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Eclectic Approach at the Tertiary Level: A Reflection

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Abstract		Original Research Article

This study focuses on the imperativeness of Eclectic Approach for classroom activities in private universities of Bangladesh. An attempt has been made to find out the regions of performance of the learners. As no single method, no mater how elusive it may appear is not sufficed to meet the learner's needs. Educationists have so far chalked out myriad of teaching methods with no single one emerging as the master method in all situations. It may be mentioned that 'Lecture Method' serves the purpose to some extent at tertiary level in the case of homogenous learners. However, in the context of the current tertiary level scenario in Bangladesh, the learners are heterogeneous which is atypical to any classroom situation of developed countries. Moreover, almost all the methods so far developed have been designed for the primary level. As such, no single method being introduced by the researchers of those countries is likely to work in a coveted way. Therefore, the Eclectic Approach can be a pragmatic solution as far as learner's proficiency amelioration is concerned.

Keywords: Eclectic Approach, Listening Skill, Reading Skill, Writing, and Speaking Skill.

INTRODUCTION

In Bangladesh context, CLT has been introduced both at school and college level. Yet, CLT could not achieve the desired outcome in spite of the education policy makers' putting best efforts. In order to improve the learners overall English language performance, the teacher must apply the method which he/she would consider best depending on the learner's needs analysis. In this respect, it sounds practical that through introducing Eclectic Approach, the teacher would try his/her level best so as to enhance not only ameliorate the learner's performance but also would strive to provide comport to the learners in the classroom as much as possible.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is to find out the reasons of the difficulties of the learners poor performance in the class room because of dealing inappropriate method that is for the lacking of Eclectic Approach.

In order to analyze the problem, both teachers' and learners' point of view has been taken into consideration. Moreover, it tends to delve out some effective and pragmatic solution of the problem, so that both teachers and the learners can be benefited and also put forward the importance of the Eclectic Approach for the successful class room out come as well.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to enable the learners to be proficient in English language, all the four skills of English are to be introduced in the class room. According to Rivers, "an Eclectic Approach allows language teachers to absorb the best techniques of all the well- known language teaching methods in to their class room procedures, using them for the purpose for which they are most appropriate." In addition to this, the integrated skills approach is to be introduced as contrasted with the purely segregated approach, exposes second language learners to Authentic Language and changes them to interact naturally in the language. Moreover, Del Hymes [1] introduced 'Communicative competence' as the goal of language teaching. Furthermore, Noam Chomsky asserts language theory in-terms of 'homogeneous speech community'. He [2] regards:

Linguistic theory is primarily with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant condition as memory limitation, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and

errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance.

However, Eclectic Approach has to be introduced in the class room, since this approach is the mingling of all the important method all together.

Grammar Translation Method
Richards and Rodgers [3] mentioned the following features of the Grammar Translation Methods:
- Goal: ' The goal of foreign language study is to learn a language in order to read its literature or in order to benefit from the mental discipline and intellectual development that result for foreign language study (P.4)'
- Skills focuses and materials: Reading and writing are emphasized; listening and speaking receive little or no attention. Materials mostly comprise literary extracts and classical texts.
- Vocabulary: Vocabulary is based on the reading texts and taught through transliteration often in the form of bilingual wordlists, memorization and dictionary study.
- 'The sentence in the basic unit of teaching and language practice, much of the lesson is devoted to translating sentences into and out of the target language ....' (P.6)
- Accuracy of grammar and translation is emphasized.
- Deductive teaching of grammar: Teachers explain grammar rules and then give examples. Grammar provides the rules for putting words together and instruction often focuses on the form and inflection of words rather than on communicative use of the rules.
- Medium of Instruction: Classes are taught in the mother tongue, with little active use of the target language. Comparison and contrast between the target language and learners' mother tongue in carried out in order to enhance proficiency in both.
- Role of teachers and students: In GTM, the teachers and learners take on traditional role of knowledge transmitter and knowledge receiver. The teacher is the authority in the class room while students simply do what they are asked to do.

Direct Method
According to Richards and Rodgers [3], the key features of the Direct Method are the following:
- Medium of Instruction: Class room instruction is conducted exclusively in the target language.
- Vocabulary and sentences are selected and taught on the basis of their usefulness in everyday situations.
- For the sake of developing and communication skills, question and answer exchanges are frequently arranged between teachers and students in small, intensive classes.

- Grammar is taught inductively, that is, 'rules' are not given by the teacher and students are made to discover the 'rules'.
- New teaching points are introduced orally first, that is, students listen and speak before they read and write.
- Translation is not allowed in teaching vocabulary; so concrete vocabulary is taught through demonstration, objects, and pictures; abstract vocabulary is taught by association of ideas.
- Unlike in GTM, both speech and listening comprehension are taught.
- Native like pronunciation and correct grammar are emphasized.

Audio-Lingual Method
Here is a summary of the key feature of the Audio-Lingual Method:
- New materials are presented in the dialogue form.
- There is dependence on mimicry, memorization of set phrases and over learning.
- Students are sequenced by means of contrastive analysis (of L_1 and L_2) and taught one at a time.
- Structural patterns are taught using a series of repetitive drills.
- There is little or no grammatical explanation. Grammar is taught by inductive analogy rather than deductive explanations.
- Vocabulary is strictly limited and learned in context.
- There is much use of tapes, language laves and visual Aids.
- Great impotence is attached to pronunciation.
- Very little use of the mother tongue is permitted.
- Successful responses are immediately reinforced.
- There is great effort to get students to procedure error free utterances.

Communicative Language Teaching
Richards and Rodgers [3]. Sum up four characteristics of the communicative views of language:
- Language is a system of expression of meaning.
- The primary function of language is to allow interaction and communication.
- The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative uses.
- The primary units of language are functional and notional categories, rather than structural ones.

Richards and Rodgers [3] also mentioned a number of elements underlying the learning theory of CLT:
- **Communicative Principle:** Activities that involve real communication promote learning.
- **Task Principle:** Activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning.

- **Meaning Fullness Principle:** Language that is meaning full to the learners supports the learning process.

STUDY METHOD

Participants

For the questionnaire survey, three hundred learners from 10 private universities and twenty seven teachers have been selected at random. The universities surveyed are: State University of Bangladesh, ASA University of Bangladesh, BRAC University, The People's University of Bangladesh, East West University, Northern University, University of Development Alternative, Daffodil University, Eastern University and Stamford University.

Survey Instruments

To gather information, questionnaires were prepared both for the students and the teachers. The questionnaire for the students consisted of six multiple choice questioners. The questionnaire for the teachers consisted of six multiple choices including an open ended question. Regarding the open ended question, the teachers were given the scope to incorporate their valuable suggestions in their questionnaire. Interestingly, both the questionnaires were design so as to facilitate a comparative analysis. A common statistical tool like statistics was used for data analysis.

Analysis of Students' Information

Through collecting and analyzing the data, it has been found that most of the students (226 Students, 74%) answered that the medium of instruction at their academy is mixture of English and Bengali whereas 26% students (74 Students) replied that the medium of instruction is solely English. Second question was set to find out the student's ability of comprehending the

English lecture given by the teachers. Hence, it was found that 62.33% students answered that they comprehend the English lecturer and other 37.33% students replied that they sometimes comprehend and sometimes struggle to comprehend (in Table 1.1). The third question was prepared to find out the reasons for not being able to properly comprehend the English lecture. It has again been found that 36.33% students answered that, for difficult content, they encounter problem. Another 20% students replied that they encounter problem for not comprehending the pronunciation of the teacher. The rest 16% students identified poor listening skill for not comprehending the lecture delivered by the teachers, and the other 27.66% students referred all reasons for lack of Eclectic Approach.

The fourth question was prepared to find out the ability of students' comprehension of native English. It was also found that 65% students sometimes can comprehend native English and other 35% students can fully comprehend.

The fifth question was set to know the importance of practicing all the four skills and surprisingly observed that hundred percent students unanimously felt the imperativeness of four skills which has to be applied in the class room without second thought whatsoever. The last question was set to delve out in terms of the logistic support for practicing four skills. It has been found that 50% learners admitted that logistic support in the class room is not enough. Amazingly, it was observed that 37.33% learners replied that they had not any logistic support for practicing four skills, whereas, 32.66% students were satisfied with logistic support which they had at their disposal in the class room.

| Four skills practices | 33 (12.66%) | 117 (37.33%) | 150 (50%) |

Analysis of Teachers' Information

Analyzing the data collected from the English teachers, from the first question, it has been found that the information that all the teachers (27) think that all the skills should be focused with equal importance. From the question no 2, it has been observed that 47.15% teachers believe that most of the time students comprehend their lecture whereas 36.46% teachers claimed that students urge for Bengali explanation and only 16.38% teachers out of 36.46% feel that their students comprehend their lecture. The fourth question was prepared to know whether the option for listening skills development is included in the syllabus or curriculum. It has been found that 63.54% teachers assert that the option is not directly incorporated in the syllabus, whereas 25.92% teachers said that their syllabus include option for development of listening

skill and 10.53% teachers assert that there is no option for listening development in the syllabus. The fifth question was prepared to delve out whether the teachers have adequate logistic support for teaching listening; 34.62% teachers said that they had enough logistic support for teaching listening. Whereas, 10.53% teachers replied that they did not have enough logistic support, again 54.84% teachers said that they had logistic support for teaching listening but the support was not adequate. The sixth question was prepared to find out whether the teachers should focus on Eclectic Approach. It is fascinating that 94.15% teachers opine that Eclectic Approach is a must, whereas only 5.84% teachers think that communicative language teaching or direct method can be used for the automatic development of learners' proficiency.

Table-1.1: Collected from Learners Data collected from Learners

1. Medium of Instruction	English	Bengali	Blending of English and Bengali	
	74 (26%)	0	226 (76%)	
2. Learners ability of comprehending English lecturer	183 (62.33%)	0	117 (37.33%)	
3. Reasons for not comprehending English lecturer	for difficult content	For not comprehending pronunciation	For lack of Eclectic Approach	all
	104 (36.33)	62 (20%)	46 (16%)	88 (27.66%)
4. The ability of comprehending native speaking	Yes	No	Sometimes	
	105 (35)	0	195 (65%)	
5. Necessity for practicing four skills (Reading, writing, listening, speaking)	Yes		No	
	300 (100%)		0	
6. Logistic support	Yes	No	Not significant	
Four skills practices	33 (12.66%)	117 (37.33%)	150 (50%)	

Table-1.2: Data Collection from Teachers

1. Four skills should be given equal weight	Yes		No	
	100%		0	
2. The pattern of delivering lecture	Through English	Code mixing (Amalgamating of English & Bengali)	Mostly in Bengali Version	
	10 (37.46%)	17 (63.54%)	0	
3.Students' comprehension of the lecture	Yes	Most of the time they comprehend	Request for Bengali interpretation	
	4 (16.38%)	13 (47.1%)	10 (36.46%)	
4. Option for development of listening skill in syllabus / curriculum	Yes	No	Not directly	
	6 (25.92%)	4 (10.53%)	17 (62.54%)s	
5. Logistic support for teaching listening skill	Yes	No	Not adequate	
	7 (34.62%)	5 (10.53%)	15 (54.84%)	
6. Should focus upon Eclectic Approach	Yes	No	Any single method for automatic amelioration	
	26 (94.15%)	0	1 (5.84%)	

FINDINGS

The aim of this study was to focus on the present scenario of English, especially in the class room context. The teacher in spite of putting his/ her best efforts so as to enhance learners' proficiency in English to the highest extent in every possible way. It has been observed that most of learners always struggle in the class room just because of not getting the right kind of facilities which they deserve to have. Moreover, unattended listening skill, difficulties with teacher's English pronunciation. Last but not the least point to be pondered is all about the area of difficult teaching methodology that is lack of introducing an Eclectic Approach which is the pinnacle point to be remembered as well.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the aforesaid findings and discussion, it can be mentioned with assertion that since there is a tremendous dearth of appropriate teaching methodology along with severe negligence in terms of proportionate preponderance of four skills as far as learners' needs are concerned. That is why, keeping in mind the Bangladesh perspective, few steps are to be taken with utmost attention in this regard.

- Motivation from the learner's point of view has to be undertaken so that learner's hidden potential is aroused to its apex point what so ever.

- Teachers should always encourage the learners to enhance their knowledge on vocabulary buildings.
- The scopes of proportionate preponderance on four skills are to be prioritized.
- Both listening and speaking skills have to be introduced in the class room.
- Learners are to be facilitated with multimedia and internet using scope the moment needs arises.
- Four skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) of English language are to be introduced in the class room.
- Eclectic Approach has to be dealt in the class room for the benefit of the learners.

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Appendix – I

A survey on the Eclectic Approach in the class room for the learners benefit

FOR TEACHERS

[Please give tick (√) mark on the suitable choice]
1. Do you think four skills of English language in the class room disserve equal weight?
    a. Yes; b. No
2. Do your learners comprehend the English lecture delivered by you in the class room?
    a. Yes b. Most of the time c. Learners urge for Bengali interpretation
3. In the syllabus/ curriculum is there any choice for the amelioration of the four skills?
    a. Yes b. No c. Not directly
4. How do you introduce your lecture?
    a. Using absolute English b. Using code mixing (blending English and Bengali) c. Mostly in Bengali
5. If in the syllabus / curriculum, there are the choices of ameliorating four skills for which adequate logistic support for teaching those?
    a. Yes b. No. c. No adequate
6. As an English Faculty, do you think that the teacher ought to take special care about the amelioration of the four skills with equal preponderance?
    a. Yes   b. No. c. Four skills be ameliorated automatically
7. Do you have any recommendation about the amelioration of four skills of the learners? Please reflect it.
    ....
    ....
    ....
    ....

    Teacher's information
    (The information obtained will be kept confidential)
    Name   :..
    Date   :..
    Name of the academic institution:
    Designation   :..
    Mo. No. (If any) :..
    E-mail ID :..

Appendix-II

A survey on the amelioration of four skills of the learners along with introducing Eclectic Approach in the class room has been conducted.

For the learners

[Please give tick (√) marks on the suitable choice]
1. Do you comprehend the English lecture delivered by your teacher in the class room?
    a. Yes b. No c. Sometimes
2. What is the mode of instruction at you institution?
    a. English b. Bengali   c. Code mixing of English and Bengali
3. If you do not comprehend the English lecture delivered by your teacher, then pin down the causes from the followings:
    a. Just because of difficult content
    b. For not comprehending the English accent
    c. For lack of dealing four skills judiciously
    d. For not having Eclectic Approach in the syllabus
4. Do you think you should practice four skills equally?
    a. Yes b. No
5. Do you comprehend the English speaking of the native speakers? (Native English conversation, Dialogue from movies, CNN or BBC News etc.)
    a. Yes b. No c. Sometime
6. Is there adequate logistic support for the learners to practice four skills?
    a. Yes b. No c. Not significant

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