

**Two-Day National seminar on
"Artificial Intelligence, Multimedia and ICT in Teaching,
Learning and Acquisition"**

sponsored by

Indian Council of Social Science Research, New Delhi
on 23rd and 24th September 2019 at **Department of English,**
SRI S. Ramasamy Naidu Memorial College, Sattur, Tamilnadu, India



**Grammar Translation Method To Technology Enabled
Language Learning – A Journey**

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Abstract

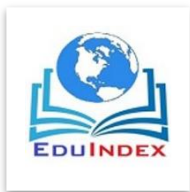
English has become the means of communication for the people of the entire world. So learning English has become necessary. In the pursuit of language teaching, we have come a long way. We have so many methods and approaches. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is used in enhancing the skills of language learning among students. The use of ICT in learning and acquiring English language is effective. The use of computers and Internet are helpful in the process of language teaching and learning. Artificial Intelligence is a branch of Computer Science. It is the competitor of human intelligence. As it is very much used in language teaching, it has become important for the present generation learners of second language. The evolution of language teaching has undergone many changes. Though modern tools are useful and powerful, one cannot deny the validity of the earlier language Teaching methods and approaches. So this paper attempts to trace the evolution of language teaching from Grammar Translation Method to the Technology Enabled Language Learning (TELL).

English is an important language for so many reasons. As rightly stated by C. Paul Verghese in his Teaching English as a Second Language,

Today the compulsions of learning English are no longer merely political but scientific and technological. And no longer English the language of Great Britain only; it is the language required by the world.

It has become the means of communication for the people of so many countries because of historical reason. It is used either as a link language or as a second language in countries like India. It has become necessary for the survival of everyone. So the educational institutions and the governments are taking steps to develop English language skills among students. We have so many methods and approaches starting from Grammar Translation method to Technology Enabled Language Learning (TELL). In the recent days information and communication Technology (ICT) is used in enhancing basic skills of language learning (LSRW) among students. The use of ICT in learning and acquiring English Language is effective. The use of computer, television, radio, mobile phone, projector and internet are helpful in the process of language teaching and learning.

Teaching aids refer to traditional ones like the blackboard and the more modern ones like the computer. In language teaching, the spoken word is reinforced by the written word on



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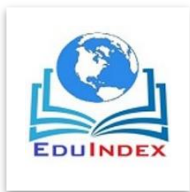
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the board. Science has contributed a lot which has been useful and comfortable in leading our life in all possible ways. In language teaching also it has made a revolutionary change. The scope of language learning has widened enormously. Anyone even from the remotest corner of a village can learn a language if he possesses a mobile phone. Initially radios and tape recorders were used. Later televisions and CDs ruled the roost. Then projectors and language labs became popular. Now with the help of computers and pendrives, PPT lessons are prepared and effectively presented.

First the rules taught by the Grammar Translation Method were drilled with the use of computers and then they were used to develop the language skills as recommended by the 'Communicative Approach'. Later they were used for both. Computers have become popular and everyone has started using it in the recent times. The scope of using computers is increasing day by day. The majority of language teachers have started realizing the importance and implications of computers in language learning. They are using computers in the class room itself. It is used as a tool to implement the traditional methods and approaches. They are used to enhance the exposure to listening as recommended by the Direct Method. According to this method listening exposure will facilitate the skill of speaking. Multimedia programs help students record and playback their own voice which is always attractive to listen and then correct the errors whenever there is one. Some of the multimedia programs are designed to promote a variety of language skills. It helps in communicating with others in the real life situations.

Then comes the use of mobiles and internet. Now everyone can develop the language skills by using computers, mobiles, internet etc. Even an individual can develop the skills of language without a class room or teacher or a group of students. Any language can be learnt individually by anyone and everyone. Anyone can access any mater. Today with the help of mobile technology, one can learn any language if one possesses a smart phone. According to the traditional method of teaching, students were passive learners but modern technology changed it and students are used to interactive learning. They can even interact with the native speakers. Exposure to listening, getting opportunity to speak and finding passages for reading and getting opportunity to write are possible today with the help of internet. Thus modern technology has redefined the concept of teaching and learning a language. Except emotional touch, technology offers everything.



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Artificial intelligence is a branch of computer science which attempts to produce an intelligent machine. This can respond like humans. It is the competitor of human intelligence. Even it may surpass human intelligence. Artificial intelligence (AI) is based on the assumption that the process of human thought can be mechanized. As it is very much used in language teaching, it has become important for the present generation learners of second language. Technology has become more powerful and can be used in language teaching so as to help teachers and students to reap enormous benefits. It has drastically changed the way of teaching and the materials of teaching. Using the traditional 'Stimulus and Response' method the computers ask questions (Stimulus) and students answer (Response). Computers are used to drill students after making them learn a rule of Grammar. In training students speak English, computers are used by following 'Listen and Repeat' method. Later 'Communicative Language Teaching' (CLT), which is a reaction against the earlier 'Grammar- Translation' (GT) method, became popular. This method gives importance to learners and learner-centered approach. Computers are very much in use in popularizing this method. Students can watch videos where the voice of the native speakers is heard. It is an extension of the audio-lingual method. It is more effective than the audio-lingual method. Different situations are presented to the learners so as to make them understand the exact expressions used in a particular situation.

The technological development has led the language learners to another modern method of learning called Computer Assisted Language Learning popularly known as 'CALL'. It includes many communication approaches and applications in teaching and learning a foreign language. The use of mobile is also a manifestation of this method. It also makes use of 'Information Technology' (IT). Later it is known as 'Technology Enabled Language Learning' (TELL). Both CALL and TELL emphasize on student-centered teaching. It allows the learners to learn on their own. It is an interactive self learning. The learner is active not passive as in the case of traditional teaching method. It is used to reinforce what is taught in the classroom. It takes into consideration the methods that are derived from the earlier language learning theories like behaviorist and cognitive theories. They are blended with the modern tools and methods to enhance the learning ability of learners. Thus computer has become a necessary teaching tool.



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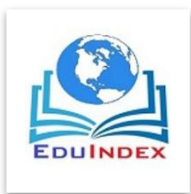


There are several types of language learning softwares. Developers of CALL use the Internet, Multimedia and Artificial Intelligence. This new field has explored various approaches to teaching a second language, including the communicative approach and the drill based approach. It can help to improve one's ability of language learning. Guided by Artificial Intelligence (AI) one can achieve proficiency in learning a new language. It mainly focuses on basic fluency which can be achieved but building vocabulary is difficult. Here traditional approaches which use reading materials like stories and prose lessons can achieve strengthening one's vocabulary. While reading unconscious learning takes place. The effect of it is permanent and tremendous. Nothing can be more effective than the Artificial Intelligence (AI) combined with traditional methods like reading stories which will work wonders. It can help language learners save time but it cannot replace human language partners and teachers. Real human interaction cannot be brought to the purview of any preplanned machine learning. Moreover anything learnt quickly will be forgotten quickly. Learning requires considerable time. Only then it will be embedded in the mind permanently. Only Unconscious learning by reading can be permanent. The emotional touch which cannot be achieved by machines can be had by reading stories.

Whatever may be the tools, the purpose of using them is to impart the skills of language learning. In the present context modern tools are considered to be powerful because skills like listening can be imparted easily using these tools. Teaching listening is one of the difficult tasks for the language teachers. The framers of the educational policy are not aware of the importance and the difficulties of imparting listening. The reason is that they are not usually academicians. That is why there is no scope for listening in our syllabus. Even reading is also neglected. The audio-visual aids, televisions and mobiles are useful but the problem is that they are not properly used. Thus the modern technology offers a lot to develop the skills of learning but they are not used for the purpose for which they should be used. If they are used properly, the quality of learning would be tremendous.

Dr N. Krishnasamy and Dr T. Sri Raman, in their book, English Teaching in India write: English

Language Teaching in India has glorified theory over practice and what theory it has is only Received Theory; it is yet to come out of the colonial fold. We don't go to our classes to see what is happening there and how English is



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taught in large classes by some of our good teachers. We need British experts to tell us how to teach English in large classes under difficult circumstances (23).

The famous Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar stated some 2000 years before about the importance of listening.

“Selvathul selvam sevitchelvam AtchSelvam
Selvathul Ellam Thalai”

It means that listening skill is superior to all other skills. Instead of highlighting ideas expressed by visionaries like Valluvar, we are quoting and glorifying others. That is why Dr. Krishnasamy says like that. According to linguists also a child's ability to speak depends on the ability to listen and observe the speakers. It imbibes the skill of speaking naturally while listening the speaker. Later it skillfully uses it whenever necessary.

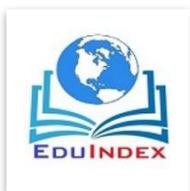
Like this Reading is also important to express one's thoughts and feelings. Reading improves one's unconscious learning. The more one reads the more one is effective in communicating and persuading others. Lack of reading is a hindrance to speaking and writing. Studying improves conscious learning. The longevity of reading is more than the longevity of studying. The quantity of reading is also more than the quantity of studying. That is why conscious learning is secondary and always supplements unconscious learning. If a learner studies for the purpose of examination, he will tend to forget when it is over. So the longevity of it does not last long. However, while reading learning takes place unconsciously. Anything learnt unconsciously will be permanent.

Memorization and assimilation are the two components of any learning process, more so far the language learning. These two components may be practised consciously at the early stage. Memorizing the structures of sentences will help the learners to produce the structures flawlessly at a later stage. In Teaching English Adrian Doff says,

Learning by heart is likely to be the most useful in learning things which are fixed and limited, and it is often formed to be a useful way of mastering certain fixed items in a language.

SUMMING UP:

The evolution of language teaching has undergone many changes. Though modern tools are very useful and powerful, one cannot deny the validity of the earlier language



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learning theories, methods and approaches. Each and every method has its own merit which cannot be dispensed with. The fact is that one stands on the shoulders of the other. Every method owes something to the previous method. So the contribution of everyone should be taken into account. The modern tools are vital and it gives us comfort in learning a language. At the same time one cannot deny the fact that good teachers, good books, good movies and audio-visual aids are indispensable for the successful implementation of teaching a language. By looking at all these developments one can come to a conclusion that no method is irrelevant and no method is hundred percent relevant. Each method has its merit. So let us take these merits and develop the skills of language learning among our students.

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