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ENGLISH MADE EASY FOR RURAL STUDENTS THROUGH SUGGESTOPEDIA

Dr. Gannavaram Sridevi
Lecturer in English, B T Government Degree College, Madanapalli.

Introduction:

India is the land where many languages are commonly spoken. Each region will have a different language. Though officially, Hindi occupied the position of National language, most of the South Indians cannot speak in Hindi. After the invention of the British in Indian education English has turned to the language of learning and the link language. In most of the rural areas the youth and others cannot speak in English and consider English as a difficult language. Even in higher secondary class rooms English is taught as a third language and the rural students feel that it is not easy to master the language. In the above circumstances a study is made in the issue of making English easy for all the students.

From times immemorial the teachers have been taking classes in the direct method to the students. Though many changes have been made in this respect the teachers are not in a position to adopt them. The reasons are many and varied. First of all, the class rooms are large and filled with more number of students. The second reason is the heterogeneous class rooms. The level of learning varies from student to student. The most important reason is a language is learnt in the base of marks not on the basis of acquiring the four skills viz listening, speaking, reading and writing. The examinations are conducted on only one concept that is writing. In this variety the students focus on writing and neglect the other three skills. When the student enters in to the job market then only he/she realizes the importance of the other three skills.

Suggestopedia:

It is a portmanteau word for "suggestion" and "pedagogy". This method has been used to learn foreign languages. This method is developed bythe bulgarian psychiatrist georgi lozanov. Lozanov presented this method toa commission in paris atunesco. Two years later in 1980 unesco issued their final report with various mixed views onthe theory. On the one hand, it affirmed suggestopedia asa second language learning technique. [1] suggestopedia asserts that the physical surroundings and atmosphere of class room are vital factors in making sure that "students feel comfortable and confident". [2] there are three phases in this method. They are deciphering, concert session, and elaboration.

Deciphering: in the deciphering phase, a teacher introduces to their students some written or spoken content. In most materials the foreign language text is onthe left half ofthe page witha translation onthe right half. When the teacher introduces, the students are asked to go through the text. The academy books that are published bythe andhra pradesh government too have been followed the same.

Concert session: the concert session phase consists of active and passive sessions. In the active session, the teacher reads the text ata normal speed, while their students follow. In the passive session, the students relax and listen tothe teacher reading the text. If possible, simple music may be added. Playing music may not be compatible inthe loaded class rooms of indian context. Hence, the teacher reads the text witha speed ratio where the slow learner too identifies the words. Later, with a normal speed, the teacher reads, and then the slow learner recalls the word inhis/her memory. As a suggestion the students will be given the words and their meanings in english only.

Elaboration: the students express what they have learned through acting, songs and games. A fourth phase, production, is also sometimes used.

Production: the students spontaneously speak and interact inthe target language without interruption or correction.

Implementation:

As a case study the same is implemented inthe class room. The poem "night ofthe scorpion" written by nissim ezekiel, has been given tothe students of under graduation in andhra pradesh. The class room is completely a heterogeneous class room; where the students of bachelor of science (chemistry and physics) bachelor of commerce and bachelor of arts meet inthe same room.

The first step of deciphering is done bythe teacher. The poem is in indian english with all the idioms. The students first understood the theme ofthe poem. The teacher then went tothe active mode of concert and read the poem with change of modulations inthe tone. The slow learners could not understand the meaning of certain words like "clicked their tongues" etc. The teacher now, provided the meanings withthe help of pictures, without giving translations or sounds. The students understood.

The students are given the task of acting the same. One of them took the position ofthe mother who was stung bythe scorpion. Some boys and girls acted the peasants. One boy took the role asthe father. They really showed the empathy of pain in their faces. Though they made mistakes, they are not spoken of during the period of enacting.

Ultimately, the students are made into groups. They are asked to discuss on each role and their behavior at that hour.

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Thus the class room has been engaged more than one hour. The students enjoyed learning like this and they can produce answer of their own as they spoke inthe targeted language first. No text is given during the entire process tothe students.

Criticism:

Suggestopedia has been called as a "pseudo-science". [3] In response, Lozanov claimed that suggestopedia cannot be compared to a placebo as he regarded placebos as being effective. Another point of criticism is brought forward by Baur, who claims that in suggestopedia students only receive input by listening, while other points of language acquisition are neglected. Several other features like the method is nonconscious learning of language or bringing the child like state are questioned by the critics.

Conclusion:

Though there are some pitfalls, the suggestopedia makes the student enjoy learning the second language. Some times, it can used to make the student experience infotainment. Thus in the heterogeneous class room one can adopt as a relaxation in teaching learning process.

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