

English Language Teaching in Uttar Pradesh: A Critical Study**Dr. Akhilesh Kr. Sharma****Assistant Professor,****Dept of Humanities & Social Sciences****SRMU, Barabanki, Lucknow (UP)**

This paper is a critical discussion about the aim/objectives of teaching L2 in the schools affiliated to the U. P. Board of Education and the methods teachers use in their language classroom to deal with L2. As we know, English (L2) has become an integral part of the study because of the industrial development that is taking place rapidly and providing the chance for global communication. In India, schools and colleges recognized its importance and made English as a medium of instruction. Later, some states in the country declared English as their medium of instruction in their schools so that students belonging to the schools may be competent enough in the usage of the language. In Uttar Pradesh, the government has recently taken initiative and upgraded some schools giving them proper infrastructure and making English as their medium of instruction. But announcing English as the only medium of instruction does not seem to be enough for the exposure, the students required for the usage of L2 properly. The schools and their language experts need to specify the role of English and proper methods of L2 teaching in their curriculum so that the students getting their schooling may get enough exposure in L2 and may use it when they need or when they go for the higher education, change their board or enter in the technical education.

Key Words: L2 (second language), global communication, methods of language teaching, competence, ELT (English Language Teaching), GTM (Grammar Translation Method), ALM (Audio Lingual Method), NCF (National Curriculum Framework), SSA (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan), NCERT (National Council of Research and Training) etc.

Introduction

Over the decades, many changes have taken place in various directions of approaches and methods of language teaching and learning because of the search for greater understanding of language learning as well as making language teaching more effective. The traditional methods (such as GTM, ALM) seem to have more emphasis on a teacher and are teacher centered, while learners are taken as passive commodities. Repetitions, mechanical drills and memorization are main tools to develop a language in most of the classical methods as

developing language for them is formation of habit which comes through the tools. But in new trends of language teaching and learning, the emphasis is on individual instruction, more humanistic approaches to language learning, a greater focus on the learner and greater emphasis on the development of communicative competence instead of giving emphasis on merely linguistic competence. The recent methods, as opposed to repetition, mechanical drills and memorization, include different types of activities as situational communication, authentic materials, scrambled sentences, language games, role play, picture strip story, group work, jigsaw, meaningful tasks etc. to facilitate language learning. Most of the recently developed methods such as Community Language Learning, Desuggestopedia, Communicative Language Teaching, Total Physical Response and Task Based Language Teaching, reflect the above trends. Thus, greater stress has been given on authenticity in language learning, meaning that the activities involved in language learning in modern methods lead the learners to real world usage of the language. In the next chapter, we will look at the plan and procedures adopted for the present study.

ELT in Uttar Pradesh

The present curriculum of English in Uttar Pradesh has been designed according to ‘SSA Framework 2011’ which is as per the guidelines of RTE (Right to Education), NCF-2005 and NCERT. According to SSA Framework 2011, “NCF-2005 lays down the broad principles for the Curriculum Framework, for the States to design the detailed Curriculum and Syllabus. The curriculum tells us what is worth teaching, how much should be taught and in what sequence, with what methods and materials, the linkages across different aspects of knowledge, how learning should be assessed, teachers prepared, and how schools monitored.” (SSA Framework, 2011: 60). Thus, the state curriculum also follows the ‘three language formula’ and English is taught with Hindi and Sanskrit in schools at the primary and upper primary level. Since the state curriculum is designed and approved as per guidelines of NCF-2005 and NCERT, it also lays greater stress on communicative approach to language learning.

The curriculum talks about meaning based language learning, which may lead learners to negotiate with meaning of what they learn. In English language learning, it advocates to include things related to everyday life requirements so that learners may develop their fluency and interact freely, meaningfully and joyfully. At the primary level, when English is introduced, the aim (the first or first two years of English) is to make learners familiar with

the language through giving them spoken or spoken & written comprehensive input in meaningful situation so that the learners may build up a working knowledge of the language (NCERT, 2006: 6). At the upper primary level, developing all the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing is the main goal for both the state curriculum and NCERT (NCERT syllabus for classes at elementary level, 2018: 66).

Aim of the Present Study

As the U. P. Board of Education claims that it focuses on all of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and on the meaning instead of the different forms of an L2, the present study, therefore, is to see whether the U. P. Board of Education maintains the norms what it claims. For the study, the researcher has specified the objectives as follows:

1. To observe the language classes in the schools affiliated to the U. P. Board of Education.
2. To see and assess their method of language teaching process.
3. To give a set of guidelines regarding the methods of L2 teaching so that the teachers may bring modifications if they required

Data Collection Procedure

For collection of the data, the researcher has used observation technique. For the observation, the researcher used an observation checklist which is a list of questions/statements that an observer is supposed to focus on during their classroom observation. The observation checklist structures the observation and does not allow the observer to deviate from the objectives of the research. In this paper, the researcher will discuss some of the aspects taken for observation.

Analysis of the Data

The researcher observed more than 90 L2 classes in the schools affiliated to the U.P. Board of Education at upper primary level with the help of L2 observation checklist. 73 out of the 90 observations were processed and analysed with the help of spss. The observation checklist has six sections dealing with the different aspects of L2 teaching and learning. In the paper, the researcher is going to discuss some of the aspects such as 'group and pair works, 'role

play and language games’, situational and real life communication’, ‘focus on the learning process’ etc.

Group and pair work

Observation-1	Group & Pair Work						
U. P. Board of Education	Mean	Very rarely	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Total
	2.5616	3	39	18	13	0	73
		4.1%	53.4%	24.7%	17.8%	0.0%	100.0%

Table-1.1.

In response to the term concerning the implementation of group and pair activities in L2 classes, the language teachers seem to be poor. Through observation, the researcher finds out that only 17.80% (13 out of 73) of the teachers seem to use group and pair works in their language class frequently or often, 24.70% (18 out 73) sometimes use the method, while 57.50% (42 out of 73) use the group and pair works rarely or very rarely. The mean value (2.5616) calculated for the observation also reflects that most of the teachers do not apply the method to deal with their language class. There may be many reasons behind it but one of the reasons for not implementing the method may be because of large classes. The researcher observed that many classes affiliated to the UP Board of Education have more than 50 students. A teacher cannot use the method in large classes.

Role Play and Language Games

Observation-2	Role play and language games						
U. P. Board of Education	Mean	Very rarely	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Total
	2.2877	6	52	3	12	0	73
		8.2%	71.3%	4.1%	16.4%	0.0%	100.0%

Table-1.2.

In the table (Table-1.2.) mentioned above, the statistical figures of the observation regarding role play and language games have been given. According to the outcomes, 16.40% (12 out of 73) of the teachers seem to use role play and language games in their class frequently while dealing their L2 class, 4.10% (3 out of 73) sometimes uses the method and 79.50% (58

out of 73) of the teachers conduct role play and language games either rarely or very rarely. The mean value calculated for the term is 2.2877, which is below average and reflects that the large number of the teachers do not use the techniques to enhance their language class.

Situational and Real Life Communication

Observation- 3	Situational and real life communication						
	Mean	Very rarely	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Total
U. P. Board of Education	2.4110	9	37	15	12	0	73
		12.3%	50.7%	20.5%	16.4%	0.0%	100.0%

Table-1.3.

The outcomes of the statistical analysis of the data regarding situational and real life communication have been displayed in the table given above (Table-1.3.). The analysis of the data collected to know whether the teachers use situational and real life communication or not reflects that 16.40% (12 out of 73) of the teachers frequently use situational and real life communication in their L2 class, 20.50% (15 out of 73) sometimes uses them while 63.00% (46 out of 73) of them rarely uses situation and real life communication. Mean value calculated for the term is also below average, which reflects that the way of dealing class is not part of the many teachers in the U. P. Board of Education. Through observation, the researcher noticed that the teachers in most of the schools seem to only transferring information to the students giving them lecture.

Conclusion

The outcome of the data analysis is different from what U. P. Board of Education claims for regarding language teaching. The board claims to follow NCF-2005, which advocates meaning based language learning where the learners may learn how to use the target language instead of only knowing about it but it was seen that the most of the language classes still practice lecture, drill and repetition method to deal with L2 classes. In most of them, there is no activities as pair and group works, role play and language games, situational and real life communication. Group and pair work make students feel easy and productive, where they can be heard, listened and valued. The situational and real life communication makes L2 teaching-learning process meaningful, rather than transmitting only knowledge about the language to the learners and so the learners learn how to use the language into different

contexts. They do not only listen what is said to them but they get chance to perform it and learn how to negotiate with meaning. The schools, therefore, should observe and motivate the teachers to inculcate such activities in their classes so that the learners may be skilled in all of the four basic skills of an L2 and may use what they learn.

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