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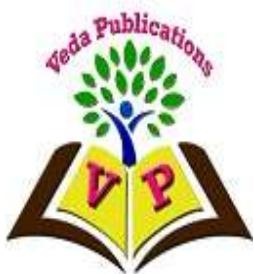
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A COURSE FOR POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN COMMUNICATIVE ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT



The course designed perhaps is the shortest possible course to give maximum working results in the quickest possible time spells of 32 hours with the two basic components of language learning - 1. Knowledge of language. 2. Drilling the language skills. Here Language means Grammar, Vocabulary and Pronunciation and Skill means Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. The course has been tried with an objective that the learners to take –off from the exit point of the course to further hone their skills on their own.

For this proposed PG Diploma in Communicative English Course, since the duration is two semesters of six months each, it is suitably modified (Pre-Intermediate to Intermediate level) to meet the demands of a two semester course with appropriate additions like a package of phonetics, linguistics, socio-linguistics and grammar and extended time frame for drilling language skills through the concept of ICT and Blended Learning. In this monograph, we present the core of two semester course that comprises:

1. Phonetics 2.Grammar 3. Receptive Skills 4. Productive Skills 5. Vocabulary.

Behind this Designed Course is our belief that the learners are always capable of learning various related topics, if they are provided with the most essential teachable items. The components spread over semester one and semester two take the students to explore and internalize the grammar to achieve desired balance of accuracy and fluency in Spoken English Skills and Professional Communication Skills. The contents in these components will also cater for the analysed needs so that they are able to cope with the present day demands of adequate proficiency in soft skills needed in presenting the students in all real life situations with Standard English usages in their social, academic and professional life. This Designed Course motivates them enough to learn English to get a good job and fits into their Learning Styles. Their personal characteristics, like discipline, confidence and experience, also facilitate learning.

Keywords: PG Diploma Course, Learning Styles, Need Based Course.

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OBJECTIVE

The objective of this course is therefore to provide the learners a platform to attain and learn the required balance of accuracy and fluency so that they can present themselves in English everywhere be it their social or professional life and become self dependent for interviews, presentations, speeches, group discussions and in professional Business writings, too.

INTRODUCTION

STUDENTS BACKGROUND

Developing Students' English Language & its Skills is a challenge. The students that come to the first year college are 17-18 years of age. They have had at least six years of English at secondary and higher secondary levels. Therefore, it is expected that they understand and express themselves in workable English. But in reality, that is not the case. Most students passed their examinations through rote-learning without forming concepts and developing their language skills. This practice has made them dependent on notes and has hindered their creativity leading to live their life based on notes.

Most students, therefore, when they come to college or are about to graduate or complete graduation suddenly realise that they need English if they wish to enter corporate, professional and social, at least as a library language.

THIS DESIGNED COURSE FITS INTO THEIR NEEDS AND CATALYZES STUDENTS' LEARNING

How?

This course proves out to be a very successful tool for the beginners to understand and express their ideas and thoughts from one person to another with the right balance of fluency and accuracy.

On the other hand it provides a platform to observe their own usages and gradually improve themselves on their own. And above all, it enables them to communicate in English in real life situations.

Why Phonetics?

Pronunciation is one of the key constituents of success while learning and teaching a foreign language. Pronunciation is a very important component of speaking skill. Without proper pronunciation, which should be somewhat

similar to but not necessarily identical to native performance, second or foreign language users of English will not be able to communicate accurately.

Remember that pronunciation lends accuracy to the message conveyed. Remember also that if the learner's pronunciation is "very poor", a concept which needs to be clarified and specified in context, he will have great difficulty in communicating orally with native speakers of English. He may have excellent skills in writing and reading, but if his pronunciation is very poor, he will not be seen to be proficient in English.

Further, the learners also learn to use articles correctly and accurately with only one rule of 20 vowel sounds and 24 consonant sounds.

Why Auxiliary Verbs?

"The use of Auxiliary verbs builds confidence in the students that they can master 75% of accuracy in terms of sentences expressing states, modalities and possessions. It also helps them to learn how to make Negative/Interrogative transformations, Short answers, Question-tags and Agreement/ Disagreement.

Why Time-Tense Relationship?

In this component, the students will get to know the relationship between few selected Tenses and their respective Times of action. This again will help students to focus on essential language tools to master accuracy.

Here, the students are able to concentrate on one language item at a time which is not possible in the main course.

Why POWER?

The Writing Process

Writing can seem like a puzzle – it can be difficult to know where to start. On the other hand, writing can also be exciting. With the right tools, writing can be an adventure and a way to discover more about yourself and the world. To find your ideas and the words to express them is a wonderful thing – whenever you get an interesting letter or read a good story you can feel that excitement. With writing skills, you can meet new people, get information, or even find a job. The following steps are often followed by successful writers.



Key of Writing - Power – Plan - Organize - Write

Edit - Rewrite

METHODOLOGY

The class size of 20 students in the present course has confronted us with a situation where we have to accept the challenge and still work within the framework of communicative/communicational methodologies making some room for effective improvisation in the form of eclectic approaches and strategies.

We have always believed that the participants need to be actively involved in the process of learning. Therefore, the teacher will introduce skills development and sound pedagogical practices and will also provide the participants with opportunities to try out some of these skills and techniques in pairs and groups.

MATERIALS

The materials are basically teacher constructed, building in from social situations and/or popular contexts of interest like sports, cinema, and science, for example. Suitable pieces from newspapers, films, and science magazines can also be utilised as "Unseen Passages" for Reading Comprehension .Language points can be extracted from them for teaching grammar. This is more and more possible as the course progresses.

Nowadays, we get enough materials through INETRNET in the form of audio- video cassettes and CDs. The teacher can sometimes use these materials in his classroom but must be careful enough to establish a balance between fluency and accuracy.

Moreover, the materials from Language in Use Get your Tenses Right and other similar courses based on communicative approach can also be referred and used as resource material to expose the students to Standard British English through audio and video clips.

TIMETABLING AND LOGISTICS

The details of Timetabling, scheduling of the course and the other logistics along with materials will be customized according to the intake of students. However, a sample Time-table, phasing and duration is presented here. The required ratio for one course between a teacher and students is 1:20 and each classroom should have the following:

Requirements

- Computer operated audio-video system(tape recorder and LCD Projector with screen and speakers)
- White Board with Markers or Black Board with chalk sticks
- Printer ,Photocopier and A4 size paper facility
- Ideally speaking, a communicative/communicational learners/trainees group consists of minimum 12 and maximum 15 learners/trainees but in the present scenario, keeping all the considerations in mind the number can be raised to 20.

PHASING, DURATION, SEQUENCING

The classes in this Course are generally held one hour everyday - Monday to Friday. A 3 five minute activities are given as homework at the end of the class, especially on Fridays so that when they come for the next class they have had enough practice in what was taught to them earlier. It is believed that this kind of drilling will lead to automatization.

Therefore, the first month of the first semester even though it appears to be a short 20-hour module based on phonetics , 24 Auxiliary Verbs and 5 Tables (Time-Tense Relationship) spaced over 4-5 weeks, it, in fact, means heavy work for the students and provides them solid basic knowledge to internalise a perfect blend of accuracy and fluency. After the first months' module, the students would take a test where they would require 70% pass marks to continue the course. A provision of re-test would also be made according to the situation and the level of the student. The teacher, then, has the challenging job of giving them enough motivation to keep their interest alive all through the Course.

The components of the course are listed according to the sequence of presentation and why they are arranged in that order will be explained under Rationale.

Further, in semester 1, the course would comprise Topic Components like Description; Family and Friends; Habits, Customs and Facts; Food and



Drink, etc. to let students transfer the input into their own real life situations.

The underlying component in terms of learning and Teaching in semester 1 will have the students to practise:

- Word stress; vocabulary
- Drilling of sounds
- Phonetic Transcription
- Drilling of tenses; interrogative-negative; Short answers; question tags, agreement-disagreement, request, offer, polite questions, polite agreement and disagreement.
- Discourse markers
- Letter writing and Report writing

And, in semester 2, the course would comprise Grammatical Component of Time –Tense – Meaning relationship and Conditional Clauses through Topic Component like Over the telephone; At the restaurant; at the travel agent's ; what was the film like; At the land lady's ; Watching telly; Asking her out , You must see the doctor, etc.

The underlying component in terms of learning and Teaching in semester 2 will have the students to practise:

- Pronunciation
- Intonation: Tune I – the falling tone
Tune II – the rising tone
Tune III – the falling rising tone
- Voice, Reported Speech
- Use of Articles and Locatives
- Questions and Answers; Discussion
- Presentation skills

RATIONALE

On the face of it this Course has a structural (grammatical) syllabus because:

(1) It gives it the much needed face validity. The students are happy that they are being taught what they want (and need) to be taught. Other teachers, after a brief orientation, will be able to handle a structural syllabus more confidently than they would a communicative syllabus.

(ii) The students need English as a Library Language only, i.e. to read and understand and express them in writing reasonably satisfactorily. A structural syllabus, therefore, caters for this academic need of

theirs in more definite terms. However, as it has been said earlier, it depends a great deal on the teacher to apply more and more communicative strategies and slide the Course along the synthetic-analytic continuum to make it more eclectic and thus cater for the social needs (Spoken English) of the students as well.

(iii) It is controlled and therefore gives strong support to the teacher(s) most of who are not trained. Moreover it makes language learning accessible to all kinds of student.

(iv) It is possible for a sensible and experienced teacher (even though not trained) to make it more eclectic by teaching grammar meaningfully and communicatively rather than be confronted with a communicative syllabus and stay in bewilderment. It is possible to be eclectic with audio-video materials in use.

The Course is run on 5 days a week because the students get time over the week-end to practise the input through the tables and exercises before they come for more input.

The duration of each period in this course is 1 hour. Sequencing is done on a from-simple-to-complex basis. Also, each subsequent teaching unit builds on from the previous one. Sometimes, it is possible to relate another area of difficulty while teaching one particular language point. For example, while teaching periodic present (this is my label for the use of present indefinite tense denoting recurring 'periodic' activities. It helps the science students to understand the concept better as they do know about simple harmonic motion and periodicity), it is possible to assimilate the teaching of subject-verb agreement. That is why this is not listed separately in the components of the course.

It might be asked why a particular component is included in the Course, for example Sounds of English. Sounds of English are taught because it helps them to learn the use/choice of indefinite articles. At school the rule that they learn is: 'Use an before words beginning with a e i o u'. Then they are told there are exceptions.

Therefore, when in this Course they are told indefinite articles a and an go with countable nouns in singular (not with every word as the school rule suggests) and an precedes a vowel sound, and there



are no exceptions, it immediately clinches the issue and motivates them to learn many more rules like that, i.e., without exceptions.

Countable/uncountable nouns are taught because this area is related to the teaching of articles. Also, one text-book at school level has treated stars as uncountable (thereby losing the distinction between countable and countless.) and it is useful to make the students unlearn that at this stage.

"24 friends of not' (modal/auxiliaries) are taught (with more emphasis on "do", 'have' and forms of 'be' rather than 'ought', 'dare' and "used to") because this facilitates the learning/teaching of Negative/Interrogative transformations.

In tenses, only selected aspects are taught (as shown in the syllabus) and not others, as, in my experience, the students in general are able to learn the other aspects on their own from what they have been taught here.

Conditionals are taught because from here it is possible to go to Complex Sentences. The reason for transferring some of the grammatical items to this Course is: they can be better taught, at least in my view, in a composite and cohesive Course. Here, the students are able to concentrate on one language item at a time which is not possible and start transferring its usages and application in their real life situations.

TESTING AND EVALUATION

The students' competence and performance would be monitored progressively throughout the course and regular tests would also be conducted after the first month and after every semester. The Testing would be on all the language skills and grammar and personalised "reflection session" would also be conducted every 15 days to analyse and monitor the Progress of every student and customise the course to maintain the pace and learning.

CONCLUSION

This Course and such similar courses are always successful as it is a learner centred course, further it enhances the employability skills, making the learner self dependent and proficient enough in Spoken English Skills, Presentation Skills which surely gives an edge to the job seekers. This course has been tried out in parts at SECC and IIIT-NR and has

brought promising results in equipping the learners with a tool to:

- speak English with desired level of accuracy and fluency and above all with more confidence, in a range of situations and on a wide range of topics.
- speak more effectively in public
- pronounce English more clearly and more accurately
- improve their skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing
- expand their vocabulary
- share their knowledge and skills with other professionals in their field
- develop their communication skills
- broaden their cultural and job placement horizon
- increase their confidence and creativity in English

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr Mohammed Tausif ur Rahman is an English Language and Communication Skills Trainer. He has been teaching and training students, teachers and corporate employees in English Language (Teaching) Courses and Communication Skills since 2008.



He has taught variety of English language courses; spoken English skills, general English and writing skills for young learners and adults at SECC, Raipur; SCERT ELTI, Raipur, British Council ELTC, New Delhi at different levels according to CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) and Communication Skills at PieTech, MMCT, Raipur and IIIT Naya Raipur.

He has also designed and taught a course on writing skills for young learners at **British Council ELTC New Delhi**, a Mini-Max course on general English at **SCERT ELTI, Raipur**, Professional Communication Course (Blended with ELT) at **IIIT Naya Raipur** and conduct variety of English Language (Teaching) workshops for teachers at **CSVTU, Bhilai**, **Pt. RSU**, Raipur and at some other **government colleges** of Chhattisgarh.

His Doctorate is in "**Course Design and Material Development Proposed for Teaching of English**" (with special reference to First Semester Engineering College Students at CCSVTU). He also has an internationally recognized qualification (**CELTA graduate**) in teaching English either as a Foreign Language or a Second Language from **Cambridge University** with an **MA and MPhil in English (Merit)** from Pt RSU, Raipur and **CTE** from **IGNOU**.

He has got **2 books published** in English Language Teaching from Vaibhav Prakashan, Raipur and **15 papers published** in various reputed international journals of India and abroad. He is a member of **Pearson India Resource Panel** for Teacher Training. Apart from his regular teaching at IGNU, He designs and conducts workshops for teachers and students in the area of English Language teaching and Communication Skills. Some of his recently conducted ELT and Communication Skills workshops for teachers and students are:

1. 1 Day Workshop on "Enhance your English" for school teachers under the banner of Pearson India at Nalanda Public School, Jabalpur, MP on 27 Jan 2018.
2. 1 Day Workshop on "Communication in English" for school teachers under the banner of Pearson India at Nirmala Higher Secondary CBSE School, Korba, CG on 18 Nov 2017.

3. 1 Day Ice-breaking session for semester- 1 students at IIIT-Naya Raipur on 12 August 2017.
4. Half Day training programme for the teachers of colleges and universities on 'Developing the Communication Skills' at Human Resource Development Centre, Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University, Raipur on 19 Feb 2017.

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