APPROACHES AND METHODS IN ENGLISH COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

This paper presents various definitions of methods and ways of English communication. The general purpose of our study is to highlight the methods of English communication over generations and centuries. We will be analysing the various communication methods which have prevailed in the society, including the pros and cons of the methods used. We will make a comparative study of the methods used during the medieval times to the ones made in the modern society, the modifications that prevailed in the methods with time. In this paper, we will primarily emphasis on three factors. Firstly, we will thoroughly describe and define the methods and focus on the growth and build up on English language as a whole. Secondly, we discuss the various methods used for English communication during different historic time zones or the particular teaching methods prevalent during particular regimes of different English rulers. Thirdly, we will be comparing the methods used between then and now, whether our methods excel from the 'then methods' or not. With time the theories and methods of communication are constantly improving. Recent trends, methodologies and developments play a vital role for the education sector in general with internalization of education process. This education process and ways pertaining to English language in particular is what our paper looks to emphasize on. Generally, each method or approach has its own merits and demerits in their practicability and adaptability in real classroom situations. Some of the common methods used are drills, dialogues, role plays, sentence completion, etc. Also there are methods like the oral approach, situation approach, audio-lingual approach which are language communication techniques. Following are the four necessary requirements of a method-selection, gradation, technique, and practise. We will discuss further ahead in the paper. With technology and advancement of science the methods and approaches of communication have been modified. With time we need to adjust to these changes to come out stronger in this world of fighting foes. We conclude by drawing English literature over centuries and new trends in foreign language teaching inspired by English literature.

Keywords: Audio-lingual, communication, English, internalization, language, methodologies.

Introduction

Over decades and generations English language has transformed and reformed. With time it has become more refined and its techniques have become reformed. The language has reformed as a plethora of voices trying to liberate themselves from the clutches of traditional methods of English communication. Also, the variety is due to the techniques used across the different parts of the globe. Our main motive of the paper would be to study the approaches and methods in English communication.

Communication is "the imparting or exchange of knowledge or information by speaking, writing or use of some other media." It is the process of interaction or interchange of information among people or among cultures. In this paper our main motive would be to analyse communication with respect to the English language. As Paul J. Meyer had said, "Communication is the key to personal and career success."

Approaches here refer to the conceptual principles, views or assumptions that underpin the way one communicates. These beliefs may be explicit and supported by research or intuition held by a particular person in accordance to the communication methods used.

Method can also be defined as "The process of planning, selecting and grading language materials and items, technique of teaching, etc." As Anthony had defined the term "method", it is a particular trick, strategy or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective. A method must be in harmony with an approach as well. A method mainly has four things: Selection, Gradation, Technique, and Practice.

Methods and Approaches to English Communication

Expression
The very first method of communication which is common for all languages and region is the communication through expression. As Peter Drucker had same" The most important thing in communication is hearing what is not said." It is the unsaid, expressed part of the communication that matters the most. Its problem is that the interpretation of this communication may be different for different people. So, effectively cross or miscommunication can happen between people.

Direct method
The famous technique used by infants to communicate is the direct method. The most famous example of this Direct Method is the Berlitz School. In this method they use their gestures and action in a seemingly effortless fashion to express their native language. Same applies for English communication. The methods developed from Chomsky's notion of the universal grammar which proclaims that all languages abide by a single set pf properties unique to humans.

Behaviorism
Another method of communication was behaviorism. This method was argued to characteristics not just general learning but native language learning as well. In this method the main method of communication is through the behavioral actions of the person. This method speaks about the personality and type of the person. It speaks of the morals and ethics of the person and builds on the impression of the listener.

Oral Approach
Another approach would be the Oral Approach. This method was developed in England. It was similar to the situational method which was developed in the Australian context. In this method people express their views and concerns orally in communicating with others. Its only problem would be that the other person may not necessarily know the language the person is conversing in. This process requires the listener to at least be as sound as the speaker in the language they are conversing in.

The approach developed in Australia among applied linguistics was the situational approach by George Pittman. This approach focused on objects, pictures or other realia to present new

language points. However, the disadvantage of this type of communication is that it is time consuming in making the different items required for this.

Audio-Lingualism

Audio-lingualism is another method used which came from funding provided to the US military, who had gathered a set of language specialists to support the efforts of the superpowers. In this it required repeated drilling of specific language patterns at a particular time. This method was formulated by Charles Fries and required coding and decoding of message to be sent over particular frequencies over long distances. Its main disadvantage was that it required intense specialization over the language. This method was primarily used in those times to code and decode messages sent over or by enemy lines. Messages were coded when sent over enemy lines and the captured messages over enemy lines were decoded to crack the enemies plans in advance.

The method in which communication happens is also affected by the second language or the nature or the target language. The personality of the person is modified with respect to the cultures of the other languages in contact with. This process is called Ludo's contraceptive approach. His statement says that there are differences in language communication between same language with different secondary language. Noam Chomsky had a view of natural, innate language development and communication to second language learning. This method had a lasting impact and gave rise to Generative Linguistics. The two problems were that language communication was constrained by universal principle and innate biological property of humans.

Communication is the "exchange of information between people." All this while, we discussed the communication methods in English language. Communication also includes teaching methods which are communicated or taught between the teacher and the student. In this way there are various methods which are used for English communication overt time.

Community language learning

One such method of communication is the community language learning, where students are treated as adults to encourage independent thinking and build up character. Here, students have the opportunity to build up the language to communicate. In this method the student is able to focus on generating pronunciation, vocabulary to communicate, thus building up character and stance.

Comprehensive approach

In comprehensive approach or total physical response approach, meaning of target language on communication is conveyed through actions. This promotes better retention and better communication. Example, reading aloud while studying. This is the method used by an infant to study or learn its maternal language. This is why kids learn to speak maternal language faster than any other language. However, some of the prominent problems in this method are to make the students understand the vocabulary present and to enable them to demonstrate understanding by responding to single commands and sequence of commands.

Communicative approach

In communicative approach, goal of language teaching is to enable students to use the target language. This includes language functions as well as grammar structures. Here, students are encouraged to negotiate meaning to express their opinions. In this approach it is acknowledged that structures and vocabulary are important. The problems in this method is that some believe that students must master the function or purposes before putting the language to use.

According to Wedell, learning English is an important way of increasing human capital on which future national economic development and political power depends. Thus reaching out with the language to the masses is necessity to strive for a better economy.

In silent way, teaching should be subordinate to learning and language is not learned by repeating s model. Students are encouraged to develop their own "inner criteria" for correctness. These methods help develop the subconscious mind for corrective approach learning.

Another constructive method applied by the British linguists was the communicative method. It saw the need to focus on communicative proficiency rather than mastering of structure. It aims to make communicative competence the goal of language teaching. It encourages activities that involve real communication and carry meaningful tasks. This method grew and developed very fast. However, its drawbacks were that it could not be used in all levels of teaching. Also it was not suitable for non-native teachers.

With the advancement of technology, methods of English teaching and communication have developed rapidly. We shall be discussing those points further in the paper.

Language Communication with Time
A glance into history of language teaching in the European context provides various insights about language teaching methods and approaches.

Fifteenth Century Renaissance
Fifteenth century renaissance Italian educationalists argues for importance of teaching language function and font. Here classical languages were deemed a necessary part of formal education.
Past communication and teaching practices were often traditional and involved learning grammar rules and committing grammatical paradigms to root memory. With rise of French speaking political power houses in Europe came English speaking ruling classes.

In early days the only form of communication between teachers and students was in the form of black board. Their form of practicing grammar solely relied on black boards. They believed in the method of drill and practice rather than build up.

Indian Sub-Continent
The main difference in the method of communication in the Indian sub-continent came after our independence. Earlier mostly English was used as the official language throughout India. After independence the native languages in India gained ground.

The most important effect that time has had was on the mindset of people, which has helped ease out communication. With time people's mindset have changed, they have become more open to each other. In turn this has remove barriers and has helped communication. Some other methods of communication are also there which have prevailed due to advancements of technology, we will discuss them further. Therefore, in a third world country like India, learning English has a massive socio-economic impact.

Advancements due to Technology

Printing press

Another factor affecting education and communication is the innovation in technology. Firstly, it would be the development of the printing press. Latin was becoming restricted only to vernaculars. With printing press, it became the language in official documents too. Thus, technology helped in the development, spreading and communication with its advancement.

Golden Age of Gadgets

With modernization and invention of computer and other electronic devices, communication became faster and easier. Now, English language communication can be rectified too, using grammar computer applications. Thus, users need not have excellent command over the language to communicate in English. They only require sound knowledge of the subject. Its only disadvantage would be that the method of communication is costly and would require buying an electronic device.

Social Media

Another blessing in disguise was the development of social media. This is the most used and the fastest form of communication in the modern days. Its advantage is that it does not require excellent command over the language. Its main disadvantage is that it often leads to incorrect grammar knowledge because the incorrect practises are not corrected during communication.

Audio-Visual

In the sphere of language teaching and communication, the modern world uses the Audio Visual approach to language teaching. Today's methods are more student centric so as to enable them to learn best. Also, in a knowledge based society teachers are expected to engage in continuous professional development or learning activities from the beginning to the end of their careers.

Conclusion

Just like no process is full proof, in the same way no method is perfect. Each process has its own pros and cons. However, it is upon us to take the best of the methods for our own benefits. The merits of all the methods can the used to learn the four proper language skills to promote correct communication. It all depends upon the communicators and teachers on what method they would choose to use. Thus by using different methods and approaches teaching and communication can be made innovative and interesting.

Each method derived from different historical context stressed on different social and educational needs and had different theoretical considerations. Always while conversing or teaching a person must have certain point's questions ion his or her mind – who is the listener, what is the current level of their language proficiency, what is the standard or choice of their communication method and the circumstances involved of all the questions. This would help in their communication process.

With the advancements of technology, better methods are coming up with every passing minute. No single method can guarantee successful results. English is the future of communication so let's accept the merits of all the methods and move toward a better society with proper communication and standards.

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