



SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION THROUGH FIELDWORK: A PANACEA FOR HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNER

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ABSTRACT

This paper aimed at increasing social interaction in English Language through Fieldwork. It is observed that English language teaching and learning process has been continuing within the four walls of the classroom. Most of the teachers are following conventional methods to inject various elements of English language into the minds of English as Second language learners. This is the need of the hour to introduce interactive group activity like field work which promotes a wide range of linguistic competency to interact with the society as well as enhancing analytical and perceptual skills.

Fieldwork is the most effective tool which can promote inquisitive mind and can develop Interpersonal skill; it also helps our students to understand diversity in thoughts, actions and customs and traditions through interaction. Hence, in this paper, an attempt has been made to introduce the fieldwork for overall development among the Second Language Learners. This paper also explains the procedure and advantages of the activity (Fieldwork) such as linguistic competency, analytical skills and perceptual skills. So, it is recommended that the Second Language Teachers have to incorporate activities like fieldwork in the course module to break the rigidness among the students.

Keywords: *Social interaction, acquisition, breaking rigidness, linguistic competency, analytical skills and perceptual skills.*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Second language learning in the traditional method has become monotonous task where the teacher plays an active role and learners as silent spectators. Since decades this method of language learning and teaching has been put into practice in the classroom. But, still there is deficiency of the language elements for flawless expression in day to day communication, especially at work place. Teaching language and learning are not meant for stockpile language related information in the note books, but for expressing ones view points with others by writing and speaking. Here, a numerous research have been made on this area and proved that group work provides extensive scope for the development of proficiency in second language. For instance, according to Brumfit, Christopher (1984) Group work is one of the finest methods of language learning to foster interactive communication as well as collaborative work among learners in an easy manner.

In this activity the teacher confines his role as instructor and facilitator to develop linguistic features as well as to confiscate inhibitions like fear of public speaking, rigidity inferiority feeling among Second language learners. This is absolutely speaking activity which can improve communicative competency and can provide ample opportunity to learn from real life we live-in. It is high time our teachers should focus on teaching linguistic elements of second language through the activity like fieldwork among peer groups.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY

The following are the objectives of the paper

- To foster language acquisition through collaborative work
- To develop formal language
- To improve speaking and Listening skills
- To develop analytical and better perception among English as Second language learners

3. INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURE OF THE ACTIVITY

Name of the Activity: Fieldwork

Target group: UG to PG

Duration for fieldwork: 2 weeks

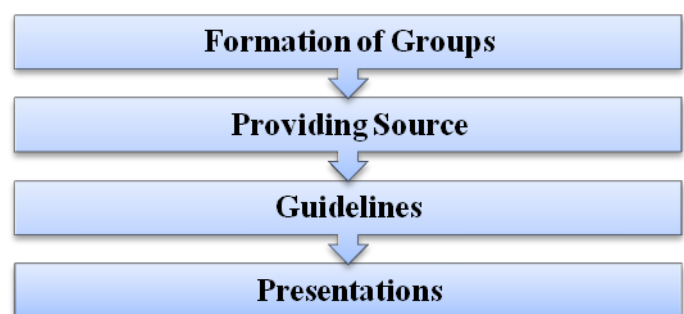
Duration for Presentation: 15-20 minutes

Fieldwork provides ample opportunities and can promote Collaborative learning among Second language learners. This task is nothing but group work where group of learners working together with an interactive approach to develop competency levels in the target language. Hence, we can't substitute this Collaborative learning with field work by any other activity.

"Group work gives learners exposure to a range of language items and language functions" (Krall, 1989-1993:161). "Pair and group work immediately increase the amount of students' talking time" (Harmer, 1991).

Therefore, undoubtedly, group work is outcome based method in Second language learning.

A FEW STEPS INVOLVED IN THE FIELD WORK



- Group formation is the pre requisite and the first step in the field work. Teacher instructs the students to form groups on their own interest to work together. Because it is not a five minute task; it requires extensive and meticulous plan.
- Second step is an important step and it provides wide range of scope for the ESL learners to gather information to make their presentation successful as a part of fieldwork. Here, teacher suggests different persons including bureaucrats, politicians, entrepreneurs, old age homes, blind children schools, farmers etc. or work places such as printing press, factories, slum areas, engine sheds etc. to each group to interact with them. For instance, one group has to interact with a police officer with a questionnaire of 15-20 questions. Students have to prepare questionnaire carefully without grammatical errors. After



completion of questionnaire, let them choose one person or place based on their area of interest and they have to distribute work among team of six. Then three among six will ask questions and gather some information from the police officer about his duty, problems and challenges; rest of the group will involve in the video recording, note-taking the information and recording the interaction between police officer and students. Likewise, they can choose Old age homes, Blind children schools, Factories, Slum areas, life of rag pickers etc. Now, it is time to prepare the entire process in the form of presentation to present before class.

- Teacher has to give certain guidelines to the groups before presenting field work in the class. It is better to advise the groups to complete the given task within two weeks. Students have to take appointment to meet officials in advance. They should inform the process of fieldwork i.e., about video recording, questionnaire etc. If anybody not interested in recording the process, group has to go ahead with questionnaire. At the same time, groups have to mind the duration of the presentation i.e. 15 to 20 minutes and plan their presentations accordingly.
- Presentation of the fieldwork is the last step to show their group work before class. Students have to prepare slides, images and videos. They have to predict some questions from peer groups at the end of their presentation and prepare well to respond for the questions posed by the other groups.

4. LANGUAGE ACQUISITION THROUGH THE FIELDWORK

According to cf. Long (1983); Long, L. Adams, M. McLean, and Castanos (1976); Taylor (1982) fieldwork (group work) provides interactive environment to learn second language and can yield better outcomes in the second language than passive learning where lecturer as the protagonist in the classroom. So, based on the above study, Language learning in the ESL class room within the four walls is consuming time to open up and leaving behind

passive learners. Fieldwork provides ample opportunity among the learners of Second language. Students have to work out on various linguistic elements to interact with target people in the fieldwork and to foster competency levels in the second language as mentioned below.

4.1. ABILITY TO EXPRESS & FRAMING QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The process of second language learning confined to only to take exams at the end of the academic year. But, in the fieldwork, students are not going to take any exam but for presenting their task before class and to interact with the society. This kind of social interaction and peer communication demand proficiency and accuracy in linguistic features like good communication skills, especially construction of interrogative sentences to obtain vast information as well as to clarify their doubts. Practicing wh...forms gives students self confidence and the power of questioning among groups to break the silence.

4.2. DEVELOPING FORMAL LANGUAGE

Fieldwork provides ample opportunity to the ESL learners to develop formal language in the interaction with bureaucrats and politicians etc. They need to use polished and graceful language while they are communicating with authorities concerned. According to (Haines, 1989) Students are going to interact through authentic activity with focused language; it requires flawless expression and provides ample opportunity to use formal language in a real context with at most care. Though this fieldwork ends with presentation, students have to work out beyond four walls of classrooms to interact with others in the formal language.

4.3. DEVELOPING ANALYTICAL SKILLS

According to aspiring minds National Employability report (2014) 57.96% Students are lagging in analytical and quantitative skills which are highly expected from the students for the Knowledge process Outsourcing industry. It is observed that there are 12 out of every 100 engineering graduates employable for analytics roles. The above findings emphasis on the importance of developing analytical skills among engineering graduates and it is the responsibility of L2 trainer to conduct activities like fieldwork, case study, role-plays etc. Students who are engaged in the fieldwork have to apply their



analytical skills after completion of fieldwork to arrive at logical conclusion to demonstrate the problem before the class.

4.4. IMPROVING PERCEPTUAL SKILLS

Perception is a process of understanding; receiving and interpreting the given message with one's own observation. The process of perception is really complex and varies from one person to another. As a part of field work, students may realize different shades of meanings from different perspectives while they are interacting with target persons. Here, one can improve and can change wrong perception by interacting with various people in the society.

4.5. DEVELOPING NOTE-MAKING AND REPORT WRITING

Note - making and report writing are going to play a pivotal role in the fieldwork. It is expecting note taking skills and report writing in the students to grasp certain information from target source. Students have to hone note - making skills to paraphrase received information for an effective presentation of fieldwork. According to Menakshi Raman and Sangeeta Sharma (2011) note making is an organized way of writing the received information, viewpoints and facts of the problem by recollecting important information from various sources. If they need to send the above information in the format of report writing, it is very much important to know the format of formal report to submit the findings of fieldwork to the authority concern.

4.6. DEVELOPING PRESENTATION SKILLS

It is observed that a good presenter can get attention of audience and can ignite the minds of peer groups to initiate the work with fire. Presentation is an effective medium to bring forth our innovative ideas. As Sai Krishna Kota, and Rajendra Babu V. (Teaching English for Employability TEE – 2013) stated that Presentation skills provide wide range of opportunities to put forward new ideas and to present a concept or a new project. However, fieldwork activity would be a right platform to examine our expression, appearance, voice and accent and body language in the fieldwork presentation before peer groups.

5. CONCLUSION

Therefore, this paper aimed at introducing an activity which can provide ample opportunity among

ESL learners to develop collaborative learning and to linguistic competency levels of Second language with an interactive approach. It is time to redesign English language modules to encourage group work among the students for overall linguistic proficiency instead of recording whatever we listen silently like a tape recorder. Teachers need to upgrade recent changes in the methods of language teaching and learning, and enrol as a professional member for ELT Journals to introduce new methods and material in the classroom. Thus, this collaborative activity can help us to eliminate rigidity, lassitude and shyness among peer groups.

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