

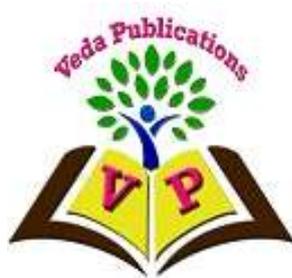
HUMANISTIC APPROACHES: INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES TO TEACH ENGLISH IN ELT CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT



The introduction of Humanistic Approaches are the need of the present day education system especially ELT classroom. An explosion of new and innovative approaches to learn a language came to light in the recent years. It seems that drastic changes have taken place in everyday life with English language teaching. With the introduction of computer technology classroom communication has been changing day by day. As a result, students are rapidly turning more cosmopolitan and relaxed, more democratic and less egocentric. At this juncture there is a call for new Approaches in classroom. All these approaches are always considered as Humanistic Approaches. The Humanistic Approaches may relieve the students from stress and strain in the present classroom. Learning should be joyful, it should not be painful. In this paper, an attempt is made to review the new trends in this area of language teaching and some suggestions are made with practical experience.

Keywords: *ELT classroom- Humanistic Approaches.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Humanistic Approaches in ELT are an attempt to respond to the needs of the students in the classroom. The main principle of these Approaches is to shift the education from teaching to learning. So that the teacher is no longer a center in the classroom but someone who facilitates the process of education. Silent Way Method, Total Physical Response, Suggestopedia and Community Language Learning are some of the Humanistic Approaches in English Language teaching.

SILENT WAY METHOD

The Silent Way is a language-teaching method created by Caleb Gattegno that makes use of silence as a teaching method. Gattegno introduced the method in his book *Teaching Foreign Languages in Schools* in 1963. It is usually considered as an "alternative" language-teaching method. The silent way is a methodology of teaching language based on the idea that teachers should be silent. At the same time learners should be encouraged to speak as much as possible.

"The Silent Way is characterized by its focus on discovery, creativity, problem solving and the use of accompanying materials". Richards and Rodgers (1986:99)

The method emphasizes that the active student participation. Silence is used as a tool to achieve the goals of the students. The teacher uses a mixture of silence and gestures to focus students' attention and to encourage them to correct their own errors. Pronunciation regarded as fundamental to the method with a great deal of time spent on every lesson.

FEATURES OF SILENT WAY METHOD

1. The Silent Way is based on the premise that the teacher should be silent as much as possible in the class room but the learner should be encouraged to produce as much as possible.
2. The Silent Way belongs to the tradition that learning as a problem solving, creative, discovery activity, in which the learner as a principle actor rather than a bench-bound listener.

3. The indirect role of the teacher highlights the importance and the centrality of the learner. In other words teaching is subordinated to learning
4. The Silent Way is also related to a set of premises that we have called "problem-solving approaches to learning." The premises are reflected in the words of Benjamin Franklin:

Tell me and I forget

Teach me and I remember

Involve me and I learn

ADVANTAGES

- Learning through problem solving looks attractive especially because it fosters
- creativity,
- discovery,
- increase in intelligent potency and
- Long term memory.

DISADVANTAGES

- The Silent Way is often criticized of being a harsh method.
- The learner works in isolation and communication is lacking badly in a Silent Way classroom.
- With minimum help on the part of the teacher, the Silent Way method may put the learning itself at stake.
- The material (the rods and the charts) used in this method will certainly fail to introduce all aspects of language. Other materials will have to be introduced.

TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE

Total Physical Response (TPR) originally developed in 1960s by James Asher an American professor of psychology. Total Physical Response is based on the theory that the memory is enhanced through association with physical movement. It is also closely associated with theories of mother tongue language acquisition in young children. Basically they respond physically to parental commands, such as "Pick it up" and "Put it down". Total Physical Response as an approach to teaching a second language is based on listening and this is linked to physical actions and oral pronunciation. Early years of life are the period of emotional, physical, cognitive and language development is very



fast. It is the most valuable time to start teaching a foreign language to young children. Although there are different methods and techniques in teaching foreign languages, the most appropriate one for young learners is Total Physical Response method.

Total Physical Response is a method which is built around the coordination of speech and action in other words it is to teach language through activity (Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

There are no texts in the teaching environment but there is a teaching foreign language through songs, games, and stories. Total Physical Response activities contain instructions such as "Walk to the door", "Open the door", "Sit down" and "Give Maria your dictionary". The students are needed to carry out the instructions by physically performing the activities. Such activities can be both motivating and fun.

ADVANTAGES OF TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE

- It is a lot of fun, students enjoy it and it can be a real stirrer in the class. It lifts the pace and the mood.
- It is very memorable. It really helps students to remember phrases or words.
- It is good for kinaesthetic learners who need to be active in the class.
- It can be used in large or small classes. It doesn't really matter how many students you have as long as you are prepared to take the lead, the students will follow.
- It works well with mixed-ability classes. The physical actions get across the meaning effectively so that all the students are able to understand and use the target language.
- It doesn't require a lot of preparation or materials. As long as you are clear what you want to practise (a rehearsal beforehand can help), it won't take a lot of time to get ready.
- It is very effective with teenagers and young learners.
- It involves both left- and right-brained learning.

DISADVANTAGES OF TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE

- Students who are not used to such things might find it embarrassing.
- Students feel happier about copying.
- It is only really suitable for beginner levels.
- Whilst it is clear that it is far more useful at lower but not with Intermediate and Advanced levels.
- Can't teach everything with it and if used a lot it would become repetitive techniques.

SUGGESTOPEDIA

Suggestopedia is a modern teaching method, which focuses on how to deal with the relationship between mental potential and learning ability. *"It is very appropriate to use in teaching speaking for young language learners"* (Xue, 2005). This method was introduced by George Lazanov in 1975, a Bulgarian psychologist and educator. Maleki (2005) believed that *"we are able of learning much more than we think, provided we use our brain power and inner capacities"*. Lazanov created suggestopedia for learning that capitalized on relaxed states of mind for maximum retention material. Suggestopedia is an effective method with a combination of desuggestion and suggestion to achieve super learning. The most important objective of suggestopedia is to motivate more of students' mental potential to learn by suggestion. Desuggestion means unloading the memory banks, or blocking memories. Suggestion means loading the memory banks with desired and facilitating memories.

ADVANTAGES OF SUGGESTOPEDIA

The most conspicuous characteristics of the method are

1. The decoration, furniture and arrangements of the class room.
2. The use of music, and the authoritative behavior of the teacher.
3. Lozanov acknowledges ties in the traditions of Yoga and Soviet psychology.
4. Dramatic way of learning is a prominent feature of Suggestopedia. Traditional way of the methods doesn't care for the psychological aspects like the perception levels of homogenous and heterogeneous.



5. Lozonov promises success through Suggestopedia to the academically gifted and ungifted alike.
6. In the student's role the learner takes part in role playing, games, songs and gymnastic exercises that help the older student regain the self-confidence, spontaneity and receptivity of the child.

DISADVANTAGES

1. It is not possible without the bright decoration of the class room, the musical background the shape of the chairs.
2. Suggestopedia can be applicable in the select schools in India because of the infrastructure provided by the government or the managements.
3. It is very difficult to implement in the overcrowded class rooms.

COMMUNITY LANGUAGE LEARNING

The CLL approach was developed by Charles Arthur Curran, professor of psychology at Loyola University Chicago. Basically he was a counselling specialist. This method refers to two roles: that of the teacher and student learner. Also the method draws on the counselling base and refers to these respective roles as a counsellor and a client. According to Curran, *"a counsellor helps a client understand his or her own problems better by 'capturing the essence of the clients concern ...[and] relating [the client's] affect to cognition...;in effect, understanding the client and responding in a detached yet considerate manner"*.

Community language learning (CLL) is a language-teaching method. Students are work together to develop what aspects of a language they would like to learn. It is based on the Counselling-approach in which the teacher acts as a counsellor, while the learner is seen as a client. The CLL emphasizes the sense of community in the learning group. It encourages interaction as a vehicle for learning. It also gives much and priority to the students' feelings and the recognition of struggles in language acquisition. There is no syllabus or textbook to follow. It is the students themselves who determine the content of the lesson by means of meaningful conversations in which they discuss real messages. It deals with translation, transcription, and

recording techniques. C.L.L teachers must be highly proficient and sensitive to nuance in both L1 and L2. As with most methods, C.L.L combines innovative learning tasks and activities with conventional ones. They include: Translation, Group Work, Recording, Transcription, Analysis Reflection and Observation, Listening Free conversation.

CONCLUSION

Linguists say that a strange language can be learnt in six months duration. Though English language is treated as second language in India, majority Indian English learners learn it for more than two decades. In process of learning they learn it under pressure which causes a lot of stress and strain. Majority of the learners practice The Grammar Translation Method, which is not practically inapplicable in the Indian context. Though the teachers have avoided the idea 'spare the rod spoils the child' the teachers have adopted "complete the syllabus and get the pass mark, or first class. In the process of learning English language majority Indian learners feel stress and strain which may be called inhumanistic. In this context it is an urgent task to practice the Humanistic Approaches in Indian class rooms.

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