Pedagogy of Teaching English – Part 2

Principles of Language Learning & Nature of English

Principles of Language Learning

People generally assume that those who study in English medium schools are good at English and those who study in government schools are poor in English. Language learning has little to do with the medium of school. It rather depends on teachers' application of principles of language learning.

Habit Formation

Language learning is a habit formation process. It is a process during which various language habits are formed. Therefore, listening, speaking, reading and writing habits are to be formed consciously and unconsciously

Practice and Drill

Language learning is a habit-forming process. For this purpose sufficient practice and drill is needed

Oral Approach

A child learns to speak his mother tongue before reading or writing it. This principle should be adopted in learning and teaching a second or a foreign language.

Natural Order of Learning

Listening-Speaking-Reading-Writing (LSRW) is the natural order of learning a language. In this order, a child learns his or her mother tongue without any formal instruction. So this natural order of learning should be considered while teaching English

Multi-Skill Approach

All the four language skills are to be given their due importance when learning or teaching them. No skill should be overemphasized or neglected. \

Selection and Gradation

One should proceed from simple to difficult in language learning; therefore, vocabulary and structures of language should be selected and graded as per their frequency, teachability and difficulty level.

Situational Approach

The English language should be taught in situations which is the natural way in which a child learns his mother tongue.

Exposure

A child learns his mother tongue because he is exposed to it. While learning a foreign language like English, exposure to it helps in learning it.

Imitation

The child learns his mother tongue by imitation. The English teacher must provide a good model of speech before the learners. Audio-visual aids should be used.

Motivation

Motivation plays an important role in learning a language. Thus, learners should be motivated.

Accuracy

The English teacher should insist on accuracy in all aspects of language learning. So learners follow their teachers and consider them as a role model.

Purpose

Purpose of language learning should be decided in the beginning. So it becomes a simple affair to design a course suitable for the purpose

Multiple Approaches

The English teacher should not stick to a particular method of teaching. He should use all methods, approaches and techniques of teaching English as per the needs and requirements of learners.

Interest

The teacher should generate a great deal of energy and interest among learners so they will pay attention to learning a language.

Co-relation

If teaching-learning of English is co-related with real life then learner will realize the need of language learning and will take interest in it.

Nature of English Language

English is a varied language that has absorbed vocabulary from many languages of the world. English is the most dynamic language of the world

Receptive

Receptiveness is regarded as an extraordinary nature of English language. It has maintained its open door policy. It has adopted and accepted thousands of words from European, Asian, African, Indian, Japanese, Chinese and other languages, English has the richest vocabulary due to its receptiveness

Heterogeneous

As English contains vocabulary from many languages, it has become heterogeneous in nature. In the process of adopting words from other languages, in some cases the original words as it is without change in meaning, but in some other cases, the spelling, pronunciation and meaning of original words from other languages was changed for instance

Systematic

The system of English language functions through sounds, words and structures. The system of sound is known as phonology. The system of words is called as morphology whereas the system of structures is named as syntax. All these three systems are integrated with one another making an organic whole which is called as the English language

Unique

English is unique in its nature. English is not 100% French, not German or Arabic, not Latin or Greek. English is English. English differs from other languages in its sounds, words, structures and functioning. Though English has adopted vocabulary from other languages, it has shaped them remarkably as if these words are its own.

Dynamic

English is a dynamic language. It is constantly changing. These changes are regular and systematic. If you study the history of English language, you will come to know the difference between Old English, Medieval English and Modern English

Creative

English is a highly creative language, that's why it has the richest literature in the world. A writer or speaker can write or speak something he has never written or said before. English literature has a wide variety of prose and poetry, fiction and non-fictional writing

Productive

English is also highly productive. One can make thousands and lakhs of sentences with its words. There is no need to learn by rote English sentences. We can produce sentences without effort. People speak and write in different ways and styles best still, the words and sentence structures are same

Symbolic

English is symbolic. Every English word, phrase or sentence represents some object, activity or idea.

Modifiable

English is extremely modifiable. It penetrates, fuses and assimilates with the local language of a given country to emerge in different modified and extended forms of English to be accepted, understood and enjoyed universally

Grammatical

English has its own grammatical rules and structures of sentences. These grammatical rules and sentence structures are necessary for proper relationship of the words in a sentence and to avoid ambiguity. It also clarifies the acceptable and unacceptable forms of sentences

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