

Role of Experimental Lab Class (ELC) for the development of English Language in Government Schools of J&K

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ABSTRACT

Every age witnesses the development of language through innovative methods devised by educators or linguistics of that age. These methods have been invented right through the ages to improve or develop the target language. Researchers have found that most of these methods or innovations when applied in any sector (government or private) have mostly ended up with the desired results. With the passage of time it becomes necessary for the authorities of any state to revise and introduce the latest methods in the field of education. We have so far witnessed many such innovations in the education sector which has either proved beneficial for the students or failed at the experimental stage only. Of many such innovations the introduction of Experimental Lab Class (ELC) for the primary class students in government run schools of the Jammu & Kashmir state is worth mentioning and shall be the core focus of this paper.

Keywords: *Education, Experimental Lab Class (ELC), Government, Innovations and Language.*

INTRODUCTION

As food is vital for the humans to live in the same way introduction of latest innovations in all the field of life is important and vital for the development and progress. Development in all the walks of life include, progress in the field of science and everything what comprises other than science. 'Education is that discipline of life which occupies the utmost place and requires our foremost attention.' The explanation and answer to this statement is lucid and clear, which is that via education only we can plan to reach-out to all the other disciplines of life. The government of India has always been very keenly working and planning for providing the proper and adequate education facilities for its people. As such which has always encouraged them to look and revise the education policies after equal intervals. The introduction of Experimental Lab Classes is one such brick put into the wall of education as a development. Obviously the very first question that occupies our mind is that what is this Experimental Lab Class (also abbreviated as ELC)? How this class room looks like? What is the role and importance of ELC. As the name signifies it is a sort of laboratory where in experiments are help with of our second language (English). It is a sort of Smart Class concept where if not all the latest gadgets are used but the use of images and colors form the main source of attraction for learning language. In India various innovative learning organizations are working for the improvement of education, one such organization is 'Pratham' established in 1995 which focuses on the high-quality, low-cost, and replicable interventions to address gaps in the education system (Pratham, 1995). The government schools of J&K have very recently started to encourage

the primary class students to learn English language in these Experimental Lab Classes. The sole purpose of ELC is to build and fabricate the basic concept of second language in the minds of students from their class first only. It is important to note that for primary class students this special Lab cum class is a sort of dream class wherein the walls are beautifully painted with diverse colors, the images of flowers, wild animals and domestic animals, birds, numbers like 1 to 100, and many other attractive things are mounted on the walls and ceilings of this room for these children. Children enjoy in these special labs which makes their learning process easy and fruitful. As already pointed out that the sole purpose of these class rooms is to introduce the child to his/her second language (English here) thus a sort of environment is created in such a way that the children via pictures and images learn English language easily, correctly and properly. Here they learn and develop English language skills with other subjects without any pressure. It is worth mentioning here that language learning is not same as learning any other subject, it is not mere writing an examination and getting a degree or award. To learn any language it is very important to make its learner get into the contact of aesthetics i.e. having aesthetic sense forms one of the basic pillars of language learning. In order to learn any language it is necessary to comprehend four skill i.e. listening, speaking, reading and ultimately writing (Yule, 2016). All these four learning phases are made available to the primary class students in a very favorable and attractive environment called ELC. The teachers play a very vital role here as it is them who have to expose these students to this modified and new form of learning for which they (teachers) need themselves to be trained and educated first. In these labs students are made to practice all the four language learning skills regularly and gradually. It is pertinent to mention here that not only in primary schools now a day labs called language labs are introduced in higher seats of learning also i.e. universities wherein all the students, (here all mean the students pursuing any course) are made to spend some time in these labs in order to learn the second language which helps them in their future prospectus. Surely language is the only best source of communication and unless one isn't good in communication it hampers his/her success to a considerable extent. In schools the primary class students are made to listen and learn new words in English which indeed increase their vocabulary and helps them to pronounce words correctly in addition of imparting proper grammatical rules. In short in ELC's the students are exposed to English language and efforts are made to make them relish and develop a mindset to welcome English language as a language that is not difficult and impossible to learn. With ELC we can assess student's language learning process very closely and effectively. It is a sort of entertainment for students generating a feeling of ease and security as felt obviously at homes. Experimental lab class gives every students a freedom to learn and develop English language at their own pace. As the time advances the scientific advancements have produced number of innovative applications to assist the learning process. Innovative products such as digital multimedia control, wireless handsets and microphones, the interactive response pad etc. have been very useful for the students in learning the English language (Aleman, 2014). Michael Connolly rightly says "innovation can be revolutionary and abrupt, but more often it is part of an evolutionary process: small, forward-thinking changes that cumulatively" (Pickering, 2014) .

If the current educational landscape in J&K state is completely reinforced with these experimental labs rather than putting these innovation to experiment and test, it will surely develop the effective communication skills among the students. The ELC stimulates and motivate students about learning the English language which otherwise seems to be some others cup of tea. Comparatively this technique rather concept has proved and

showed positive results in the development of English language among the students and learners. As we are well aware of the fact that most of the population of the world is bilingual, which mean it becomes important for any learner to learn his/her second language properly, correctly and completely. At the same time we must be aware that English is an accepted universal language which further attests its importance for learning.

In the words of Jane and Cynthia learning of any language is a gradual process wherein the development takes place in the following four stages (Björk, 2008):

- *Pre-Production: In this stage student is silent who can figure out English language but can't speak. Sometimes the student even don't understand the English language at all;*
- *Early production: This is a baby step for new student. In this stage he starts converting one's passive vocabulary into active and develops more than 40 words;*
- *Speech emergence: When the student reaches third stage the vocabulary develops to more than 70 words. The students reads simple sentences with the help of a teacher; &*
- *Intermediate Fluency: In this stage the students are able to speak English fluently. In this stage students try to translate words or sentences into native language. A student speaks what he listens from the teacher.*

The above stages confirm the developmental process for any language development which in our case if obviously English. The ELC effectively improves the English language skills among the students of J&K and its proper and complete implementation in our government schools can surely generate the miraculous results. It is important to understand that the language can be accurately learnt only if the student learn it right from his/her elementary class level.

II.CONCLUSION

Without any shadow of doubt Experimental Lab Classes (ELC) is one such innovation in the field of education which has so far helped a large community of students to boost their second language morale and learning skills. The introduction and implementation of the same by the government of J&K is indeed a very promising step towards the betterment of student community in particular and the society in general. However, it is a fact that there is always a scope for development and keeping this fact in view it is the duty of government to take necessary steps for the proper and complete implementation of ELC in each and every school. Besides what is more important than the implementation process of ELC's here is the unremitting and quality check over the already functioning ELC here in the state of J&K.

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