

Use of Multilingual Setting with Group Activities as a Teaching-learning Strategy in Teaching and learning of English (esl) in Rural School

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Abstract:-Students of rural schools face many problems in getting of education. One of the big problems is to learn English in their school days, mainly when they appear in matric board exams and show poor performance in English, in comparison to other subjects. To help in this problem Vidya Bhawan Society, Udaipur with collaboration of Hindustan Zinc organizes a summer camp in the month of May at the school campus for the students of class IX and X of Rajasthan.

English language team organized the class of thirty students in four to five groups randomly and one person of the team introduced the topic of the day. Then English worksheets were distributed among the students. In each group one facilitator helped the students in doing the worksheets. In descriptive questions option of writing in their mother tongue or Hindi was also given so that they could at least attempt the worksheets. After completion, discussion was followed. Students were provided with grammatically right answers based on the content described by the students in English, Hindi or mother tongue (Marwari, Bagri) in the oral or written form. Researcher who was one of the members of English team observed that this strategy of teaching English works effectively. Students attempt to perform and learn in friendly environment.

Keywords:-Multilingual Setting, group activities, teaching-learning strategy, English learning in rural schools.

Introduction:-Language plays vital role in our life not only for communication but also for thought expression as well as acquiring the knowledge from different fields. Rama Kant Agnihotri speaks about the language, “it (language) has often been thought of only as a means of communication. It is actually much more than that. It is a marker of our identity and a tool for the acquisition of most of knowledges” (Agnihotri, 2001).

In school setup language as a subject is different from the language of instruction in other subjects. In Govt. schools of India, English is taught as second or third language but medium of instruction is either Hindi or the other regional/state language. It means each subject teacher is not only her subject expert but she is also a language teacher as she uses many terms and registers for teaching her subjects. This way every teacher teaches students language related to the subject. Therefore, language is not just a means of communication. All sources of knowledge are opened through language. According to Agnihotri, “language is central to all domains of knowledge” (Agnihotri, 2015:1). He speaks about the language that it should be across the curriculum in the teaching learning process, as our school system does provide space for three language formulae, but language across the curriculum has not yet get focus in school curriculum.

“Indian society is characterized by multilingualism” (Pattnayak, 1984). There are many languages available in the classroom setting; different style of a language is used by students for oral expression at different places and in written expression; teachers also use different style of language according to their subjects as well as their own tongue (accent of a specific language) which can be different from school language. Agnihotri points out the importance of multilingual character of classroom settings in these words, “unmarked classroom in India is essentially multilingual and multicultural and these features can be used as resources rather than seen as obstacles” (Agnihotri, 1996).

Students of rural area schools face many problems in getting of education. Most of the students are first generation learners, have the knowledge of their home tongue and own

community culture. Medium of instruction is Hindi in most of the Govt. schools of North India. Hindi is other than the home languages of the students of these schools. They speak different style of Hindi or the dialects of Hindi. These dialects are also complete languages and have their own identity which is different from Hindi. For example, Bagri, Marwari, Braj-bhasha, and Avadhi are known as the dialects of Hindi, but they are complete in their own. We can see the wordily meaning of Braj-bhasha: language of Braj state (Braj Pradesh ki Bhasha), which means it is a complete language, not a dialect. In the medieval period, Braj-bhasha was the language of literature as well as administration. English is a foreign language for the students of rural area Govt. schools. As we talk about ESL (English as a second language), but for many of these students, it is a third language. One of the big problems for these students is to learn English in their school days, mainly when they appear in matric board exams and show poor performance in English, in comparison to other subjects.

Vidya Bhawan Society, Udaipur with collaboration of Hindustan Zinc organizes a summer camp in the month of May at its school campus for the students of class IX and X of Rajasthan, every year. Purpose of the camp is to provide help these students in improving the English language for their board exams. Participating students have come from the six districts of Rajasthan to Udaipur for this residential camp. This camp is also organized to other places (sites of Hindustan Zinc) of Rajasthan for those students who could not attend this residential camp of Udaipur. Vidya Bhawan Society, Udaipur invites volunteers from all over India to facilitate these students.

As NCF 2005 recommends children's mother tongue as the medium of instruction. In this camp, English language facilitators use Hindi and home languages of the students to teach English. Therefore, students feel comfort and proud for their tongue, as recognition to their tongue is given in the class. Many documents and educationist recommend bilingualism/multilingualism as a means of school learning because it is proved that bilingual

or multilingual children are more creative than the monolingual children. They have control over many languages which helps them in metalinguistic awareness, critical thinking and comprehension (NCERT, 2006:21).

For teaching learning of English language, Agnihotri recommends a pedagogy rooted in multilinguality that would ensure the emergence of society that is marked not for its justice, equality, liberty and care for others. It should also be a society that encourages rationality and respect for diversity. Main purpose of the language teaching is to sustain multilinguality and motivate critical thinking. It should encourage the ability of speaking without effort, listening and understanding with patience and learning to respect other languages (Agnihotri, 2010)

Objective of the study:-To observe the effectiveness of use of Multilingual Setting with group activities as a teaching-learning strategy in teaching and learning of English (ESL) in rural school.

Research Methodology :-Researcher was one of the members of English language team and worked as a participant observer in the English language class. Qualitative research methodology was adopted for data collection and data analysis. Researcher's self-experience is documented in this research paper. Researcher stayed at the residential camp and observed daily routine activities. English class was organized in four to five groups. Four to five facilitators were present in the class means at least one facilitator per group. In English class other languages were also welcomed. Students-students, students-facilitators interaction activities in English with the support of Hindi or mother tongue of the students were happened.

Tools used

1. Worksheets used by language facilitators
2. Participant observation
 - a. Interaction with students
 - b. Interaction with teachers
3. Feedbacks
 - a. Students feedbacks
 - b. Teachers feedbacks

Teaching learning strategy:-There was multilingual setting in the English language class. Students belonged to six different districts of Rajasthan and speak different styles of their local language and Hindi for communication. Facilitators belonged to different parts of India speak Hindi or English in different styles. Though all facilitators did not know the local language of Rajasthan but in explaining a concept or content, they encouraged students to participate in their tongue. When any word was not clear than facilitator asked students to explain that word in their own words. Afterward facilitator explained that in simple English.

As Anandalakshmy in ABL project (ability based learning) mentioned teaching learning in groups. Several children have the learning material for working in their groups, when the teacher is engaged with one group. In this approach the child learns in self-directed way at her own pace, from given systematic materials (Anandalakshmy, 2010). Like ABL in the English classes of summer camp, language facilitators divided the class of 25-30 students in 4-5 groups for teaching and learning activities. Students in a group were free to discuss and help each other in relation to the topic introduced in the class. One of the facilitators introduced the topic and discuss it with the class in general. Then worksheets related to that topics were distributed among students. Worksheets had different types of question like: fill in the blanks, matching, one-word answer, one-line answer, and descriptive answer. In the descriptive type questions, option of Hindi or Marwari/ Bagri was given for writing the answers. Students were helped in groups by the facilitators. After completion of worksheets, discussion was followed with the groups by facilitator. Students participated in discussion in their comfort language Hindi or Marwari/ Bagri.

Results and discussion:-Students participated confidently without fear in the teaching learning process, as they had provided opportunities to talk or to write in their comfort language. They can discuss, answer, respond, and write in Hindi or their own tongue like Marwari, Bagri etc. When they

gave their answer, facilitator had provided them simple English version of that answer. Students and teachers both tried to participate in groups to discuss the language learning problems of ESL. In these classes, not only students learned but the facilitators also learned many things from the students.

No single method is completely good or bad for teaching-learning a language. Therefore, a combination of different methods of teaching learning language was used instead of a single method for learning English language in these classes. This combination included translation method, cognitive method, behavioristic method etc. These classes were fully multilingual as students were from the different district of Rajasthan (having different language according to their district) and facilitators were from different states of India having different language ability. These English classes were basically related to grammar. Medium of instruction was Hindi but in flexible tone so that it could include the variety of students. With the help of students' language and cultural knowledge, English was taught.

Researcher who was from Delhi felt no problem in interaction with students. Even facilitators who belonged to south India and had little knowledge of Hindi also enjoyed these multilingual classes of English language learning. We all were facilitators as well as learners in these settings.

Conclusion and suggestions:-Researcher can conclude that in the classroom teaching of not only English but in all subjects, teachers can use group activities as teaching learning strategy by making 4-5 groups of the students. As the teacher knows the performance of the students of her class, she can make mix group of sharp and low students so that good discussion can be done. After introducing the topic, she can go individually to the groups one by one and observe their problems. At the end, whole class can get their solution from the teacher. Minor mistakes of spelling or grammar may be ignored. In the last of the class, grammatically right answer can be provided by the teacher after making discussion in

Regard to content and context of the answer with students. It can reduce the over burden of the teacher. Students feel happy with these activities as it provides them opportunities to participate without fear and to use their own comfort language in class. Teacher also works as a learner among the students which provides them proud about their language. For this teaching strategy events can be taken from the textbooks or some worksheets can be developed by the teacher herself. After discussing the print material, teacher can use the language and cultural knowledge of students as a study material to encourage them for participation.

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प्राचीन बौद्ध स्मारकों का सांस्कृतिक महत्व

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प्रस्तावना - संस्कृति शब्द का तात्पर्य संस्कारित या परिष्कारित कार्य है। यह संशोधन की सतत प्रक्रिया है। संस्कृति, मानव समाज के भाव विचारों और उनके जीवन में व्यवहार से संबंधित है, जबकि सभ्यता उसके बाह्य जीवन से संबंधित है। विशाल देश भारत में बृहत्तर परिपेक्ष्य में भारतीय संस्कृति एक होते हुए भी धार्मिक दृष्टि से बौद्ध, जैन, हिन्दि आदि संस्कृतियों में बंटी हुई है। प्राचीन भारत की संस्कृति के अध्ययन के लिये पुरातात्विक सामग्री एक अपरिहार्य स्रोत है। भारतीय पुरातत्व में बौद्ध केन्द्रों और स्मारकों का अद्वितीय स्थान है, क्योंकि "हमारे देश (भारत) में जो पुरातत्व अवशेष हैं वे हमारी सांस्कृतिक और ऐतिहासिक धरोहर है। उनकी संख्या प्रायः 1800 है जिनमें 1400 अवशेषों के स्थल नितान्त बौद्ध परम्परा के है।"

बौद्ध संस्कृति का महत्व - प्राचीन बौद्ध केन्द्र धार्मिक सहिष्णुता के प्रतीक रहे हैं। यही कारण है कि जहाँ बौद्ध केन्द्र हैं, वहीं जैन और ब्राह्मण धर्मों के भी केन्द्र स्थापित और विकसित होते रहे हैं। वे पारस्परिक सौहार्द के केन्द्र थे। वर्तमान की भाँति उनमें धार्मिक कटुता और विद्वेष की भावना नहीं थी। यदि कहीं एकाध उल्लेख मिलते भी होंगे तो वे किसी कारण घटना के फलस्वरूप ही होंगे।

इस धार्मिक और सांस्कृतिक सहिष्णुता का कारण यह था कि उनका अन्तर-भेद, धर्म में नहीं था, वह अन्तर था धर्म-पालन विधि और प्रक्रिया में। उनके दार्शनिक विचारों में अन्तर था। उस समय के लोग किसी बात का खण्डन-मण्डन, शास्त्र ग्रन्थ लिखकर करते थे। कभी-कभी तो बौद्धिक प्रतिद्वन्दात्मक प्रतियोगिता कई पीढ़ी तक गुरु-शिष्य परम्परा के माध्यम द्वारा चलती रहती थी।

प्राचीन भारत की एक सांस्कृतिक स्वस्थ परम्परा यह भी थी कि दार्शनिक प्रतियोगिता में पराजित होने वाला विद्वान, विजयी विद्वान को अपना गुरु मानकर उसका शिष्यत्व स्वीकार कर लेता था और अपने पूर्व के सिद्धान्त या सिद्धान्तों का पूर्णरूपेण परित्याग कर देता था। पूर्व बौद्ध साहित्य से पता चलता है कि पंचवर्गीय परिव्राजकों ने, काश्यप बन्धुवों ने और सारिपुत्र मौद्गल्यायन आदि ने इसी प्रकार बुद्ध का शिष्यत्व स्वीकार किया था। वेद-बेदांग पारंगत अश्वघोष और बुद्धघोष ने भी इसी प्रकार बुद्ध धर्म स्वीकारा था। ज्ञातव्य है कि अश्वघोष ने बुद्धचरित और सौन्दरनन्द (महाकाव्यों) सारिपुत्र प्रकरण (नाटक) वज्रसूची (चम्पू काव्य) की संस्कृत में रचना करके कालिदास का पथ प्रशस्थ किया। बुद्धघोष ने बौद्ध दर्शन का दरूह ग्रन्थ 'विसुद्धि मग्ग' तथा पालि त्रिपिटक ग्रन्थों पर भाष्य (अट्ट कथायें) लिखीं।