

THE GLOBAL JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES

A Peer Reviewed International Journal

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Special Issue
Conference Proceedings

EMERGING APPROACHES AND METHODS IN
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (EAMELT)

Jointly organised by :
Kongu Engineering College, Perundurai
The Global Association of English Studies
All India Network of English Teachers

An official Journal of

**GLOBAL
ASSOCIATION OF
ENGLISH
STUDIES**

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Volume II, Issue 1,
February 2016

**Modern Perspectives on English Teacher : Transformations Expected in Digital Era
Language Teaching in the Higher Level Education**

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Abstract

In a modern English classroom, the needs of a young learner and the old fashioned learning style and learning set up have changed tremendously in the past decade, with the advent of new technologies and so has been the role of an English teacher. The gradual shift from teacher-dominated to learner-centered education is indispensable in the current scenario of need based language learning, especially in the case of learning the universal language English as L2. The present paper deals with the transformation to be self-made in a conventional English teacher 'from instructor to facilitator' and the need for his / her various roles to be played in making his/ her teaching meaningful and fruitful.

Keywords: Shift in learning needs, transformations expected, conventional to modern teaching

INTRODUCTION

Even in this modern technological era, where there are multiple technological alternatives, which may almost replace a human teacher, the role of teacher is very significant for imparting knowledge of incomparable quality. In the modern context, a ‘perfect teacher’ should not only be a ‘fountain of knowledge’ but also be skilled enough to facilitate the students for quality learning. Today’s young learners of this communicative era prefer to learn this global language as a means of communication and not just as a subject. Hence, in accordance with the changed requirements of a language learner, the teaching modes and methods have to be modified, not just for a ‘change’ but as this modern shift in the teaching/ learning style has proved to be so effective and successful. The self-motivated learner with the need of communicative English, the global competence, for various practical purpose can be easily taught or facilitated to fulfill his learning needs. The wide accessibility of technology inside and outside the classroom, and the growing needs to learn English will make the teaching easier and quicker. Hence a contemporary English teacher has to renovate himself according to the changing needs of new generation language learners.

THE REAL NEEDS OF PRESENT DAY YOUNG ENGLISH LEARNER

The need to access internet for various purposes, the popularity of Face book, Twitter, You tube and other social media sites make the young learners realize the significance of English especially for communicative purposes. The need for applying English to life is felt very essential by the young learners’ community and it naturally drags them into the natural acquisition of this ‘Lingua franca’. Also, it is quite evident to the modern era English learners that the proficiency in English promisingly paves way for their brighter professional future, by moulding them to fetch greater job opportunities. Hence there is a dire need for better English proficiency among the English learners. Hence, unlike in the olden day teaching, it becomes easy for a modern day tutor to feed the students with the required skills for their specific needs in language learning as they are internally motivated to acquire language naturally.

THE NEW ROLES – EXPECTED OF A MODERN ENGLISH TEACHER

The digital era English teaching is no longer confined to four walls and hence is the task of a contemporary teacher. English teachers should realize that their students have needs and interests beyond their classroom too. The digital era has given the teaching community many facilities to motivate the learners so that they can engage themselves with English in a way that most interests them and best suits the way they learn. Hence by knowing the exact linguistic needs of an English learner, the present day teacher needs to facilitate him with current pedagogical methodologies. Also the bitter truth to be digested by the traditional English teachers is that they alone cannot be recognized as ‘the single major source of language’ and bygone are those days, in which they were solely acclaimed as ‘the ideal model for the acquisition of language’. They should see to that the classroom or the learning set up provides major space for learners- the knowledge seekers for instant learning with the needed guidance at the needed time.

Hence it's high time for contemporary English teachers to come out of their 'shell' of old-fashioned ideologies and methodologies and take up new promising roles in modern English teaching. They should be ready for the widely accepted shift from the traditional grammar translation method (GTM) to Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). They should be aware of their differences in ELT and accordingly they should get trained on the innovative methods and approaches, which create the 'real interest' among the English learners. Instead of mainly focusing on grammar and literary texts, they should aim at the good gain of communicative competence in the learners.

THE TRANSFORMATIONS TO BE 'SELF-MADE' IN A CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH TEACHER:

With the massive spread of technologies in the field of education, it is indispensable for an English teacher to get transformed from 'teacher to technologist', due to the convergence of internal and external forces that drags them into the use of new technologies in language teaching. This transformation is very essential for a language educator, in spite of the fact that in most of the academic settings, there is only a little scope and range for using any technology. Also, he has to be multi-skilled and multi-tasking as he needs to provide for or satisfy the specific needs of any individual learner, in a class room crowd, within the specified time limit. Varied methodologies and learning provisions and materials are to be supplied, keeping in mind the latent language skill level of the students. Reflective practice and teacher-learning is most needed in modern English teaching, and this is about questioning and exploring their own ideologies and practice of teaching.

CONCLUSION

Innovative methods of Teaching English, especially communicative approach are urgently needed as it is the language of modern technology. It has been best understood in academic world that teachers should cater to the needs and learning styles of their students with 'knowledge thirst', since present day learners with varied learning exposure outside the classroom too, will lose interest on the monopoly of a formal English teacher. A modern teacher needs not only to have a thorough understanding of the present day curriculum but also all the various methodologies, their merits and demerits, and how and when to apply each of the technique for his students. They need to personalize their teaching based on the student's stage of life, objectives, motivation and aptitude for languages. In addition to these, language educators should update their knowledge, skills and to acquire mastery over the language to meet with the demands of globalization since English is seen as a key educational investment in this world. Along with the real interest in modifying himself in accordance with the changing needs of language learning, if a modern English teacher use precisely the latest language teaching tools, with the support of technology, he can teach the language effectively and facilitate the students towards the new- era language learning.

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