

Vol 4 Issue 5 Nov 2014

ISSN No :2231-5063

International Multidisciplinary Research Journal

Golden Research Thoughts

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RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595

ISSN No.2231-5063

Golden Research Thoughts Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial board. Readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

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Golden Research Thoughts
ISSN 2231-5063
Impact Factor : 2.2052(UIF)
Volume-4 | Issue-5 | Nov-2014
Available online at www.aygrt.isrj.org



**GR_T RELEVANCE OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING-A
CRITICAL STUDY ON ENGINEERING STUDENTS
IN ENGINEERING COLLEGES OF TAMIL NADU**

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Abstract:-Teaching of English in Tamilnadu at secondary and collegiate levels is to be revised forthwith for the sake of providing ample scope for self-education for engineering graduates. Self-direction in learning English is to be the way for the students for achieving self-education. As a result of it, they will be turned as the users of English rather than languishing as learners of English as ever before. This paper throws light on how the Macaulay Model of teaching English is to blame for this kind of academic lacunathat is haunting the supply chain of educational devices for educating the students in terms of their acquiring the working knowledge of English on their own. This will be consistent with the modern educational approach of making the teaching of English as learner-centred and not teacher-centred. It logically follows that the learner student will have to have academic autonomy mostly in terms of self-direction.

Keywords:Self-Directed Learning , Engineering Students , learning English mechanically .

INTRODUCTION

In the secondary level and in the collegiate levels, our students are treated as robots, learning English mechanically and not by any subjective experience, so that the words and phrases of English, while being learned, will have to get internalized in their mind forthwith. By this process, the students will have the feel of English words so that they could have unfailing ability to communicate in English. Their thoughts and ideas among their peers in the colleges and colleagues at workplaces. Also they will feel the words of English in their bones so that they will have no difficulty in practicing the various language skills such as LSRW.

CHALLENGES IN SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

Acquisition of English is made possible only when the students learn English with greater scope for autonomy in terms of making individual efforts by self-direction. An effort of will is to be made by the students at learning English chiefly for its merit of communicative function. It is really a veritable challenge for the learner-student to follow different methods to learn English in terms of practicing it. It will take place under the conditions of acquiring it by self-will and not by any external help or persuasion.

B. Thenmalar Bharathi, "RELEVANCE OF SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING-A CRITICAL STUDY ON ENGINEERING STUDENTS IN ENGINEERING COLLEGES OF TAMIL NADU", Golden Research Thoughts | Volume 4 | Issue 5 | Nov 2014 | Online & Print

INNOVATIVE METHODS PRACTICED BY TEACHERS IN ENGINEERING COLLEGES

There has been a radical change in the academic thinking on how to teach English to engineering students more scientifically. Accordingly the learning-teaching setting in the colleges is to be learner-centered. The teaching methodology is to take recourse to educational psychology pertaining to learning a foreign language like English by our engineering students. When they are in the midway between adolescence and adulthood. Such students will be with their juvenile vision of making thrust into putting forward the claims of assertive personality as the self-styled learners of English. Such students are supposed to be the beginners of the learning process. However our college students are matriculates with the English knowledge at secondary grade level. They are not new to learning English in the colleges. Rather they are privileged to have been learning grammatical English for twelve years as English medium students and six years as the regional medium students. These are the favourable factors that will hold them in good stead while they are learning English with greater scope for their individualism in terms of self-direction, and self-discovery and self-evaluation.

ROLE OF ENGLISH TEACHERS

The language teachers might be facilitators to motivate the students to exercise their will power to learn English more in an Acquisitional context of Krashen's theory of curriculum. Under this system, the learners try to use English words and phrases already known to them. They use the words while acting upon the input hypothesis mechanism. Hence, the part played by the teacher is vital. The teacher makes room for task based teaching that requires the total psychological commitment on the part of the student-learners towards using independently the language skills (LSRW) in practical situations. Such assertion of one's own personality is the prerequisite to the method of self-learning. This formula should be applied to learning English by the different learning styles like Suggestopedia, Silent way and Total Physical Response. The teacher motivates the learner with a scientific attitude rather than romantic feeling. The inference of this academic situation is that the students are made to learn English more engagingly in terms of objective assimilation than in terms of subjective experience.

ROLE OF THE STUDENTS IN THE ENGINEERING COLLEGES

Immaturity of knowledge in acquiring English on the part of the student learners is not to get outweighed against the merit of making individual effort at learning English mostly by self-direction. Corollary to this, occurrence of errors, random or characteristic, is integral to such individual effort. Errors in practicing English are due to the misjudgement of linguistic applications while mistakes are traceable to misconception of linguistic norms. The supposition is that such errors are to get corrected by the students themselves as and when they practice the skills LSRW on their own in uninhibited awareness of such errors. The concept of communication as related to practical use of English is the be-all and end-all of how and why to use a language for interpersonal correspondence by word, spoken and written.

FINDINGS

With the advent of student's upward individualism as accommodated into the new system of learning English in a scientific manner, the role of the teachers and the function of the students are to be re-defined. The customary services of the old fashioned teachers are found dispensable. This is in preference to their assuming the role of facilitators, supplying their students with words of friendly counselling and suitable study materials. All these will be the pre-conditions prior to empowering the students with talent to learn English on their own. Errors are to be viewed not as indicators of deterioration but as marks of self-evaluation. Modern trend is to attribute merit of communicative function to English in regional and global demand. To sum up, the learner-students with a sense of directions of their choice are to prefer English for Communicative Performance to English for Communicative Competence.

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