

Teaching english as an additional language



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Teaching English as an additional language TESOL stands for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. B. Kumaravadivelu talks about the major trends in TESOL since year 1991. Therefore, he categorizes the time before 1990 as a period of awakening and the one after 1990 as the period of awakening. The three major shifts that constitute the major transition in TESOL method since 1991 have been very effective. These are discussed below. First shift is from communicative language teaching (CLT) to task based language teaching (TBLT). CLT which is sociolinguistically oriented enables a student to use English effectively in communication i. e., the major objective language learning is interaction. TBLT on the other hand, is psycholinguistically oriented. This approach is learner-centered where students are made to perform numerous tasks in the second language. As the student interacts in the new language, gradually he acquires more fluency. Second shift has been from method-based pedagogy to post method pedagogy. This shift talks about the importance of a substitute to the method instead of changing the entire method. The concept of using a method has a very limited role in learning as well as teaching a language. Thus, an appropriate substitute to the method is the need of the hour. Third shift has been from systemic discovery to critical discourse. This is associated with realizing the fact that teaching or learning a language is not enough. It involves creating interesting language. This transition regards a language as an ideology and not merely a system. The author further says that ideas should be translated to goals. These goals should be accomplished through plans. Thus, awakening must be transformed into attainment. In the current era of the twenty first century, education has gained utmost importance. This has led to the influx of students in US from all parts of the

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world such as Europe , Ireland etc.. This migration has led to a significant increase in the number of students opting for English as an Additional language (EAL). EAL includes English both as a second as well as a foreign language. EAL teaching or learning English where it is not a native language or where there is not enough language proficiency. Pupils have different learning needs. Some are beginners- new and unfamiliar to the language and others are advanced learners. The prime objective of EAL is to help students acquire all skills of English language that are essential for both academic as well as social life. The EAL classroom is formed by students from diverse geographical, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. There is a wide variety of languages spoken inside the classroom. Thus, we will have to be very careful in dealing with students. It is the responsibility of us as teachers to create inside the classroom , a healthy atmosphere which is free from any kind of racist jokes or provocative comments. Students sharing a common first language can be grouped together in performing various tasks. Initially, a learner may be apprehensive and anxious about the subject and begin by giving one-word answers. Some of them may even show zero participation. I understand that we have to be patient. The student should be given sufficient time to get accustomed to new set of rules, new teachers , new people and new environment. They should be encouraged to develop interest in the subject. Gradually students should be motivated to come up with more than four-word answers, phrases, sentences and so on. Appreciation from teachers can also work in favor of the students. With time the student will acquire enough fluency and confidence. As the students are from all nationalities and cultures, where English is not spoken at all, a little or are totally bilingual, we have to make ourselves capable and efficient

enough in meeting the learning needs of all students. Its very important on part of the staff to make learning interesting and a thoughtful process. So I would device new ways to arouse the interest of pupils in English. The social ability such as to speak and understand English develops more rapidly than the academic skill i. e. to read and write. The curriculum should be designed in such a manner that it creates numerous opportunities for students to participate in meaningful conversations. The teacher-student communication should be English. However, I would also like to mention that we should also help the pupil in realizing the prime importance of his first language. This can be achieved by the use of skills that he has acquired in the home language. A student should also have access to material in main language. Reading this article has also made me think that there should be a healthy atmosphere where student interacts with his fellow students and as they perform various tasks. I have to make myself efficient enough to analyze a student's work because as we all know that work his the reflection of one's progress. Appropriate approaches applicable to different ranks can prove beneficial to the students. Weak students should be given proper attention rather than being looked down upon. I would also like to talk about variety of teaching aids that crossed my mind to make learning more effective. These include the use of charts, audio-visual clips , lectures , symbols , gestures, classroom discussions , demonstrations, assignments , simplified texts group tasks, word cards , matching exercises etc. Students can also be made to create their personal dictionaries for future reference. Working on this assignment has made me understand the importance of task based learning. Language skills and the curriculum should be taught through tasks rather than by one-way-process i. e. from teacher to students. If learning is task

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based it makes the subject very easy and enjoyable. When put in different situations students acquire the subject well and with a greater confidence. The student should be able to use English as means to communicate , read , write and apply in different situations in life. The lessons learnt should stay with them forever, should be the aim of our teaching. I would try my best to inculcate the students with all the knowledge that I gained as a student. This assignment has evoked a new enthusiasm and a variety of ideas that I shall implement in my career as a teacher. References Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006) . TESOL Methods : Changing Tracks , Challenging Trends . TESOL quarterly , 40 , 59-81.