CHAPTER 6
TECHNIQUES, AIDS AND MODERN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY IN LANGUAGE TEACHING

6.1. Teaching aids and techniques

In the recent year the technology has provided education with a range of teaching aids that have been great help in modern language teaching. Digital Tape-recorder, filmstrips, film projector, radio and TV are playing important in language teaching in the different parts of the world. Linked with growing age of these technological aids has been the development of programme learning, which has, in recent year, made considerable impact on language teaching.

The experiments carried out by psychologists like Thorndike, Pavlov, Tolman, Kaffka , Kohler and others have provided insights which have great relevance to language teaching . Thorndike and Skinner tried to apply their findings in the field of psychology to the field of teaching. Skinner went a step further and devised a practical appliance to promote efficient learning. This appliance has now become widely known as the Teaching Machine and the kind of instruction associated with such machines is generally called *Programmed Learning*.

6.1.1. Skinner's view on language teaching

Skinner believed that all behaviors, animal or human, was made up of emitted responses, which could occur again and again in the life of the individual. The recurrence of a particular response would depend on the support it received from a further set of stimuli called the reinforces. These reinforcers in the case of rats and pigeons happened to be food and on the human level they could be gifts, money, and praise and so on. Satisfaction

resulting from learning can also be reinforcing at a higher level. With these guiding principles in mind skinner build his first teaching machine in 1953. It is significant that he invented the teaching machine at a time when there was a shortage of teachers in the U.S.A.

The machine is simply a device to unfold a programme of learning prepared by the teachers. It has certain advantages. For example, it is difficult to cheat a machine. The learner cannot go to the next question until he writes the answer to the first. Unless he studies the question and formulates the answer he cannot make any progress what so ever. It provides individualized – instruction which is not possible in an ordinary classroom situation today. Lastly, the machine remains neutral; it does not scold or punish. As against all this, however, one may argue that if the machines do not scold, they do not also praise or inspire the learners. They cannot show affection and stimulate the learners as human teachers can. This, in fact, is the major criticism against the machine by its users. Secondly it cannot adjust its programme according to the needs of the individual learners. While a human teacher can respond to the varying attitudes and approaches of a learner even in a classroom a machine cannot do this. A significant development in language teaching based on the principles of Skinner's Teaching Machine is 'Programmed – learning' which has now developed into a science in its own right. Three important features of 'Programmed Learning 'are:

(a) Human behaviors can be manipulated in way which leads to the desired terminal objectives

(b) Individual changes the way he behaves by observing the consequences of his actions. Favorable results encourage and heighten the learner's interest in learning.

(c) A good programme is a carefully graded sequence of steps.

Even though these current developments in language teaching techniques have certain distinct merits we cannot import them in our situations. The two major reasons are

(i)These technological aids involve huge expenditures which the financial resources of our secondary schools can ill afford and

(ii)The expertise which is needed to efficiently handle these sophisticated techniques cannot be easily made available in all the colleges.

However, an awareness of the principles on which these new techniques are founded can provide some useful insights to the language teachers. Teaching aids supplement instruction and enhance instructional capabilities. They brighten up the classroom and bring more variety and interest into language lessons, thereby motivating the learners. They also light up the meaning of the utterances by providing situations . Use of aids stimulates learners to speak, read and write the language. Teaching aids are designed to save the teachers' time and effort, thereby helping them to devote time for creative tasks. They have a psychological value as well; they encourage learners to participate and bring the class closer to real life (Saraswathi 2005)

6.1. 2. Advantages of using Teaching Aids

Teaching aids creates interest among the students and more involvement on the part of the students. They make the learners more active and draw their attention. Choudhury (2015) has mentioned following the advantages of teaching aids:

(i) Being attentive, the learners can easily retain the teaching. Thus they make learning permanent.

(ii) Such use reduces verbalism on the part of the teachers. With a little explanation, S/he can enable the learners to grasp the matter in an easy and quick way.

(iii) They develop greater understanding in learners. The realistic world comes in front of them and as a result they can easily comprehend the taught matter.

(iv) Use of teaching aids acts as a booster in the process making the learners very active and alert. The Subject matter becomes very interesting to them. As a result, they like to engage in self -activity.

(v) Teaching aids stimulates interest of the learners, engaging them in relentless activity. They keep their minds fixed in the study matter. Hence, the continuity of thought on the part of the learners is reflected in the process.

(vi) Proper utilization of teaching aids helps the teachers a lit making reaching effective and an enjoyable activity.

(vii) They help in overcoming language barriers. In some contexts language stands as an obstacle in the process. Teaching aids act as a panacea in this regard, breaking the ice of language problem

(viii) Teaching aids translate the classroom into a real world. They make the subject matter more authentic and concrete.

6.1.2.1. Classification of Teaching Aids

According to Saraswathi (2005), teaching aids may be broadly classified as follows:

Non Projected Visual	Audio	Audiovisual	Projected	Computers
Graphs	Radio	Films	Sliders	*
Charts	Records	Video	Silent Films	*

Posters	Tapes	Television	Film Strips	*
Models	*	*	Overhead Projection	*
Bulletin Boards	*	*	Opaque Projection	*
Cartoons	*	*	*	*
Books	*	*	*	*
Photographs	*	*	*	*
Chalk and Blackboard	*	* *		*

6.1.2.1.1. Relevant Teaching Aids in language Teaching

Choudhury (2015) has further mentioned some of the relevant aids of teaching which are discussed are discussed below:

6.1.2.1.1.1. Realia: Models

The most influential teaching aid is realia. The realia includes clock, calendars, plastic fruits ,food items, and vegetables, household objects, maps, real and play money, abacus, food containers, manual for learning to drive, and classroom objects like model chart ,films etc. Those models play a vital role in teaching – learning process is accomplishing the goals of English teaching in India. The ELT can be more lucidly described by using

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linguistics models like IPA Chart, place and manner of articulations, these linguistic models help in understanding ELT.

6.1.2.1.1.2. Flash Card

In the classroom, flashcards are commonly used to teach reading. Flashcards are small cards with a picture or symbol on them used both in teaching and in development work. A picture, for example, of a horse may be drawn or stuck on a card and the word 'horse' written underneath it or on a different card. To use flashcards in a classroom situation, such as learning to read show the picture and the word together. Ask students to look at the picture and say the word. Then they look at the word and say it again. The students are encouraged to associate the pictures and the words through various 'look and say' activities and games, for example, Kim's game, Pairs, and so on. After presenting a number of words with pictures that the students already know, ask for volunteers to come out and match pictures and words .In teaching and development work, flashcards may have pictures symbols drawn or painted on them. Lines should be broad enough and words large enough to be easily visible from the back of the classroom. The darker colours are the most visible (Allen and Valette 1972)

6.1.2.1.1.3. Black Board / Chalk Board

When thinking of visual aids a good point of departure is to consider as a basic aids the one most commonly used, most dependable and most greatly accepted by particularly all teachers: the blackboard. The blackboard fulfills a number of requirements which should be basic to all visual aids: it remain at our command through every minutes of our class; it is constantly available; no special request or effort is necessary on our part to secure it; it will not break down. It is most reliable tool of instruction. According to

Baruah (2001) , the teacher , before writing anything on the blackboard , should mentally divide the blackboard space into two parts – (i) a 'reference area ' for developing the blackboard summary , and (ii) a 'working area' for writing or for drawing sketches etc., which need not stay long on the board A teacher can use the blackboard in a very effective way be using the following the techniques.

(a) Blackboard should not be loaded with too much information. A few important points make a vivid impression.

(b) Blackboard summary should be planned in advance.

(c) Colour techniques like template pattern, over head projection techniques for effective display should be used.

(d) The required amenities such as chalk, ruler eraser etc should be collected needed before the class meets.

(e) Handwriting should be legible and bold on the blackboard. The magnetic chalk board, a steel based porcelain surface chalk board, adds a new dimension and increased flexibility to class room presentations. Again, a flannel board is a piece of rigid material covered with cotton, flannel, felt or wool. When objects like pictures, drawings, symbols are backed with strips of paper they will adhere to the flannel board.

6.1.2.1.1.4. The Overhead Projector

The overhead projector, used as a controllable blackboard or bulletin board in the teaching of writing, extends the range of teaching techniques so that an instructor may (1) Prepare, In advance, handwritten sheets of film--test questions, pupils' sentences, quotations, short poems--to be shown in any order or form; (2) Use pictures, graphics, or cartoons as subjects for creative composition; (3) create diagrams of symbols to aid in the discussion of a composition. Although there are many advantages tc an overhead projector, it is limited because only a short passage of a composition can be shown at

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one time, large print Must be used, and the materials must be read line by line from the screen. However, the value of tee overhead lies in the teacher's increased ability to control the visual content of his message without total reliance upon oral directions and repetitions.

6.1.2.1.1.5. Slides

There are various types of materials available such as still projection, slides and film strips are the foremost visual aids. Film strips are easy and convenient to use. It takes up little space and can be stored easily in container. They are of great value in teaching. The picture or images in film - strips are sequential in order. It can be used at any desired place while teaching. The Slide Projector or Diascope used in teaching and commonly known as Magic Lantern. As it is used to project slides, i.e., why it is called a slide projector. When the figure or illustration is very small and it is required that the whole class should see it clearly, a transparent slid of this small figure is prepared. The slide is placed inverted into the slide carrier part of the magic lantern (slide projector). ' It is a related sequence of transparent still pictures or images on a strip of 35mm film . It helps in showing the magnified image of the slide. The slide projector projects its erect image on the wall or screen by enlarging its dimension and making the vision more sharp and clear. The picture may be in colour or black and white. It can be used effectively even in semi – darkened room

6.1.2.1.1.6. Diagrams and Graphs

A diagram is a simplified drawing to show interrelationships primarily be means of lines and symbols. A graph is a visual representation of a numerical data, presented in a quick and an effective manner. A good graph

requires little explanation and conveys information at a glance. The most commonly used graphs are the line, bar, circle or pie and the pictorial graph.

6.1.2.1.1.7. Maps

The usefulness of map in modern field of teaching can't be denied. Maps made by students or communities may take several days or weeks to build up, as they gain confidence through the process. Making a map in a classroom can help to teach students about the concept of maps and how to interpret them. The process of making a map can encourage cooperation between students, by jointly assessing their situation and needs. It can help the student to reflect on their own surroundings. For example, they might make a map of the health and safety hazards in the school compound, village or town, showing features such as busy roads, blind corners, unprotected water sources, rubbish tips and stagnant ponds where mosquitoes breed. Map help in understanding different countries locations, place etc. It also provides road directions to us. Mapping can help outsiders to become more familiar with an area and with the people who live there.

6.1.2.1.1.8. Cartoon

A simple drawing showing the features of its subjects in a humorously exaggerated way, especially a satirical one in a newspaper or magazine. Cartoon pictures can enable people to discuss sensitive issues and so are useful for teaching and training. Cartoon strips can be used to teach sequencing and ordering to students. In development situations a cartoon is a method of conveying a specific message.

It has been observed that there are a wide variety of teaching techniques and aids that can well be implemented sides the English language classroom. It is apt to mention Harmer (2007) here: "The resources that are currently

available are truly amazing, as we shall see, they over an amazing variety of routes for learning and discovery. Yet we should not see them as methodologies for learning, but rather as tools to help us in whatever approaches and techniques we have chosen to use. And we need to remind ourselves constantly of the fact that many classrooms both in the 'developing' and developed world do not have access to very modern technology. Yet this does not prevent students and has never prevented them ---from learning English successfully." Again, Venkateswaran (1955) warns us . "… you must not be intoxicated with visual aids. It will be advisable to combine them with other teaching techniques to fulfill immediate and long term aims." Hence, the role of teacher again plays an important factor in judicious selection and application of available techniques and aids. He/ She should apply such techniques and aids only when the situation demands. Excessive dependence on them and their overdose may result in total failure of the very process of teaching -learning.

6.2. Factors Affecting in Teaching-Learning process of English in Bengali medium schools

Most of the students who study in mother tongue medium schools have no ample opportunity to study English Language except in the particular class of the language. Though, the students are encouraged to learn the use of English, the content of these English courses are grossly inadequate for the students to acquire requisite skills in effective use of language for communication and for the give and take of social experience. In order to study English as a second language and be successful at it, the student must be helped by the teacher to acquire four skills of language i.e., speaking, reading, listening and writing.

The deterioration of the standard of English in India is because of the way English is taught in our schools today. The aims of English Education and Teaching are certainly very lofty and there are inadequate means to realize them. The policy makers have forgotten that English is not the mother tongue of Indians. We must accept that the standard of its teaching has deteriorated vastly and that is why it is essential to know the problems of teaching English in India in the school level. In this chapter it is attempted to trace the problems faced by both the Teacher and the student in the English teaching and learning process in the Bengali medium school in Silchar subdivision of Assam and suggesting remedies where these are called for.

In Assam the teaching of English has many-sided problems and their remedies will find place in detail in the following lines of the study (Kindly refer to suggestions, page : 208) . Considering the following points which entail certain factors affecting in teaching- learning process: (i) Defective Clear-cut Policy, (ii) Lack of Exposure to the Language, (iii) Dearth of Suitable Teaching/Learning Material and Insufficient provision of audio-visual aids (iv) Lack of competent Teachers, (v) Defective Methods, (vi) Lack of English library and laboratory, (vii) Variation in English syllabus, (viii) Defective textbooks and curriculum, (ix) Faulty Examination system, (x) Apathy of the government, (xi) Use of mother tongue in the Classroom (xii) Laid back attitude of both the teacher and the student. (For detail descriptions kindly refer to page number: 194)