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## IMPROVING THE METHODOLOGY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING THROUGH THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER: A CASE STUDY OF FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

**Abstract:**This paper explores the importance of the teacher's role in enhancing the methodology of English language teaching. Focusing on first-year students, the study aims to demonstrate how the teacher's role in facilitating the learning environment can significantly improve student engagement and language proficiency. By examining various teaching techniques, including communicative language teaching (CLT) and task-based learning (TBL), this study presents the impact of teacher-student interaction, feedback, and guidance in the language learning process. Moreover, the paper highlights how modern pedagogical strategies can be integrated into the classroom to create a more dynamic and interactive environment for English language learners.
**Key words:**Teacher role, English language teaching, methodology, first-year students, communicative approach.

## Introduction

The role of the teacher in language teaching cannot be overstated. Teachers are not only transmitters of knowledge but also facilitators, guides, and motivators who influence the learning process. In English language teaching, particularly for first-year students, the teacher's approach to the subject can significantly affect student engagement, understanding, and language acquisition. This paper explores how the teacher's role can enhance the effectiveness of English language teaching methodologies and improve students' language skills.

First-year students, often in the initial stages of learning English, face various challenges in language acquisition. These challenges range from a lack of confidence to difficulties in grasping the grammar and structure of the language. Therefore, this study examines how teachers can apply effective methodologies to overcome these barriers, focusing on interactive and student-centered teaching strategies that can motivate learners and foster their language development.

## Literature Review

A growing body of research emphasizes the significant influence of the teacher's role in student motivation and language acquisition. Studies show that a teacher who provides clear instructions, offers constructive feedback, and creates a supportive classroom environment can enhance student motivation and language skills (Dörnyei, 2001). Moreover, it is widely acknowledged that language teaching methodologies such as Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Learning (TBL) require active teacher involvement in guiding students through meaningful communication tasks (Nunan, 2004). Research by Richards and Rodgers (2001) suggests that the teacher's attitude, enthusiasm, and use of dynamic teaching techniques can directly impact students' willingness to participate in class. Teachers who integrate interactive elements, such as group work and peer discussions, can stimulate a more engaging and productive language learning experience for students.

This paper also reviews literature on the importance of feedback, highlighting how both formative and summative feedback from teachers can improve students' understanding of language concepts and foster continuous improvement.

## Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, involving a case study approach with first-year students in an English language course at TIIAME National Research University. Data was collected through classroom observations, student surveys, and teacher interviews. The research focuses on identifying the most effective teaching methods used by instructors to enhance first-year students' language acquisition. Additionally, interviews with teachers were conducted to understand their perspectives on the teacher's role in language instruction.

## Results

The research findings indicate that the teacher's role in shaping the language learning environment plays a crucial part in student engagement and success. Some key results include:

**Interactive Teacher-Student Relationship**: First-year students reported that they were more motivated and engaged in lessons when teachers encouraged interaction, used humor, and demonstrated enthusiasm for the subject. Students who had teachers who were actively involved in discussions and provided real-time feedback felt more confident in their learning.

**Task-Based Learning (TBL) and Problem-Solving**: The use of task-based learning methods where students engage in problem-solving activities proved highly effective. For instance, group projects and role-playing tasks allowed students to use English in authentic contexts, leading to better retention and understanding of the language. Teachers who facilitated these activities helped students develop critical thinking skills while improving their communication abilities.

**Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)**: The implementation of CLT strategies, such as group discussions, debates, and peer teaching, resulted in enhanced communication skills. Students noted that when teachers encouraged them to use English in real-life situations, it helped improve their fluency and confidence.

**Constructive Feedback and Guidance**: Teachers who offered consistent, positive, and constructive feedback were seen as more supportive. Students appreciated when their mistakes were corrected in a manner that promoted learning rather than discouragement. Moreover, personalized feedback helped first-year students address specific areas of difficulty in grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary.

**Use of Technology and Multimedia**: Teachers who integrated multimedia tools, such as online quizzes, videos, and interactive games, made lessons more engaging. The combination of traditional teaching methods with digital resources was particularly effective in holding students' attention and reinforcing learning through different mediums.

**Classroom Atmosphere and Student Motivation**: Creating a positive and encouraging classroom environment was found to be vital in boosting student motivation. Teachers who

fostered an inclusive, non-judgmental space where students felt comfortable making mistakes and asking questions were instrumental in increasing students' willingness to participate and take risks with the language.

**Discussion**

The findings of this study underline the pivotal role of the teacher in shaping the English language learning experience for first-year students. The teacher's approach to classroom interaction, lesson planning, and feedback significantly impacts student motivation, engagement, and ultimately language proficiency. By examining the various methodologies implemented in the study, it becomes clear that teaching strategies rooted in student-centered approaches, such as Task-Based Learning (TBL) and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), have a far-reaching effect on student development and engagement in the learning process.

First-year students in this study expressed a strong correlation between their motivation and the level of teacher engagement in the classroom. When teachers created opportunities for open dialogue, allowed students to actively participate, and established a supportive environment for learning, students showed greater interest and commitment to improving their language skills. Teachers who demonstrated enthusiasm, patience, and empathy were able to inspire students to take risks and make mistakes in the language, which is essential for language acquisition. This aligns with the work of Dörnyei (2001), who highlighted that motivational teaching strategies, particularly those focusing on building a positive teacher-student relationship, can reduce the anxiety typically associated with learning a new language. Students who felt valued and supported by their teachers were more likely to actively engage in class activities and participate in discussions, which are critical components of the language learning process. These findings suggest that beyond the methodological approaches, the emotional and psychological aspects of teaching play an essential role in motivating students.

The findings from the implementation of Task-Based Learning (TBL) show that students benefited from activities that encouraged them to use English in authentic, real-world contexts. TBL, which involves completing tasks that simulate real-life communication, helped students to see the practical application of the language they were learning. Tasks such as role-plays, group discussions, and problem-solving exercises facilitated the development of both fluency and accuracy in English, particularly when students were required to work collaboratively with their peers. This aspect of TBL is particularly important for first-year students who are often learning a new language for the first time. By engaging in hands-on activities and interacting with their classmates, students were able to practice English in a low-pressure environment, which promoted deeper learning and retention. This study supports the view expressed by Nunan (2004), who emphasized that tasks allow students to focus on meaning rather than form, leading to more natural language acquisition. Furthermore, TBL encourages critical thinking and decision-making, which are essential skills for language learners, helping them to not only improve their linguistic abilities but also build confidence in their capacity to use the language independently. Ananther hand, the use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in this study demonstrated its potential to create dynamic and engaging language lessons. By encouraging students to interact with one another in English, participate in debates, and discuss topics of interest, CLT helped create a classroom atmosphere that prioritized communication over rote memorization. This shift from traditional grammar-based instruction to communication-focused

learning allowed students to use English in a meaningful context, which resulted in improved motivation and language skills. Students who participated in CLT activities reported that these lessons were more enjoyable and practical compared to traditional grammar drills. These findings resonate with Harmer's (2007) assertion that CLT fosters authentic communication, enabling students to develop the ability to use language in real-life situations. Additionally, the social aspect of CLT, where students are encouraged to engage with their peers, fosters collaboration and a sense of community within the classroom, which was especially motivating for the first-year students in this study.

Feedback emerged as one of the most significant factors contributing to students' progress in language learning. Teachers who provided consistent, constructive feedback were able to guide students through difficult areas such as grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. The immediate feedback offered during classroom activities helped students to correct mistakes in real-time, reducing the chance of incorrect patterns becoming ingrained. However, the study found that feedback should not only focus on error correction but also acknowledge student effort and progress. This dual approach to feedback—correcting mistakes while also recognizing achievements—seems to foster a more positive learning environment where students feel encouraged to continue improving. As Richards and Rodgers (2001) suggest, effective feedback can motivate students to actively participate and push themselves further. Additionally, teachers who provided individual feedback during one-on-one interactions were able to address specific challenges faced by students, leading to more personalized learning experiences.

**Technology and Multimedia Integration**

Another important aspect of the study was the integration of technology into the classroom. Teachers who utilized multimedia tools such as educational apps, interactive games, and online language learning platforms created more engaging and varied lessons. Students who were exposed to these digital resources reported that they felt more motivated to study outside of class, as the use of technology made learning more fun and interactive.

The use of platforms such as Duolingo and Quizlet allowed students to practice vocabulary, grammar, and listening skills in an interactive, gamified environment. These platforms not only provided immediate feedback but also allowed students to track their progress, which further contributed to their sense of achievement. Moreover, multimedia resources helped cater to different learning styles, providing auditory, visual, and kinesthetic learners with different ways to engage with the language. As Brown (2007) discusses, integrating technology in language teaching not only appeals to modern learners but also enhances language acquisition by providing varied input that supports different cognitive processes. By incorporating such resources, teachers can make language learning more accessible and engaging, ensuring that students remain motivated and invested in their language development.

Creating a positive classroom atmosphere emerged as a central theme in the study. The teachers who fostered an inclusive, non-judgmental environment where students were encouraged to make mistakes and ask questions were able to significantly enhance student motivation. This finding aligns with the work of Ryan and Deci (2000), who emphasize the importance of creating an environment that supports intrinsic motivation and fosters a sense of autonomy. For first-year students who may be hesitant to participate in class due to fear of making mistakes, a

supportive classroom environment is critical. Teachers who allowed students to take risks and gave them the freedom to express themselves in English, even when their language skills were not perfect, helped build their confidence and motivation. This approach led to more active participation in class and a greater willingness to engage in language learning outside of the classroom.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the teacher's role is central to the success of English language learning, particularly for first-year students. The study highlights how modern pedagogical strategies, such as communicative language teaching and task-based learning, when effectively applied, can enhance the learning experience. Furthermore, the teacher's interaction with students—through feedback, encouragement, and creating a dynamic classroom environment—significantly contributes to student motivation and language proficiency.

To further improve language acquisition, it is essential that teachers continue to embrace innovative teaching techniques, integrate technology, and foster a classroom environment that values student engagement and collaboration. By doing so, teachers can help students overcome challenges, develop essential language skills, and maintain a strong motivation to continue learning English.

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