

Suggested Solutions to Teach English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) in Jordan

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English language teaching (ELT) has always been a subject of concern to educational policy makers in the world. Much research has been conducted discussing the various problems of Arab learners learning English as a foreign language. (Wahba, 1998; Abbad, 1988 ; Abdul Haq, 1982). The first explicit stated English language curriculum for public schools was drawn up by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in the early 1960's. It outlined a rationale for the teaching of English as a foreign language, stated the general and the specific aims for teaching it, described the pedagogical theory and practices by which those aims could be achieved and indicated ways for the evaluation of their achievement (MOE, 1990).

This study investigates a new paradigm of teaching and learning English as a foreign language to find a solution to the problem in Jordan by paying attention to the following points:

The methods

What is needed is a combination of methods that enable students to master the four English basic skills.

The Teachers of English

The Teachers of English should be as the following:

- 1- Administrations in the Ministry of Education have to reconsider the qualities of teachers. They have to qualify and train them carefully.
- 2- What we need is teachers who have practice in speaking English.
- 3- Teachers of English should master the four basic skills of the language.
- 4- The teacher's proficiency levels for reading and writing should parallel those of understanding and speaking.
- 5- The teacher should know the description of the structure of English.
- 6- He should understand the intimate relation between a language and its culture.
- 7- It is necessary for an understanding of the culture.

The Jordanian Students

The Jordanian students should be as the following Hashisho, (2005):

- 1- Students in Jordan have expressed their desire to learn English even if it is not obligatory course.
- 2- Students should learn the Language step by step.
- 3- Students can be motivated highly if they are rewarded by teachers when they do well, and are forgiven and encouraged when they make mistakes.
- 4- Family could be encouraged by their parents to learn English. Parents would pinpoint the importance of English for their children, by making them listen to English programs on television or radio.
- 5- Games, songs and music in English are all worthy means of motivating students.

The Curriculum should be as the following:

- 1- A change in the curriculum should take place.
- 2- Reading books should take place.
- 3- It should include a variety of subjects some of which anecdotes, folk-tales, short stories and short plays which appeal to their attitude and background.
- 4- Students should read things which they understand and be pleased by reading it.

The problem of limited vocabulary that should Jordanian students suffer from is related to other basic skills, normally, reading and speaking. This means enrich and emphasize both reading and speaking.

Marton, (1988) in many of his lecture on teaching English as a second language, suggested the following techniques for the development of the speaking skills:

- 1- Asking questions based on text or dialogue.
- 2- Reproduction of a dialogue with certain changes .
- 3- Summaries of dialogue or selections .
- 4- Talks prepared by students on a set of topics .
- 5- Discussions , debates , arguments and panels .
- 6- Communication games in simulated environment.

7- Improvised talks on suggested topics .

Techniques for the Development of Reading

The audio – lingual methodologists believe that "the ability to read and write a language may come as a by-product of the process of learning the spoken language." Also, reading skill should be considered as essential step in teaching English in Jordan. It is a fact that the more people read English, the more they build up vocabulary that helps them to communicate with native speakers of English. The material for extensive and intensive reading should be interesting, which means that it is (National Reading Panel, 2000) :

- a. Relevant to students' needs and falls within their psychological field.
- b. It should be related to their age.
- c. It should have abundant informational content.
- d. It should have a sense of humor and jokes that are related to their culture and understanding.
- e. It should have illustrations, pictures and colors.
- f. It should be simplified and abridged and have reasonable length.

Such techniques and exercises (CIERA, 2001):

- a. Develop speed of reading.
- b. Improve vocabulary.
- c. Improve sentence structure and comprehension.
- d. Improve comprehension of complete selection.

Techniques for the Development of Vocabulary :

We can improve vocabulary by :

1. Word formation, which means using prefixes, suffixes , and derived words.
2. Guessing the meaning of words in context.
3. Recalling words from their definitions.
4. Using words in sentences orally or in writing .

Teachers of English should be aware of the following techniques that introduce meaning of new vocabulary:

1. Ostensive technique which demonstrates and shows physical objects.
2. Paraphrasing in the native language (Arabic).
3. Paraphrasing in the target language by synonyms, and examples.

Using any techniques depends on the new word itself .

Developing the Skills of Writing:

Writing is a means of communication especially when person to person contact is not available. It involves three different steps. The first is sentence writing, the second is paragraph writing, and the third is composition writing.

The following steps are recommended by William Slanger et al (1994) to improve controlled composition.

1. Answering questions or turning questions into statements.
2. Re- ordering sentences.
3. Filling in blanks with connecting words and phrases.
4. Using substitution tables.
5. Supplying topic sentences that limit the verb form or the sentence pattern.
6. Finishing sentences that are carefully ordered to produce a coherent paragraph.
7. Writing summaries of paragraphs.
8. Supplying topic sentences for a composition longer than a paragraph.
9. Writing summaries of whole compositions.
10. Deriving a composition from a model.
11. Motivating a composition by showing pictures and supplying patterns of modification.

To improve creative writing or free composition:

1. Students have to be trained carefully in controlled composition.
2. The assigned topics should be related to the students' experience s and scope of knowledge.
3. The students should be supplied with the necessary vocabulary or be prepared (in advance) by reading assignments related to the subject .
4. Students should plan and organize their writing.

They are advised to write the main ideas on a rough paper and then develop them in well organized compositions. Students should revise and review their compositions.

Developing Listening Comprehension:

MRiver(1983) suggested the following techniques for the development of listening:

1. Continuous training in listening to utterances in English prepared by native speakers to recognize and identify words and phrases in their structural interrelations.

2. Continuous training in selections or drawing out from the utterance those elements which seem to contain the gist of the message .
3. Dialogues are good exercises for listening comprehension.
4. When students acquire confidence in listening to ungraded material much practice may be given in individual situation by using :
 - a. Language laboratories.
 - b. Listening booths established in the library .
 - c. In listening rooms equipped with tape – recorders' or recorder players.
5. Material for listening may be drawn from literature being studied and may provide a basis for oral reports in class.
6. Practice in listening may be given by taped lectures on informational subjects, sustained scenes from plays, or reading from poetry.
7. Students may attempt to follow radio broadcasts or the sound track of a commercial film or documentary.
8. Listening to programs of popular songs.
9. Listening to group conversations and discussions.
10. Simulated telephone conversations are also worthwhile for they give practice in listening to slightly distorted speech with no visual clues available to counter act the effect of distortion.
11. Groups of schools in the same supervision area should cooperate in the production of material for listening comprehension.
12. In areas where contact with native speakers is rare.
13. There should be regular practice with increasingly difficult material.

Conclusion

The findings reveal a solution to the problem in Jordan by paying attention to the methods, the teachers and the students of English; in addition to the Curriculum and Techniques for the Development the four skills that we needed for the future to teach English as a foreign language.

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These are some helpful resources that could update the content, I liked the article from Sharjah "follow the first link" to that and other as supportive resources.

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http://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/16211/Ozsevik_Zekariya.pdf

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