

# IMPORTANCE OF INNOVATIVE TRENDS AND METHODS IN THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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## ABSTRACT

The use of technology has become an important part of the learning process in and out of the classroom. Every language classroom usually uses some form of technology. Technology has been used in both ways to assist and improve language learning in a selected learning environment. It enables teachers to adapt classroom activities, thus enhancing the language learning process. So, a trend is a general tendency or a change in direction. With several educational options available to the present generation of learners, newer trends seem to have emerged in the field of education that has entirely changed the face of the traditional system of education. Recent trends, methodologies, and developments portray the vital role of the education sector in general, with its internalisation of the education process, stress on quality above quantity, increase in the adoption of technologies, necessity for professional talent, etc. The theories and methods are constantly evolving in the field of ELT, too. This research paper presents the importance of innovative trends and methods that have been used, particularly in recent times.

**KEYWORDS:** activities, innovative trends, learning, methods, stress, technology.

## INTRODUCTION

Language is one of the significant elements that affect international communication activities. Language, which has been considered man's most remarkable achievement, is so much a part of our lives, like the air we breathe, that very often we take it for granted and are not aware of its characteristic features. Language is a system. English has the status of an associate language, but in fact it is the most important language in India. After Hindi, it is the most commonly spoken language in India and probably the most read and written language in India. English is used in India not only for communicating with the outside world but also for inter-state and intrastate communication. In the last two decades, so many books have been published in English about the English language in general and English language teaching in particular. These books view the subject differently by presenting a plethora of voices trying to liberate themselves from the clutches of traditional methods of teaching. The innovation that the researcher talks about in the paper pertains both to methodology and materials used in language teaching. Moreover, this article brings out the subtle distinction between the scholarly perception of language as treated in research and pedagogy. The argument advances as the paper proceeds with trends in education with specific reference to the Indian scenario, methodologies adopted, bygone methods, peer

practice, the present trend, new teaching designs, new devices, the need for change, the ICT and English languages, and also the CALL.

### **ENGLISH IN INDIA**

Officially, English has the status of an assistant language, but in fact it is the most important language in India. After Hindi, it is the most commonly spoken language in India and probably the most read and written language in India. Indians who know English will always try to show that they know English. In Indian minds, English culture means better education, better educational, and higher intellect. Indians who know English often mingle it with Indian languages in their conversations. It is also usual among Indians to abruptly switch to speaking fluent English in the middle of their conversations. English also serves as the common language among Indians who speak different languages. English is very important in some systems – legal, financial, business – in India. Until the beginning of 1990s, foreign movies in India weren't translated or dubbed in Indian languages, but were broadcast in English and were meant for English speakers only. The reason Indians give such importance to English is related to the fact that India was a British colony.

When the British started ruling India, they searched for Indian mediators who could help them administer the country. The British turned to high-caste Indians to work for them. Many high-caste Indians, especially the Brahmans, worked for them. The British policy was to create an Indian class that should think like the British, or, as it was said then in Britain, "Indians in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinions and morals, and in intellect." The British also established in India universities based on British models with an emphasis on English. These Indians also got their education in British universities. The English Christian missionaries came to India in 1813, and they also built schools at the primary level for Indians in which the language of instruction was local languages. Later on, the missionaries built high schools with English as the language of instruction, which obliged the Indians who wanted to study to have a good knowledge of English. The British rulers began building their universities in India in 1857. English became the first language in Indian education. The "modern" leaders of that era in India also supported the English language and claimed it to be the main key towards success. Indians who knew good English were seen as the new elite of India. Many new schools were established in which the language of instruction was English. According to the British laws the language of instruction at university level was English and therefore schools that emphasized English were preferred by ambitious Indians. Even after India's independence, English remained the main language of India. Officially it was given a status of an assistant language and was supposed to terminate officially after 15 years of India's independence, but it still remains the important language of India.

### **METHODOLOGIES ADAPTED IN PREVIOUS YEARS**

Communication is the foundation on which any idea can progress and develop into a full-fledged one. Without that, sustenance in any field is impossible. Some of the recent trends in ELT are quite apparent, while others are still making their presence felt. Some are yet to come into existence and are therefore subject to evolution and change. During the last decade, various crucial factors have combined to affect the current ideologies of teaching English, such as ineffective

methodologies, unsuitable materials, the integration of contextualised teaching, an overemphasis on multilingual skills, etc.

Teachers who practised the Grammar Translation method during the previous decade solely relied on the blackboard as the apt tool to impart communication skills and the nuances of the English language. Later on, over-the-head projectors acted as another medium for the teacher-dominated class room. Such teachers believed in the dictum of "drill and practice." As such, audio tapes acted as the medium for the audio-lingual method. In the later years of the 1970s, the audio-lingual method fell into disuse. During the 1980s and 1990s, there was a sweeping change over the existing trends, and more emphasis was placed on authentic and meaningful contextualised discourse.

### **MODERN TRENDS IN TEACHING ENGLISH**

Deena Boraie highlights that there are eight trends in the teaching of English, as discussed further. "Change is the Goal of Teaching English," says Boraie "In my opinion, there are two key changes in the purpose of teaching English. Firstly, as Penny Ur (2009) noted, the goal is to produce fully competent English speakers who are bilingual rather than imitations of native speakers. The purpose is not to aspire to become native speakers of English because we are already native speakers of our own language, but to focus on English as a means of communication. Secondly, English is not viewed as an end in itself but as a means to learn content such as science and mathematics.

### **GENERAL TREND**

The English language came to India in the 17th century with the East India Company. It was formed to conduct trade with India and other countries in the east. Initially, the British tried to learn Indian languages to communicate with Indians. They started special colleges for this purpose. They also took the help of the translators. But when their political powers increased, they created the British Indian provinces like Bengal, Madras, and Bombay. So the English traders gave more importance to English language teaching, which has undergone tremendous changes over the years, especially in the last ten years. Students are burdened with studying, learning, and grasping the materials, and of course, lectures require the collection of relevant information from prescribed texts. Many career alternatives once regarded as insignificant are gaining importance at present, such as communication skills, soft skills, technical skills, interpersonal skills, ICT literacy, etc. The need for chiselled graduates to merge successfully in the tough competition of survival in the global market is in great demand nowadays. For this, a change in the trend, especially in the teaching and learning process of the English language, has to undergo a transition for the better. Seasons change, fashion changes, and attitudes of human beings change, but it is disheartening to note that in the last century, the English curriculum has hardly undergone any change.

### **USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES**

Technology is an effective tool for learners. Learners must use technology as a significant part of their learning process. Teachers should model the use of technology to support the curriculum so that learners can increase the true use of technology in learning their language skills. Learners' cooperation can be increased through technology. Cooperation is one of the important tools for

learning. Learners cooperatively work together to create tasks and learn from each other through reading their peers' work.

### **CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATE LEARNING (CLIC)**

The CLIC is an approach where the English teacher uses cross-curricular content so the students learn both the content and English.

### **EARLY START OF TEACHING ENGLISH**

Many countries have started teaching English in earlier grades at school. For example, since 2011, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam have introduced English from Grade IV. Also in 2011, Japan introduced English in the primary stage, and in 2012, Dubai introduced English in the KG stage instead of Grade I.

### **CHANGE IN THE APPROACH TO TEACHING CULTURE**

Both the local, or native, and international cultures dominate in English language classes. There is less focus on teaching the culture of native speakers of English unless there is a specific purpose for doing so.

- **Changing the View of an English Teacher**  
It is increasingly being recognised that the quality or effectiveness of teachers is determined by their linguistic, teaching, and intercultural competence rather than their being native speakers of English.
- **Change in Teaching Content and Test Design**  
Teachers use a range of local texts or English translations of literature in the classroom. The use of language as well as a variety of accents in listening activities or tests is encouraged in the English language classroom.
- **E-Learning**  
With the proliferation of tablets and smart phones, it is believed that textbooks will disappear in a few years. Furthermore, access to knowledge in terms of flexibility and mobility has changed drastically.
- **Strategic Teaching and Learning**  
Teaching in English language classes focuses on fostering the students' thinking as well as language content, outcomes, and learning activities. There are significant and complex student-teacher interactions inside and outside the classroom. The "gamification" of learning is emerging as a way to make language learning more engaging and relevant to the younger generation.

### **PRESENT TREND IN TEACHING ENGLISH**

All over the world, the student-centred English language teachers seem to have realised that gone are the days when teachers reigned over their class with all monopoly and the students remained passive. There is rethinking regarding the growing interest in implementing the basic educational goals. Having realised the need of the hour, the English teachers convene different types of conferences and seminars to create a platform, get to know the upcoming ideologies in the ELT, and also to upgrade themselves professionally. Larsen Freeman (2007) asserts that it is the fifth skill of language that enables the efficiency to use grammatical structures with accuracy.

Academic qualification alone may not help teachers grow professionally; on the other hand, they need to equip themselves with the current practices. The teaching materials that are being used in our country are almost available all over the world. There had been too many methodologies for teaching the English language. One method is embraced as a development of the other. Still, no method has been a panacea for the solution of the ELT problems. At present, the era of method is over, and the ELT, as of the current scenario, is in post-method thinking.

### **ENGLISH TEACHING AND THE ICT**

The third dimension of globalization, which is inseparable from English teaching, is the advancement of information and communication technology [ICT]. The field of the ELT has been deeply pervaded by the ICT. The easy access to technology has made information possible for the enhancement of learning programs, and about 80% of it is in English (MC – Crum. R. et al., 1986). At the outset, the English teachers regarded the internet as one of the alternative media to teach language (Warschauer, 19955). The followings are some of the IC- enabled teaching activities:

- **Computer in English Learning**  
English has undoubtedly been the lingua franca of the internet. The computer-mediated English uses the language as per convenience and not by convention. For instance, using a single letter or number for a word For instance, „c, for „see, „u, for „you, and „2 for „two; the use of acronyms like TTYL (talk to you later) and WUATB (wish you all the best); using asterisks (\*) for emphasis; and emoticons for smile, frown, etc. Realizing its significance as a source of communication, the linguistic elements and discourse of computer-mediated communication (CMC) need serious consideration.
  
- **Web-based learning**  
Web-based learning, also called technology-based learning, distance learning, online education, and e-learning is one of the fastest-developing areas. It provides opportunities to create a well–designed, learner–centered, affordable, interactive, and flexible e-learning environment (Khan, 2005). There are thousands of English web-based classes that offer trainings for a variety of basic language skills, such as learning, speaking, reading, and writing, and are made interactive in a variety of ways. Some of the common technologies available for the promotion of education are as follows:
  - **E-mail:** The students can correspond with native speakers of the target language using e-mail by creating a personal email account (Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail, etc.), which is free. The students can mail their home work to the teachers concerned and get it corrected in turn. The teacher can also provide revisions, feedback, and suggestions for the betterment of every work and send them back.
  - **Blogs :** A blog is a personal or professional journal frequently updated for public consumption. The blogs enable uploading and linking the files, which is very much suited to serving as online personal journals for students. Pinkman (2005) indicates blogging becomes communicative and interactive when participants assume multiple roles in the writing process, as readers or reviewers who respond to other writers posts and as writers-readers who, returning to their own posts, react to criticism of their own posts. The readers in turn can comment on what they read, although blogs can be placed in secured environments as well.

- Skype : Every internet service has audio functions and technological instruments like laptops with cameras. The students could communicate with their teachers and friends who were far away. Likewise, they could very well communicate with the speakers of native languages and get their pronunciation checked so as to improve their speaking.
- Mobile Phone: Learners can search for new words using the dictionary option on their mobile phones and enrich their vocabulary. They may verify the spelling, pronunciation, and usage of the specific word they searched for. Moreover, they can use Short Message Service (SMS) to send queries to their instructors and get their doubts cleared.
- Language teaching, design
 

Geetha Nagaraj says, "A vital development in the area of language teaching design is the Council of Europe's "A Common Frame Work of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, and Assessment," now mostly known as CEF/CEFR, a document consisting of nine chapters and four appendices and available on the Council of Europe website: [www.coe.int](http://www.coe.int). The CEFR aims to provide a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum, what learners have to learn, what skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively...Morrow (2004) identifies four core areas in the CEF.
- The role of a modern teacher
 

Dornyei and Murphey have defined the term "role" as a technical term that originally comes from sociology and refers to "the shared expectation of how an individual should behave." Several methodologists like Little Wood [1981], Richards and Rodgers [1986], Tudor [1993], and Harmer [2001], have evolved different roles for a language teacher. Richards and Rodgers conceive of a teacher's role as a part of the design, a component of a method. Little Wood conceptualises the role of the teacher as a facilitator of learning, an overseer, a classroom manager, a consultant or adviser, and at times a co-communicator with the learners. To Harmer, a teacher plays the roles of a controller, organizer, assessor, promoter, participant, resource, tutor, and observer. Tudor also perceives the role of a teacher in the learner-centred classroom.

## CONCLUSION

Teaching English as a tool for communicating the story of Jesus has a long history. Missionaries have vehemently disagreed with one another about its usefulness as a tool for this purpose. Even as English contains excellent Christian literature, it is also home to secular literature. The traditional method lays more emphasis on the teacher himself and is teacher-centered. Repetitive practice, mechanical drills, and memorization are the hallmarks of the traditional methods. Wilkins calls this a "synthetic" in which different parts of the language are taught separately and step by step so that acquisition is a process of gradual accumulation of parts until the whole structure of the language has been built up. The autocratic or authoritative role of the teacher, which pertains to the long-cherished traditional notion that pedagogic principles depend on how articulately a teacher teaches. It is imperative to understand the current trends and evaluation methods of the ELT. The theories and methods of the ELT are constantly evolving. The teachers of the ELT are aware of the best practises in teaching and learning English and how they can be made beneficial to the students. It is possible for every child to learn English in the most enjoyable manner if it is supplied with the right kind of materials and pedagogy produced by one's own native wisdom.

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