouraging parent involvement from the time children first enter school (or preschool, if they attend). Teach parents that activities such as modeling reading behavior and reading to their children increase children's interest in learning.
- Developing parent involvement programs that include a focus on parent involvement in instruction--conducting learning activities with children in the home, assisting with homework, and monitoring and encouraging the learning activities of older students.
- Providing orientation and training for parents, but remember that intensive, long-lasting training is neither necessary nor feasible.
- Making a special effort to engage the involvement of parents of disadvantaged students, who stand to benefit the most from parent participation in their learning, but whose parents are often initially reluctant to become involved.
- Continuing to emphasize that parents are partners of the school and that their involvement is needed and valued.

Conclusion

Research has established that the most successful parent participation efforts are those which offer parents a variety of roles in the context of a well-organized and long-lasting program. Parents will need to be able to choose from a range of activities which accommodate different schedules, preferences, and capabilities. As part of the planning process, teachers and administrators will need to assess their own readiness for involving parents and determine how they wish to engage and utilize them. Involvement of parents in Education

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will bring many changes in Education which in turn enhance the development of the nation.

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Innovative Practices for Effective Classroom Management

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This paper is to evaluate the innovative practices of classroom management that can be attempted in imparting knowledge to the students. Education is a light that shows the mankind the right direction to surge. The purpose of education not just making a student literate but adds rational thinking, knowledgeability and self-sufficiency. When there is a willingness to change, there is hope for progress in any field. Creativity can be developed and innovation benefits both students and teachers. Basically, teaching must include two major components sending and receiving information. The biggest challenge any teacher faces is capturing the students' attention, and putting across ideas in such a way that it stays with them long after they have left the classroom. For this to happen, classroom experience should be redefined and innovative ideas that make teaching methods more effective should be implemented. So here are some innovative ideas that will help teachers reinvent their teaching methods and make their classes interesting. Ultimately, a teacher tries his best to impart knowledge as the way he understood it. The use of innovative methods in educational institutions has the potential not only to improve education, but also to empower people, strengthen governance and galvanize the effort to achieve the human development goal for the country.

Keywords: Teaching, Brain Storming, Storyboard Teaching and Team Work.

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Introduction

Education is a light that shows the mankind the right direction to surge. The purpose of education not just making a student literate but adds rational thinking, knowledgeability and self-sufficiency. When there is a willingness to change, there is hope for progress in any field. Creativity can be developed and innovation benefits both students and teachers. Basically, teaching must include two major components sending and receiving information. The biggest challenge any teacher faces is capturing the students' attention, and putting across ideas in such a way that it stays with them long after they have left the classroom. For this to happen, classroom experience should be redefined and innovative ideas that make teaching methods more effective should be implemented. The biggest challenge any teacher faces is capturing the students' attention, and putting across ideas in such a way that it stays with them long after they have left the classroom. For this to happen, classroom experience should be redefined and innovative ideas that make teaching methods more effective should be implemented. So here are some innovative ideas that will help teachers reinvent their teaching methods and make their classes interesting.

Creative Teaching

Take the help of creative tools to stimulate creativity. Include playful games or forms of visual exercises that will excite the young minds and capture their interest. This is a time-tested method to identify young student's creative abilities and encourage creative contributions. Bring aspects of creativity into all your subjects, be it mathematics, science, or history. Think of ways to develop their creative ideas. Encourage different ideas, give them freedom to explore.

Audio & Video Tools

Supplement textbooks with models, filmstrips, movies and pictorial material. Use info graphics or other mind mapping and brain mapping tools that will help their imagination thrive and grow. These methods will not only develop their ability to listen, but will also help them understand the concepts better. For example, you can get some oral history materials, conduct live online discussions or playback recordings of public lectures. There are a lot of smart apps that you can utilize to create awesome slideshows or presentations

Real-World Learning

Link your lessons to real world learning. Infusing real world experiences into your instructions will make teaching moments fresh and enrich classroom learning. Relating and demonstrating through real life situations, will make the material easy to understand and easy to learn. It will spark their interest and get the children excited and involved.

Brainstorming

Make time for brainstorming sessions into classrooms. These sessions are a great way to get the creative juices flowing. When you have multiple brains focusing on one single idea, that are sure to get numerous ideas and will also involve everyone into the discussion. These sessions will be a great platform for students to voice their thoughts without having to worry about right or wrong. Set some ground rules before start. We can go for simple brainstorming or group brainstorming or paired brainstorming.

Classes Outside the Classroom

Some lessons are best learnt, when they are taught outside of the classroom. Organize field trips that are relevant to the lessons or just simply take students for a walk outside of the classroom. The children will find this fresh and exciting and will learn and remember the things taught faster. Role playing is most effective for students of almost any age group. You just need to customize depending on the age group. Use this method for teaching keep it simple enough to capture their limited attention span.

Storyboard Teaching

Kipling rightly said “If history were taught in the form of stories, it would never be forgotten.” Storyboarding is a great way to teach any subject which requires step-by-step memorization or visualization highly-conceptual ideas. History teachers can use a storyboard to recreate a famous event. Such visually stimulating activity will ensure that even complex ideas are easily put

across to students. The use of storyboards as a form of communication and let the students tell a story in pictures using their imagination.

Stimulating Classroom Environment

A classroom environment that is well-decorated, fun, and engaging will help stimulate a student's mind and will help think and learn better. Children, especially young ones cannot be expected to sit all day and learn. Such creative and stimulating environment will help them explore and will encourage them to learn about the subject.

Welcome New Ideas

An open- minded attitude can help you innovating new teaching methods. Though open- minded, sometimes most of us show reluctance to new ideas. If you're a teacher never do this, always try to accept new ideas even if it looks like strange at the beginning.

Work Together as A Team

As everyone knows, the end result of collaborative efforts is always immense. Think about spending some quality time with colleagues. Ask them to share their views on improving teaching methods, you can see many of them come up with interesting strategies. So, collaborate and introduce innovative teaching methods.

Puzzles and Games

Learning is fun where puzzles and games are part of education. Children may not feel they're learning when their lessons are introduced through games. Puzzles and games help children to think creatively and face challenges.

Innovative Practices

Start School Clubs or Groups

Being a teacher may not get enough time to work on interesting topics that you are passionate about. You can share your views and learn more from others when you have school clubs or groups.

Refer Books on Creativity

To be a creative teacher, need to do some research on creative ideas and techniques. There are a lot of books on creativity. Choose some of the best works and start learning, it will be helpful for your professional development as well.

Introduce Lessons Like a Story

Just think, why do we watch movies with much interest? We like to watch movies because there is always an interesting story to keep you engaged. Like that, learning sessions become more interesting when we introduce it like a story. If we are creative even math lessons can be related to interesting stories with even the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) emphasizing on schools to take measures for improving the quality of teaching and learning, these innovative ideas are sure to make teaching methods more effective.

Conclusion

Across the world, information technology is dramatically altering the way students, faculty and staff team and work. Technology is also changing the classroom experience. In today's era information and knowledge stand out as very important and critical input for growth and survival. Rather than looking at education simply as means of achieving social uplift, the society must view education also as an engine of advancement in an information era propelled by its wheels of knowledge and research leading to development. Innovation is the path to progress for any nation and future of the nation is in its classrooms. It is not necessary that each innovation is structured and invented; it could be even a crude, unstructured, informal method adopted by the teacher for the sake of meaningful learning of the students. Hence, we need to respect such innovation as well as and promote innovative methods and new ideas and

practices of teaching in our schools, colleges, universities and other institutions.

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Probing Masters Level Teaching / Learning Economics in Kerala

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Why is it that one often stumbles with lot of outstanding economists hailed from Kolkata, from Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen and Koushik Basu to many others in a streak at various universities across the globe? But why not any single individual who spent his adult life studying in Kerala comes up in such a list? I would largely like to penetrate this issue on the basis of the information gathered from a random survey.

Keywords: Economics, Teaching, Theory, Curiosity and Learning.

Introduction

The Subject “Economics” offers a different paradigm to the students in social science both in form and content. therefore, the rush for learning the subject at masters level in Kerala is aptly justified on two grounds .One is that economics gives more rigor and precision to the kids than most of its other counter parts in social science. The second is woven in and around the proximity and usability of economics in garbing both government and private sector jobs. Economics is supposed to cater to the needs of growing economy of our country as business analysts and CEOs are essential catalysts in the private sector. So does the academicians and economists in the universities. In this context, this study tries to assess the quality of economics teaching in general

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in Kerala at master's level. The major problem one could site is the lack of teachers who could skilfully handle the subject economics One has to teach chapters filled with a lot of analytical methods such as set theory, vector algebra and equations let alone difference equations and complex variable. Generally, teachers with masters in economics are taken on the merit of their past academic records in economics which itself is lacking in mathematical rigour. This pushes the standard of the course below the mark and throws them up in a vicious circle of low standard.

A multiple non-linear Regression Model is developed to analyze The syllabus in all universities is looking fairly good in shape. Designed and drafted fairly well, even though the reason is not an ominous one. All these are handpicked by somebody from some other university handbook without much effort. Accountability and intellectual curiosity in the syllabus preparation is perennially lost as any reforming of it is politicized. The syndicates and senates would approve only ones that are brought about by the loyalists' teachers who could serve their political masters than any academic interest.

The Quality of Teaching

Most of the economics papers call for an interest and backing in mathematics. For example, to teach market form "monopoly" from an old day text called *Modern Micro Economics* by Anna Koutsoyiannis (this has been teaching in Kerala for more than twenty years...!) Needs differentiation while Anindya Sen's "*Micro klEconomics: Theory and Applications*" needs discrete maths and vector theory. In macroeconomics sphere Rosalind Lavasics "*Macro economics*", needs difference equation for teaching later developments in Keynesian economics and calculus for multiplier accelerator interaction. But these areas generally omitted or taught by somebody who could well draft some stories related to the overall theme. Nobody takes the risks of solving problems related to these areas in order to make a point clear.

Data

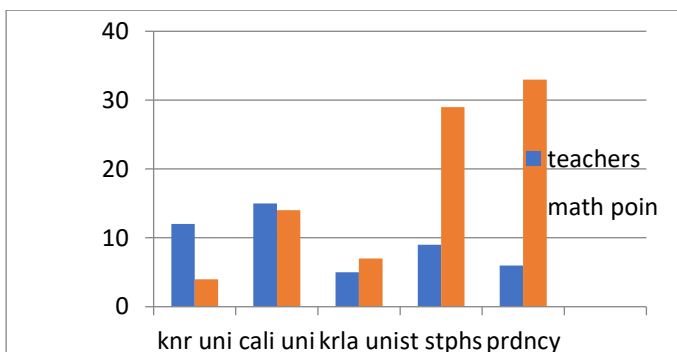
We have picked up some representative colleges and Canters across Kerala as samples to articulate our point. (See the appendix 1) In fact, two colleges from Kannur University and a University Centre and a College from both the Calicut and Kerala universities are chosen. To know the ways in which some good colleges earn their slots in any entrance exams all over India and for that matter abroad, we can compare it with two leading colleges in the

Probing Masters Level Teaching

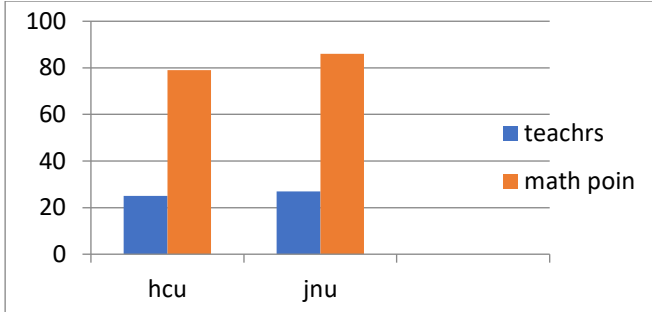
country namely St. Stephens and Presidency College, Calcutta.(though the later is a university by now). We have also chosen two central universities, JNU and HCU for better understanding of the issue. We have juxtaposed the number of teachers to their “math points” (a concept developed exclusively for this analysis. Here we give points 2, 5,7,12, each teacher to an Inter, Graduate, Masters and PhDs in Mathematics or statistics. For example, an M.A economics with science intermediate will get two points while the same guy will get 5 points if he were doing math for his graduation and so on. A PhD in mathematical economics or statistics will earn 12 marks.

Explanation

The math points scored by the colleges/centres in Kerala are quite less compared to the leading colleges namely St Stephens and Presidency. Also the ratio of teachers and their math points is high in universities across Kerala.



The second diagram shows this ratio of teachers to their math points in central universities; here you can find in the hind sight that the ratio here is comparable to that of leading colleges. In fact these colleges are perhaps better of as there ratio is still below the central universities. (In fact both the universities don't have an M A)



The fact is that even learning economic history becomes a problem in this kind of an academia. Much of the contributions to the subject in the recent past in both Micro and Macro Economics stems out of a deeper understanding and applicability of mathematical sciences.

Usually in centres of academic interest one could find research helps teaching and vice versa. People solve research questions using the models they learn or interpret the models on the basis of what they found in the real life experiences. But in Kerala, teaching could go separately as research is a method of just earning a degree to secure the life as the up gradation of faculty positions such as assistant, associate professors etc needs a PhD.

The result of these complacency and negligence in quality is widely visible in the academia at national level. Each year in J N U entrance exams for Masters in Economics, one could hardly find a Malayali name in the long list of some 70 students while a huge number of Bengalis, Orias and Delhiates are listed out one by one. This absence is obvious in places like ISI Kolkata, Delhi, and IGIDR Mumbai etc where also the way of teaching economics is mostly mathematical.

Therefore let us look at the question we did ask in the beginning regarding the reasons of Bengali dominance in economics. Records shown that even in those days, economics teaching in Kolkata went well beyond the standards and qualities of other institutes let alone some universities within in India. Therefore you find no wonder in Amartya Sen's affirmative in his auto biography by Swedish Academy that "the Cambridge in 1953 was less mathematical than Kolkata". Let's hope that things would change for the better.

Probing Masters Level Teaching

Suggestions

- 1) There must be a reform in the whole spectrum of economics teaching at B A, M A level since there is no regression in the direction of science. One could not expect a teacher with poor math would take the course further forward.
- 2) The idea of teaching statistics and econometrics by somebody from the mathematics department must be stopped. This fails in two counts. First it makes to believe that math learning is no business of economists. Second, it doesn't sink well with the economic theory taught.

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