



RESEARCH ARTICLE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: AN ACTIVE PEDAGOGY FOR LEARNERS WHOSE MOTHER TONGUE IS NOT ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

As more and more children enter schools from families in which English is not the language of the home, teachers face the daunting challenge of instructing children who have limited skills in the English Language. All teachers need to know something about how children learn a second language. Intuitive assumptions are often mistaken and children can be harmed if teachers have unrealistic expectations and an inaccurate understanding of the process of second language learning and its relationship to acquiring other academic skills and knowledge. Educational disadvantage is rooted in the social and economic factors that characterize the communities and families in which children reside. In multilingual societies which are the norm in most regions of India, linguistic and cultural differences of minority groups are translated into a low level of power influencing academic achievement of minority children. And the school reflects this position when the minority children's language is viewed as a restricted code.

INTRODUCTION

The English Lab has a unique concept of enhancing the overall personality of the students. It is designed to help the students to improve their proficiency in English, develop their confidence and attitude and discipline them, so that they can cope up with the requirements of the corporate world which is considered to be the life line of all the professionals. Though English language is used in our day to day life, still many of us lack adequate reading and communication skills. The English lab has been set up with the basic aim to overcome the problems faced by the students in the present times by encouraging functional literacy in English among the students. Here (English Lab) the students are given ample opportunities to improve their language and enhance their articulation and their personality. In English lab emphasis is laid not only on improving pronunciation, reading, writing, speaking and listening skills but also on the new trends prevailing in the corporate world. In the absence of these basic skills namely conversational skills, effective business correspondence, report writing, familiarity with the business environment, interview skills, body language, professional mannerism, and the likes, a student may feel lost in the maze and may not be able to achieve the desired results, despite having the capability to do so. At the English Lab the innovative teaching methodology comprises of seminars, workshops, guest lectures, use of modern aids/equipment's, role plays, quizzes, debates, group discussions, extempore etc. In English Lab some of the students are assigned to read paragraph from their text book while others along with their instructor judge them.

This is done in order to test the reading skills and the pronunciation skills of the students. The students are unable to read in correct manner, some even fail to read at all. In order to develop the reading skills in the students much emphasis is laid on making them read in the class room loudly, and simultaneously their reading skills are analysed in detail, their errors are pointed out and corrected by the faculty members or instructors. For improving the writing skills, the students are randomly selected and given some topics or situation on which the students are asked to prepare dialogues and present before their classmates. Sometimes the students are asked to extract clippings or news from newspapers and they are made to enact the same in the class, for e.g. one is given the role of news reader while the other helps the reader to provide information in the form of correspondent stating facts and real picture of the present scenario.

Through this activity the students are able to shed their inhibitions. Their presentation skills, body language, communication skills, facial expressions are judged by the instructor. The main aim of these activities is to improve the speaking skills and overall personality of the students. We conducted various activities in the English Lab with the aim to provide the students ample opportunities or to give students a platform to search talent, where they can learn to generate ideas and voice their thoughts in a logical and sequential manner. This platform helps students to come out from their shell and shyness and emerge as a new person with all the attributes required succeeding in life namely confidence, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, etc. The students develop their skills like leadership, team spirit through debate and discussions. In debate, group discussion, symposium and the likes, the students are divided into groups.

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Table 1. Rating provided by subjects for different skills

Skills	Controlled Group			Experimental Group		
	Average Score	Standard Deviation	Average Score / Standard Deviation	Average Score	Standard Deviation	Average Score / Standard Deviation
Reading	0.73	1.49	0.489	3.73	0.746	5
Listening	0.73	2.55	0.286	3.2	0.727273	4.4
Writing	0.86	1.54	0.55	2.33	0.970833	2.4
Positive Approach & Open Mindedness	0.73	0.99	0.73	2.66	1.1875	2.24
Confidence & Body Language	1.93	4.11	0.46	4.6	2.090909	2.2
Speaking	1.53	1.74	0.87	3	2.5	1.2

The main idea behind this is that they learn how to work in a team and imbibe culture to manage the team and its aim/target, learn to handle difficult situation and team members, to support each other in a manner that all may achieve their goal or reach their destination successfully and also simultaneously learn to be leader and motivate and inspire other team members. The process involved in English Lab have proven to be effective way to bring the content, professionalism while expressing to the non-English speaking subjects themselves specially while using English to express their emotions and viewpoints.

Evaluation Focus

This evaluation report focuses on the implementation, process and intended outcome of this project. The degree to which the program is implemented as planned and the extent to which the program achieved its objectivity is reported. The following evaluation questions are the focus of this study:

- Will the students involved in this program (experimental group) learn more effectively than students of Controlled group in the areas of a. Listening b. Speaking, c. Reading and d. Writing, e. Strategy, f. Intercultural competence.
- Will the students involved in the English Lab perceives these methods of instruction more effective and motivating.

Expected outcome and Achievement

Most of the students desire to eliminate the hesitation to express themselves in English. And in this process the rich material and the instructor helped them make the students learn and earn their reputation in this regard.

Hypothesis:

- H₀: There is no difference between skills of controlled group and experimental group.
H₁: There is a difference between skills of controlled group and experimental group.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The participants in this study were the students of Pacific University, Udaipur, from MBA stream. The experimental group in this process consists of those students who got the chance to expose English Lab for 150 hours. The controlled group is consists of another 25 students who are not at all exposed of English Lab. The controlled group as well as the experimental group both are from same background that is rural or semi urban and they have completed their graduation.

All of them are from different background like Science, Arts, and Commerce. The controlled was consisting of professional students who were having the same background, culture exposure and mother tongue.

Procedure and Findings

The study took place in Pacific University, Udaipur (Rajasthan). For the evaluation study the control and the experimental group was tested on the basis of a tool i.e. questionnaire. Both the groups were evaluated on the following parameters: a-listening, b- speaking, c- reading, d- writing, e-strategy, f- intercultural competence. The questionnaire for evaluation is consists of 20 open ended questions. In the questionnaire the subjects were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 for the skills which are basically our goal of study i.e. listening, speaking, reading ,writing, strategy and intercultural competence. The rating of the controlled group is then compared to the experimental group. And this we can see clearly that through the given table that the experimental group is better than the controlled group on the parameters stated above in terms of their presentation, as the controlled group is not exposed to English Lab, so we can say or conclude that the experimental group has enhanced their skills with the help of English Lab facility only. This also proved in the placements drive in the university that most of the selected students were those who attended English Lab and they got all insights well in the lab and got success also. The students those who got the opportunity to attend lab had an ample chance to learn all the Dos and Don'ts under the guidance of the instructors.

Hypothesis Testing

This table is clearly showing that on comparing the values of controlled and experimental groups, we can see that the reading skills of experimental group have high value i.e. 5 than 0.489 of controlled group as well as other skills too which rejects the null hypothesis that there is no difference between skills of controlled group and experimental group. We can thus say that experimental group is better than controlled group on various parameters stated above. All positive t values at 5% level of significance indicate that the null hypothesis is rejected.

Conclusion

The basic idea behind developing English Language for professional institutions is to provide current, highly motivational and interesting material for the students to groom them according to industry requirements. The use of Soft Skills based teaching methodology compels sustained attention and offers a satisfying aesthetic experience, the methodology of dividing the whole group in smaller segments and then giving

individual attention help students to feel positive about language acquisition experience. Our observation and the students' feedback indicate that interactive English Lab sessions are promising and found the learning experience very pleasant and free from anxiety. The existence of professionally qualified faculty members and high interest, rich content can help students enhance their skills and ability to professionalism and it became a reality.

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