An Analysis of Factors Impacting English Language Acquisition

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Abstract:

Teaching English in Vocational Education should refer to English for specific purposes where the students 'needs focus on communicating in their field study like engineering, nursing, navigation or computer etc... It is given to the learners who need English for their work. This study led to the conclusion that the dominance of mother tongue, negative attitudes of trainer toward English language, improper use of method in teaching the four skills of English language(listening, speaking ,reading ,writing), inadequate instructional media and facilities, and lack of language laboratory are the causes of poor students performance in English language. The paper concluded that the instructors, curriculum designer are responsible for improving the students' performance in English language four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing).
Keywords: English Language, Learning Process, English Language Skills.

1. INTRODUCTION

The decision about what English courses should be taught in an institution, corporate training program, academic department, classroom, or other instructional situation is a decision about curriculum purposes. Persons differ in their desires to determine what should be taught. On the one hand, there are those who flee from curriculum responsibility. They acquiesce to the decisions of others. For example, instructors sometimes accept without question and justification the static goals of boards, administrators, or textbook writers. Trustees and administrators sometimes avoid making decisions about curriculum and what should transpire in classrooms, excusing themselves on the grounds of academic freedom. Responsibility is sometimes avoided by denying the need for the decision, claiming that the present curriculum is good enough. Amore subtle way to avoid responsibility is to apply a technological approach, in which determination of curriculum ends is treated as non-problematic. Content is determined by the ratings that respondent groups give to proposed goals; the highest rated goal is designated the priority. On the other hand, many individuals and groups want to propose what should be taught. They may have special concerns and interests on what should be taught in preparation for future jobs and study, such as job accidents, Nursing, Navigation and Telecommunication, and computer literacy. So those at all levels of instituting should constantly question the purpose of curriculum. Changing circumstances make even the most enduring of subject matters questionable. of course, some situations offer instructors little freedom to determine ends; the military instructor ordered to train recruits a certain task, for instance. However, having curriculum goals chosen by the largest number of people involved in an educational enterprise is still the best general principle.

1.1 ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS

A. LISTENING AND SPEAKING
Listening is not a passive skill. Listening is one of the most important skills learners need in order to learn English as a second or a foreign language. It involves the nature of what a learner is listening to, its clarity

and the listeners' ability to understand it. The learner of a language must learn the sound patterns of the target language. They need to learn how speakers' express emotions and transfer information. That's why listening skill plays a significant role in language learning. When learners listen to English, they make a conscious effort to hear not only the words that another person is saying but more importantly, they try to understand the complete

LISTENING SKILLS DIFFICULTIES

a. Difficulty in remembering long massages in even longer speech

b. Cannot understand the rapid speech patterns of natural language usage

c. Unfamiliar words in an abundance

d. Difficulties to differentiate between important and unimportant information

Speaking is an act of making vocal sounds .to convey a massage or to express thought and feeling in the spoken language. It is the ability to communicate effectively. Of all the four skills speaking is the most important skill. Speaking is one of the most difficult language skills. Developing speaking skill involves gaining fluency in spoken interactions with others, as well as practicing pronunciation. In speaking Learner usually Use new language skills as often as they can to speak to people or other students from their language class, or native speakers .The mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second and foreign language learners. But learning speaking skills is very challenging for learners because they don't have the opportunities to use English outside the classroom.

In order to master the listening skill learners must listen carefully in order to note the arrangement of words, the rise and fall of voice, stress and intonation and from all these put together, learners draw meaning .So neglecting or discrediting listening skill causes distress and frustration to a language learner.

B. READING AND WRITING

Reading is a process by which learners recognize words and letters and interpret them into meaningful ideas. The recognition and understanding of words are known as comprehension. Recognition of words on its own is not enough to insure comprehension. An understanding of the meaning in crucial if comprehension is to take place. Reading is a skill that can be developed. This means that the more a learner's practice, the better he become. Frequent reading enables learners to increase both their speed

message being sent. In listening learners usually process what they hear to achieve successful communication with others. Research shows that an average of 45% is spent listening compared to 30% speaking, 16% reading and 9% writing. (Adler, R. et al. 2001). That is why listening is one of the most important skills in English language learning since it is a basic skill of communication.

and comprehension. At the same time reading build up their vocabulary. The more vocabulary they know, the easier reading becomes. Successful readers know how to easily locate and understand information to do so; they need to understand how passages are constructed.

READING SKILL STRATEGIES:

IDENTIFYING VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT:
It is important to guess meaning of words from the context. This requires understanding the words part of speech (verb , noun , adjective , and adverb) , looking around words for clues , paying attention to punctuation , and analyzing word roots , suffixes and prefixes

SKIMMING:
This is a rapid reading skill. it requires going over the text to understand the general idea. A good skimming technique is to read the introductory paragraph and the first sentence in each body paragraph (the expected place for main idea). Knowing this skill enables you to identify main ideas.

SCANNING:
Scanning is another rapid reading skill. It requires reading a specific part of the passage to look for specific information. knowledge of this skill can help learners identify details in the passage.

SURVEYING:
This is a general look at the passage to understand its structure. It includes looking at the title, length of passage, and how is it divided into paragraphs.

MAKING INFERENCES:
Making inferences is a process of reading that requires putting together information provided in the passage and reading between the lines to come up with an answer to question .The information might never be stated clearly, but there are clues in the passage that would guide you to suggest or infer an answer. Writing skill considered as a productive skill. Writing skill process is a difficult skill that integrates the knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and the extent of interest learner may find in a chosen topic

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING ENGLISH

English is a Universal language .it is a mean of communication not only among native speakers of English, but also has become a mean of communication between many of its speakers as a second or a foreign language. Since English language is the language of scientific researches, and the language of tourism and travel; it is the language of many medical organizations and International conferences it is also the language of economy and e-commerce.it occupied a prominent position as the language of the study in most universities and institutes. According to Ethnologies (2017 20th edition) there are more than 371 million speakers of English as a mother tongue, and more than 611 million as a second language. Thus, it is clear that the importance of this language is reflected in the number of those who use it more. A strategic study prepared by the Federal Coordination Council for Engineering and technology Science shows that 50% of the scientific and technological researches are published in English language. This explains that a person who is not fluent in English cannot benefit from more than half references in technology science journals or even cannot participate in global researches. From the above it is clear learning English has become very important, as it is the world's first and most widespread language.

3. INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH

Those who plan to develop English language curriculum within a given institution must attend to the nature of that institute, especially to the institute's manifest purposes. Why? One reason is that the selection of an appropriate model or set of procedures for the formulation of objectives depends on the central purpose of that institute. Vocational and other training institutes, for example, are expected to prepare students for specific jobs. Hence, the use of job analysis, a technique for deriving objectives, that directly contribute to helping students find jobs and keep them, is warranted. This technique seeks to ensure a match between what the student learns and what he will do on the job. The method can be amplified, of course, with procedures for collecting data that will help anticipate likely job requirements. Job analysis would be a less appropriate tool to use in the formulation of objectives within an institution whose mission is to further humanistic goals. Such an institution should use a different technical tool to formulate objectives, i.e., a tool more consistent with actualizing learners as individuals.

Illustrations of how institutional purposes match procedures for curriculum development can be seen in the familiar practices of the community college. There is more freedom in the formulation of curriculum goals in community colleges than in traditional institutes devoted to the liberal arts because they frequently have a very broad goal, that of community service, an invitation to meet the educational needs of the community. Because of such goals and the Kuwait legislature's practice of funding community colleges based on student enrolment, the curriculum problem becomes a search for courses that will attract students. The appropriate technical tool for the formulation of objectives in this case is needs assessment, a procedure for uncovering local deficiencies and trends to decide what might be taught, and a way to sample and stimulate interests in various kinds of learning.

4. ENGLISH COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Job descriptions and task analysis procedures are used to enhance the relevancy of the training program to the job to be performed. A job description is a paragraph or two listing the tasks involved and any unusual conditions under which those tasks are carried out. All classes of tasks are listed. The task analysis begins with a study of the job or jobs. The English language curriculum developer tries to answer these questions: What tasks are required on this job? How frequently are they required? What skills and information are the graduate of the training program expected to bring to each task? A task is a logically related set of actions required by a job objective. The step actions are as follows:

In the task analysis is listing all tasks that might be included in the job. For each of these tasks an estimate is made of the frequency of performance, relative importance, and relative ease of learning. The task is detailed by listing what the person does when performing each task. Note that what is done is not necessarily the same as what is known.

Task identification occurs through interviews, questionnaires, reports of critical incidents, and hardware analysis. Observation shows what the employees do while being observed; questionnaires and interviews reveal what they say they do. Critical incident techniques also indicate what people say they do. A critical incident report may describe a specific work assignment, which an employee carried out very effectively or very ineffectively. Such reports are especially valuable in identifying

unforeseen contingencies, difficult tasks, and interpersonal aspects of a job. Reports are sorted into topics such as equipment, problems, or groups of incidents that go together. The features common to these incidents are categorized. Each incident is judged effective or ineffective and characterized by the presence or absence of some skill or knowledge. The records may be further classified by such dimensions as work habit, management effectiveness or ineffectiveness, and method problem. From these data new training objectives are derived for courses. Critical incident reports are completed by representative samples of job's holders and supervisory persons who interact with job's holders. The job analysis and knowledge of the characteristics of the intended learners are all that is necessary for the blueprint of expected student performance. The course objectives can be obtained by subtracting what the student is already able to do from what he must be able to do. Course objectives are not the same as task analysis. Objectives specify the abilities that a beginning learner must have after training; task analysis describes the job as performed by a highly skilled person. Subtracting what students are already able to do from what they must be able to do helps one to decide the course objectives. One cannot go directly from a task analysis to the formulation of objectives for a course. It is necessary to decide which skills demanded by the occupation may be better taught on the job and which skills are best taught in the course.

5. FACTORS AFFECT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

A. ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS' COMPETENCY AND PERFORMANCE

The teacher is a key element in the educational process. He is the actual implementer of the curriculum. Teachers contribute directly to the growth of students amount learned, range of outcomes achieved, and range of students who benefit from instructions. Michael. F, Andy. H (2013). They are responsible for selecting and adapting authentic materials for use in class, they become student need analysts, and they must create truly learner centered classrooms. (Jack C. Richards, Theodore S. Rodgers (2014) p128). The impact of the instructor on performance is very high. The objectives of any English language courses cannot be obtained when the learners are taught by incompetent instructor. such instructors would not be able to properly and adequately disseminate the English language to the student. So, a well-equipped instructor masters the subject matter. He can clarify ideas and the ability to motivate the learner and involve them in meaningful activities.

B. TEACHING SOURCES AND MATERIALS

There is no doubt that teaching materials play an important role in teaching English as a foreign language. Teaching materials used to support learners and instructors in the process of teaching and learning. They are effective when instructors use them into present the proper time. They are varied according to the aims or purposes they help to convey. the instructor should be aware of the goals teaching material achieve how to use them in a proper way and when. They help student to interact, using English in an authentic way. furthermore, they encourage students to get rid of their shyness and create a sort of rivalry. So, they help instructors to make the learning session enjoyable. They help the teachers provide more stimulation learning session. they are aimed at different learners styles since it involve all senses and the more senses are involved in the process of learning, the longer the information learnt stay in memory .it encourage learners to become more involved in learning process .teachers can use for example an OHP to project a table with the new vocabulary and give copies of it students. It is much easier to write everything at home and create presentation than to write down all the ideas on the whiteboard during the learning session wasting time that can be used for discussion. Using OHP considered one of the best methods to prompt conversations and develop an active vocabulary learning. Another teaching material is using videos. They help learning language because learners can see and hear language being used in meaningful context. It is an audio-visual aid. It is authentic and interesting. the visual content can help students guess the meaning of the new vocabulary. So, videos can be of great help in language learning and teaching.

BENEFITS OF USING TEACHING MATERIALS

a. They save time and effort

b. They attract the learner attention and arouse their interest

c. They motivate the learner in the learning progress

d. They assist learning session development in a systematic logical way

e. They check and test students' interactions

f. They present models from outside world in to the classroom

g. They encourage learners to apply knowledge immediately

h. They make the learning session joyful and understood by the majority of learners Performance

C. LANGUAGE LABORATORY

A language laboratory is an audio-visual computerized device used for learning the foreign language. It plays a significant role in English language learning. The language lab has been considered as a means of providing the speaking practice. Language Lab is a very helpful tool for practicing listening and speaking. It gives the students the opportunity to listen to the model pronunciation, repeat and record it. They are also able to listen to their performance and compare it with the model and do self-assessment. It is a flexible device where students can learn as per their pace and interest and most importantly it does not require the teacher all the time. In language lab a learner can present and demonstrate language skills it also enables the instructor from monitoring and interfere as required. In his study. (Abdelaziz Mohammed1.2017) conclude that the use of a fully equipped lab daily with it altogether will probably affect students' performance especially in the listening and speaking skills

D. STUDENTS' ATTITUDE AND MOTIVATION TOWARD LEARNING ENGLISH

According to Garder (1985) Attitudes are a component of motivation, which "refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language ".

Motivation is an essential element in language teaching and learning to non-native speakers. Experimental studies indicate that students with high motivation learn language faster and better than those. If there is a need for an interesting pedagogy that can stimulate students' desire to learn foreign language, a sense of learning that language is very useful, and failure to find motivation will severely constrain and hinder the learning process. Ideally, motivation must come from learners Themselves, or mainly based on their wishes and needs, but it is difficult to achieve this goal with young pupils between the ages of 10 and 18 because they are not mature enough to understand the goals behind learning a foreign language. Their interest is not strong, especially in the middle stage, when they begin to learn English as a foreign language. The motivation of students in private schools is not a problem for teachers because students have the motivation to learn foreign language, but the situation is different from that in public schools Governmental organizations in the Arab world, which contain overcrowded classrooms with between 30 and 40 students per class, and the motivation rate varies from student to student; there are high motivation students and weak motivation students in the same class; It is difficult for the teacher to discover incentives and motivations for each student, and be practical waste of time. There is often one foreign language in the curriculum of Arab government schools, namely, English. All students in most Arab countries must learn this language and have no choice in this field. If the cause of motivation moves (transform) into creating the desire among students to learn foreign language (English), how can this issue be achieved ?Any desire to create students?

6. CONCLUSION

There are many key factors which affect learning English as a foreign language These key factors include: No habit of practicing speaking or writing or listening, a lack of interest from both sides; from teachers and students in developing the skill. Negative attitudes of learners toward English language, improper use of method in teaching the four skills of English language (listening, speaking, reading and writing), inadequate instructional media and facilities, and lack of language laboratory. Also, there is no trust in learning English and a perception that what is thought at school is enough, so when students shift to a new course/level that causes difficulties in learning and dislike as students expected an easy study which also leads to a negative attitude towards learning English. There is a gap between what is thought at school and what is required at the new level of study at the institute which should be invested at earlier stages during school study. Mother tongue was another issue as it's difficult for students to learn English at later stages; it's easier to learn English at early school stages. Another aspect is the quality of teaching delivered by the instructors which shows dissatisfaction by students including managing poor performance, and also expectation of what is taught and what is presented in the examinations. Also, students commented on availability of qualified instructors, this is a more specialized area that needs experts to list qualification and asses teaching quality in classrooms.

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