



THE USE OF READING IN MAKING LANGUAGE CLASSES INTEGRATED AND STUDENT-CENTERED

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ANNOTATION

Current article outlines the use of reading in language classes to make the process elaborate, integrated and student-centered. There specified the application of reading and incorporation into other language aspects and skills in English language instruction.

KEY WORDS: *Reading, language aspects and skills, integration, segregation, behaviourist, structuralist, student-centeredness, teacher-centeredness*

INTRODUCTION

Current trends in language education demand from language educators and materials developers focusing on integrating all language skills and aspects in organizing language teaching process rather than teaching them in segregation.

In the experience of Uzbekistan, there are fundamental enhancement and reformations are being implemented into all spheres of life including educational system. In particular, language education is experiencing great transitions and enhancement. The presidential decree on the measures of the enrichment of the higher educational system and development of foreign language teaching which deeply concerns both language teachers and young specialists of universities who need professional growth in harmony with modern demands of improving the quality of education in the country. For that the initiatives should be started with teachers themselves.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As the requirements and standards for learning and teaching foreign languages are becoming elaborated today, the demand for development of new effective methods and approaches in language teaching, creating updated materials for modern classroom teaching and for new specialists fine-tuning the way they are teaching is also becoming a preliminary task to fulfill.

In the example of Uzbekistan, classroom teaching in language instruction is experiencing a

transition from traditional teacher –centeredness to student-centered classes and enhancements focusing on integrated approach to language teaching , where they try to make the process student-centered and communicative, much more active with student participation and interactive, still there is huge need for enrichment of the faculties in terms of ELT concepts, methods and modern trends.

Famous English Scholar Jack C.Richards who is internationally renowned specialist in second and foreign language teaching, an applied linguist and an educator, the author of numerous professional books for English language teachers, highlights in his book named “ Communicative language teaching today “ that best modern language instruction is specified with the following key categories:

- In teaching process the integration of language skills and aspects are encouraged rather than their segregation
- developing communicative competence takes privilege over linguistic competence
- Mostly authentic (and semi-authentic) materials are used in foreign language instruction i.e classroom activities, tasks and assignments are developed for students on the base of genuine resources
- New lexical and grammatical materials are presented in context
- Grammar instruction is presented not only with isolated sentences and rules but also in context they are retrieved in students’ mind by meaningful and engaging tasks. Initially,



the views and ideas of students about the task are asked while counting on them in presenting a new theme

- Grammar should be taught implicitly rather than explicitly
- The knowledge of language is in harmony with intercultural, socio-linguistic and pragmatic awareness raising activities in classroom environment
- It emphasizes the freedom of students over the dominancy of a teacher in the classroom and stresses to shape the ability of learner autonomy of students.
- Real reasons for communication are promoted, grammar rules and structures are taught by exposing them to real communication, not by making the students learn by heart a grammar rule itself.
- It stresses to improve both the knowledge of language and fluency in speech at the same time.
- Teachers lessen their “talk time” by engaging learners in discovering new elements of real communication and language awareness themselves
- Language is learned more effectively by discovering, experimenting, by doing as it is a skill

As mentioned above the general language teaching is becoming a preliminary task in all education establishments, the role of each skill in language learning can be considered a worthwhile matter to consider. Thus, the significance of reading in general language learning course also has aroused a lot of interest lately. So, possible answers to the question “Why should learners read in a foreign language?” may be the following.

- So that the learner can have additional practice of what he learnt through listening and speaking before.
- So that the learner can practice his knowledge in language before re-using it in writing.
- So that the learner can enhance his reading comprehension so as to extract needed information from it.
- So that learners can find pleasure through reading.
- So that the teacher can relax occasionally.

Those who consider suggestions 1 and 2 as the most principal purpose of reading think that they are one way of “stamp”ing the language into the learner. And this approach in language learning is called structuralist/behaviourist approach. Structuralist means that the language content is organized from simple to more difficult language structures, containing more common and widely-used

vocabulary. Behaviourist means that the carefully selected language is taught, while the stress is on repetition of the content. For example, the same selected content presented in listening is practised through speaking, reading and finally writing. Although this approach gives an opportunity for a learner to practice more and move from an unknown to a known language area, still it has some demerits that should be pointed out.

- It pays too little attention to reading as a skill that needs to be developed in different ways for many purposes.
- It creates more opportunity to develop the passive knowledge of students than the active knowledge.
- Working on the same language content through the four different skills may not alert students to the stylistic differences between written and spoken language.
- The structuralist/behaviourist approach does not motivate students to help themselves, as it has more emphasize on teaching rather than learning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Reading through language.

As other suggestions pointed, the purpose of reading may be either obtaining necessary information or taking pleasure through reading. But since reading for enjoyment is more similar to the aim of a fluent native-speaker, learning language through reading may possibly be the target for learners. In that case helping the learner to manage the text is where the teacher comes in. However, the most important thing is that the learner should want to read regardless of reading for data or enjoyment. It is the main task of a teacher to arouse motivation through handling the text in classroom with the help of appealing texts or interesting tasks. It should be pointed out that this task may be rather challenging for a teacher as a class may not have the same tastes. It is the communicative approach that comes in handy in that case. Rather than seeing the reading the way of “stamp”ing the language into a learner, the communicative approach sees language learning as the development in the learner’s ability that happened as the result of doing different relevant tasks. Whichever approach is preferred, there are some points for teachers to keep in mind. Firstly, the text should not contain a large amount of language or new vocabulary that is difficult for most of the class. In addition to that the content should not be too difficult as it either slows the lesson causing boredom in classroom or increases the pace of a lesson resulting frustration in class. Advertisements and instructions may be the right choice here having been written in quite simple language. Furthermore, the texts written



imitating authentic texts may be a good source for a teacher.

Objectives in reading

The ultimate objectives in reading for learners are that they:

- Should be able to read with good comprehension;
- Should be flexible in reading according to their purpose;
- Should be able to learn both language and content through reading;
- Should read with critical awareness;

Even though these aims will vary according to the learners' ages, interests and their language levels, these are reasonable targets for a general language course to work towards.

- Reading with good comprehension. It means that the learner is able to identify the main purpose or function of the text together with its sense. Also, he is able to handle new vocabulary in the text by guessing their meanings and learning to tolerate uncertainty.
- Reading flexibly. This refers the way in which the learner can skim, scan and read intensively or extensively according to his purpose in reading.
- Reading for language and content. It means the learner is able to pick out the relevant information or evidences from the text recognizing the main point and details. At the same time he learns vocabulary by guessing and using a dictionary.
- Reading with some critical awareness. This means that the reader should be able to stand back and analyse the text objectively.

Building objectives into the program

Building these objectives in to a general program needs a teacher to plan and prepare suitable materials beforehand. So, there should also be taken into consideration access to different materials and the time for preparation of a teacher. A very effective way of working towards the aims is arranging the content topic by topic as the basis of program organization (eg. Food education, weather) Each topic can include a variety types of texts and tasks so that a learner can practice broadly this language area together with its relevant vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

As the program goes on the texts can become more complicated in language and structure, so that the learner is undergoing a real progression. There is no strict limit in choice of topics. So, a teacher can arrange the list of topics according to the learners' needs, classroom environment and the availability of

material. However, it is a good idea to move from the more familiar to the less familiar.

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