

English Language Teaching Through Eclectic Approach for Engineering Students

N.Sagar, Thahiya Afzal

ABSTRACT--- This study aims to investigate the use of Eclectic approach in teaching English for engineering students and to know how it is useful in improving their communication skills. Therefore, it uses the Eclectic approach in improving a student's language skills. If a teacher follows the Eclectic approach, it will be useful to students to improve their communication skills. Eclectic approach is a methodology that makes use of the varied language learning approaches instead of confine to one approach. It is a skilled based approach as the teacher can base his method or approach on the basis of the learner's age, knowledge and aims and objectives of the lesson. This study was carried out in two groups-controlled and experimental groups. Each group consisted of sixty students of first year B.Tech with rural background. So this case-study is useful to English teachers to follow this approach in their language teaching.

Keywords— Teaching and learning, approaches, Eclectic approach, role of teacher, communication skills..

I. INTRODUCTION

The importance of English has increased all over the world and it is playing a key role in social, economic and cultural life. As English is part of professional life, each and every student should be good at English. An engineer will be qualitative and efficient if he gets proficiency in English. The English teacher plays a key role in developing language skills in engineering students. So it is challenging for a teacher to make them good at English. If he knows various approaches, and how to use them, it will be easy for the teacher to develop communication skills in students.

The following are the objectives of English language Teaching.

To enable students comprehend spoken form

To develop students ability to use English in day to day life and real life situation

Read English with comprehension

To enable students write English correctly and meaning fully to express their ideas etc

There are various methods and approaches to teach foreign language and to meet the above objectives. The teacher has to play various roles to meet these objectives. So The Eclectic approach is the suitable approach in the language teaching to make students good at English and reach the objectives of English language teaching.

The UGC report advocates an approach to the teaching of English based on the needs for language learning both at the national and individual level. The report says that English

must serve as the Window of the world at the national level, and it provides opportunity for an individual who seeks socio-economic advancement in the individual level.

According to the report, the teaching of English at college level should aim at

1. Equipping the student with communication skills necessary to cope with the situations he is likely to encounter (these should be predictable) and
2. Providing the kind of information context which is relevant to contemporary culture. (Syllabus Reform English 1977:4)

Emerging Engineers must have effective Communication skills to get job. So it is the teacher's responsibility to make students proficient in English. So he has to follow Eclectic approach inside the class room to reach the above goals. The teacher makes students involve in participating various language activities and create interest in students in English language by following Eclectic approach. The Eclectic approach involves various procedures and techniques drawn from various methods (A.L. Mutawa and A.L.Kailan,1989:27).

Eclectic Approach:

Larsen-Freeman & Mellow used the term Eclectic approach to language teaching. It is mixed process of structural, communicative approaches. If the topic belongs to structures, teacher has to follow structural approach. If the topic belongs to speaking activity, he has to follow communicative approach. When the teacher teaches grammar topic, he can follow inductive or deductive, depends on age and rural background of the students. When he deals the topic phrases or idioms, he can use bilingual if students belong to rural background. If it is reading topic, he can use reading and audio lingual method. So it is combination of traditional modern approaches. It offers better opportunities to learn language skills. It gives good result without pressure on learner

Principles:

Al-Khuli M. Ali presented principles of Eclectic method

1. It gives a chance to teachers to select different teaching techniques in each period to reach aims of the lesson
2. It breaks monotony in one hand and ensure better understanding on the other hand
3. Different kinds of audio-visual and teaching aids lead to better understanding
4. It saves a lot of time in presenting language activities

Revised Manuscript Received on February 11, 2019.

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Advantages:

1. Learners become attentive and respond
2. It offers multiple opportunities to students to develop their own skills
3. It enhances active participation
4. It makes learning lively & enjoyable
5. It breaks monotony
6. It promotes class control and students have interest in class and it allows class discussion

These findings confirm Krashen's (1988) input hypothesis which assures that the best methods of second language teaching and learning supplied by comprehensive input and not forcing production

Drawbacks:

Though it has the best approach in teaching English, it has also disadvantages

1. Brown (1994:74) said that practical eclecticism does not meet the criterion of efficiency. Theoretical eclecticism is suspicious on logical theoretical grounds
2. It is time consuming. It may not be helpful to particular regional medium of language
3. It is not useful to slow learners
4. If the teacher does not have command over all methods and approaches, students confuse and demotivated

Method:

Participants:

The participants in this study were B.Tech first year students at SRKR Engineering College. A total 120 students were observed. I followed eclectic approach for A section of 60 students and followed single method, direct method for B section of 60 students. Life through Language, English text book has five chapters. Each and every chapter has eight activities- Listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary, scenario, life skills activities

Teaching Methodology:

I taught various language items by using different methods. I followed audio-lingual method and reading method to teach listening activity. Listening activity in every lesson had some conversations. I assigned a task to particular students and asked them to record their voice by reading conversations. Generally students have interest if the teacher teaches through audio-visual aids like, tape recorder, mobile, slides etc. Playing recorded conversations created interest in students. After playing recorded audio, I asked questions which are followed after conversations. I followed communicative approach and task based approach to conduct speaking activities like JAM, Debate, discussions, Role-plays etc. Some of the students hesitated to come and participate in activities. Then I motivated them to participate in activities and to build up their confidence. I did not interrupt when they are speaking right or wrong. After their completion of participation, I encouraged them and at the same time I gave constructive feedback. I followed grammar and translation method and direct method to teach grammar. I followed deductive approach and inductive approach to teach grammar according to context. I

explained grammar topics through power point presentation; it created interest and avoided boredom in students as they had been listening grammar in traditional class rooms. Ppts may be common in teaching in cities but it is new in rural area institutions. I followed bilingual method to teach vocabulary. I gave examples after explain meaning of the words and asked students to frame a sentence of their own. After teaching vocabulary items, I conducted quiz competition on vocabulary topics like synonyms, antonyms, one-word substitutions, idioms etc. I followed communicative approach to teach scenario activities which include role-play, and discussions. I followed task based approach and direct method to teach life skills. After explain the life skills topics like positive attitude, leadership, communication skills, stress management, goal setting, I asked students to summarize what they understood and share their knowledge and experience. I followed task based approach to teach writing topics like essay, paragraph writing etc. I taught phonetics to students to create idea about standard pronunciation. Cook (2013) states few process of teaching pronunciation

Use of phonetic script

Imitation

Discrimination of sounds

Communication

Audio-lingual method helped students learn right pronunciation of words.

So I followed various methods, approaches and techniques to teach language items. In most of the educational institutions, teachers are following traditional methods, especially in rural areas. So if the teacher follows Eclectic approach, students will get benefit.

Instrument & data collection results

A questionnaire was administered to all participants. It consists of two sections. The first section contains educational background about participants. The second section contains ten items which contains three multiple options-good, average, poor with following questions. The questionnaire covers eight activities and teaching English

1. I can understand English when others speak
2. I feel nervous to speak without preparation
3. I feel comfortable to speak on any topic
4. I can understand gist when reading text
5. I can frame sentences without errors
6. I use L2 to communicate with others
7. I don't hesitate to participate in language and soft skills related activities
8. I feel language learning is easy in English class
9. I feel comfortable in English class
10. I like way of teaching and I have interest in English class

Participants were asked to complete questionnaire after completion of first three chapters and then the results are interpreted

Results and discussion:

Each participant level was calculated. The group A has the following result



Table:1

S.No	No. of students	Level
1	45	A
2	10	B
3	5	C

Table:2 (group-B)

S.No	No. of students	Level
1	30	A
2	18	B
3	12	C

The Eclectic approach was successful in the classroom in the case of group A. students felt comfortable and showed interest in participating language activities. In the group of A, majority of the students improved their communication skills due to Eclectic approach where as students hesitate to participate in group B. The following bar chart shows A group and B group students performance.

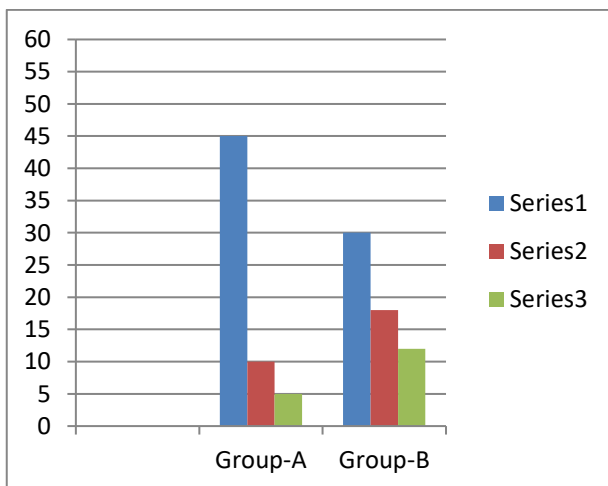


Table 3: Advantages of using various methods in teaching English.

S.NO	Advantages	Yes Frequency	Percentage	No frequency	Percentage
1	Enhance active participation	48	80	12	20
2	Enjoy listening to class	50	83	10	16.66
3	They become attentive	57	95	3	5
4	Promote class control	60	100	-	-
5	It builds good relation between teacher and student	55	91.6	5	8.33
6	It is result oriented	54	90	6	10

Table 4: result of direct method for B group

S.NO	Advantages	Yes Frequency	Percentage	No frequency	Percentage
1	Enhance active participation	20	33	40	66.6
2	Enjoy listening to class	33	55	27	5
3	They become attentive	40	66	20	33.33
4	Promote class control	51	85	9	15
5	It builds good relation between teacher and student	25	41	35	58.33
6	It is result oriented	32	53	28	46.66

The table 3 shows that how student get benefit if teacher follows Eclectic approach in class room and table 4 shows that what will be result if the teacher follows single method in the class room. So when we compare to single method as shown in table 4, Eclectic approach is 100% result oriented as shown in table 4. So undoubtedly, Eclectic approach is better than following traditional approach.

II. CONCLUSION:

The results of this study reveal that student language performance based on teachers role. If teacher is active, enthusiastic, motivator and encourage, students participate in various language activities without hesitation like group A whereas few students participate in language activities if teacher is confine to one method. One can develop communication skills by practice and participating in language activities. So it is proven that teacher plays active role in developing language skills. So if the teacher follows eclectic approach, the class will be interesting, avoid monotony and it leads to improve student's communication skills and objectives of language will be reached.

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