

# Classroom Learning Activities to Enhance English Language Skills

**Sk.Rehena, Assistant Professor in English, PVP Siddhartha Institute of Technology, Vijayawada, AP, India. jarina.2005@gmail.com**

**Mani N Bacchu, Research scholar, Acharya nagarjuna university, Nagarjuna nagar, Guntur, India. Manib4u@gmail.com**

**Abstract -** Language as a vehicle of communication is very crucial to the whole process of education, since it is through language that everything is taught and learnt in a majority of teaching-learning situation. The aim of learning English in Indian colleges is to help the students to acquire both receptive and productive usage of it. The students are expected to acquire theoretical and practical command over English. They should be able to first understand spoken English (Listening), Speak English (Speaking), read English (Reading) and write English (Writing). These are the four basic aims of learning English. Practice is necessary for enhancing the students' language skills. The teachers should make an extra effort in the classrooms to discuss new words through dictionaries, puzzles, word games, word calendars and books on riddles for an environment of enthusiastic word learning.

In this paper the students are motivated to improve their language ability through adopting some language learning strategies. This responsibility to enhance their language skills among learners termed as application of learning strategy. Consciously or unconsciously all the learners of language apply this in the learning process. In the language classrooms some students show tremendous response and others slow. It is not the problem of educational programme or those classroom activities but the abilities of the learners. One will grasp easily and other needs time. Through these learning strategies all the learners can choose their needful strategies. This is the way how information processes that enhances comprehension and learning.

**Key words:** Language skills, Activities, learning strategies, practice and comprehension

## I. INTRODUCTION

English is considered as Lingua Franca and it has got global demand from the users. To learn this language many people created innovative methods to suit the needs of learners. In this paper the researcher adopted few of those strategies as classroom activities. In the present curriculum the learners are facilitated with all the four skills (LSRW). But the problem arises with the continuous practice. Even the students are also from various learning backgrounds. Even their mother tongue is different and to teach this heterogeneous class within stipulated time and improving their language and communicative ability is a hectic task. It is not possible in a theoretical teaching so adoption of some language activities in the classroom is useful to the learners. The most common activity in a language classroom especially where language is taught through literature and language skills is to ask students to relate their own knowledge and experiences to the topic. The teacher should provide them with worksheets involving quiz, questionnaire, sentence stems to

completed, statements to be discussed and the four language skills' exercises.

English language is a foreign language to the students and it is difficult to master the proficiency of it as the native speaker. So, the students should not be compared to the native speakers but expected to communicate them properly in English. This is possible if they think language in contextual learning. In this paper researcher adopted Language learning activities as one the methodologies to train the students to teach target language to the students in the classroom. The following are the suggested activities.

## II. NEWSPAPER ACTIVITY

News paper articles are a rich source of information and also useful in building the vocabulary of the language learners. These activities will sustain the interest of the advanced language learners and also will give inspiration to motivate the new language learners by creating simple vocabulary activities for classroom. Daily reading a Standard English News paper also helps the English

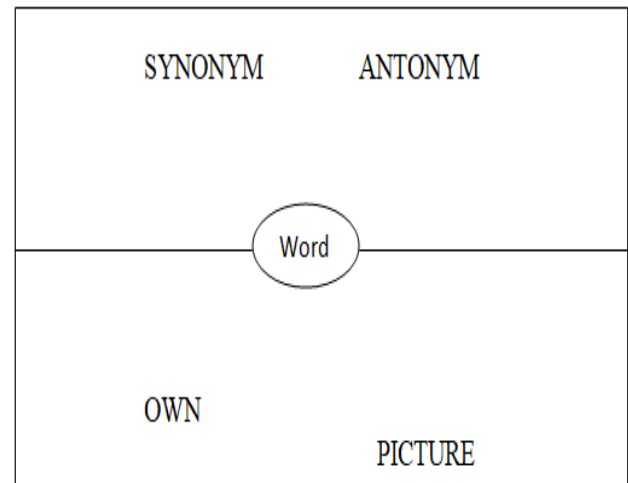
learners to improve their communicative ability by observing sentence pattern and expressions.

### Head line Cards to improve Vocabulary:

The following worksheet is for doing pair works. It can be used for training the headline vocabulary of the Newspaper

- Pairs are formed for this activity.
- Few cards distributed to each pair
- Incomplete tables are printed on the cards. They have to complete them.
- Students complete the tasks on their own with the help of headline vocabulary and also match with the word given in the box.
- After the completion of the task they are allowed to check the answers with the other pairs.

- The learner should be provided with a specimen copy before attempting a new one for the clarity.



### Graphic Organisers

Graphic organisers are especially useful in depicting the relationship among concepts and words visually. The students should focus on the main concept of the study. First they need to brain storm and give many words or expressions related to the key concept. They should divide the words and arrange them in a tree diagram. This will generate a list of words or phrases. Finally, they share these among the groups.

#### A word map

This word map is developed as a visual organiser which promotes to enhance the Vocabulary. Graphic presentation of the words make the students think the main concept in terms of several assumptions. It stimulates the minds of the learners positively and generates new words and phrases. Word maps are usually engaged in developing the definitions, synonyms, antonyms and a picture for given vocabulary. The following are the uses provided by the word maps to the students in learning language.

- Develop their understanding of a word.
- The new terms and concepts should be learned by posing questions like “What is it?”; “What are some examples?”

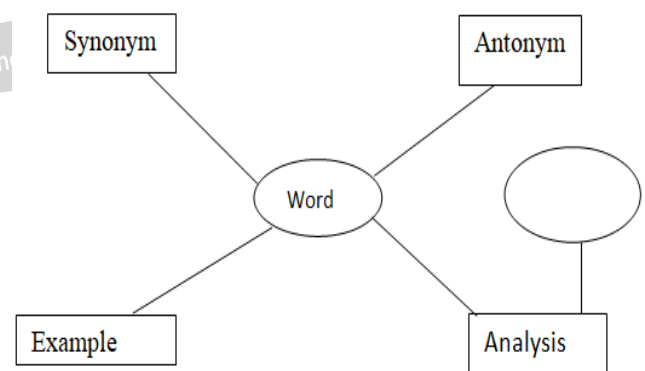
#### Guidelines to use Word Maps:

- Words and the word map should be given to the students for their understanding
- Instructions should be given clearly that how to choose the right word and place it in the box
- The learners should be allowed to fill the gaps with the right words and phrases
- The learners are encouraged to use synonyms, Antonyms and a picture to illustrate the target concept

### III. VOCABULARY WEB MODEL

Vocabulary Web Model assists students learn words in depth. This Strategy goes beyond letting students simply learn the meaning of a word. Students are allowed to work alone or in pairs. Mostly teachers assign words, but sometimes students may be encouraged to choose their own words to explore. The words to be explored must be written in the centre with an intention to find out the following aspects of language

- Definition
- Synonyms & Antonyms
- Writing a sentence using the word
- Analysis- parts of speech, origin, word families, stems
- Examples



After completing the web, students get an in-depth understanding of the word. After this the students are encouraged and motivated to share their knowledge with the other classmates or with whole class.

#### Word Walls

A Word Wall is a display of vocabulary words. The words written on a chart should be hanged against the wall. The words should be large so that they can be easily read from a distance. Presumably, the words are displayed

alphabetically or thematically, students find them easier to locate.

Synonyms:	
Synonyms for the word ----- -----	
Antonyms:	
Antonyms for the word ----- -----	
Definitions	
Own Sentences -----	
Analogies -----	

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Make a prediction about the pictures. Write your predictions on the lines.**



1. Look at the picture. Predict what will happen next.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Look at the picture. Predict what will happen next.



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Look at the picture. Predict what will happen next.



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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When a new word is introduced the old words should be moved to a different location where they can still be accessible. Students need to be motivated to verify or review their words continuously on the wall. They use the word wall as a reference for correct spelling or whatever may be the requirement. In this way new vocabulary can be advocated in class through discussions and assignment.

### Word Prediction

This word prediction is used to preview the passage or a part of a lesson or a list of vocabulary of the text book. The listed words are useful in drafting a paragraph, essay or a lesson. The list of words distributed to the students and asked to prepare a paragraph from the lesson. Later, this paragraphs also distributed in the class to prepare a gist of the lesson. The given worksheets help the students to guess

the words in the context. This enables the learners to imagine what happens next in the story with the help of the pictures. This type of activities evokes interest in the learners and they aptly guess the right words with this enthusiasm. This visual graphics encourages the students positively and with this positive attitude they learn language and use the vocabulary contextually. Unconsciously they learn vocabulary and language without much effort.

“Language is caught it is not taught”

Anonymous author

Activity really is helpful in improving their language skills.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Make a prediction about the pictures. Write your predictions on the lines.**



1. Look at the picture. Predict what will happen next.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Look at the picture. Predict what will happen next.



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Look at the picture. Predict what will happen next.



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Source: Internet

### Cloze Procedure

It is one of the strategies to guess the words and learn the meanings and vocabulary through context. Here few words are deleted from the passage and present to the students to fill the missing words. Students are expected to complete the sentences by guessing the right word and construct meaningful sentences. This can be considered as a technique for improving reading skills.

### Purpose:

They are generally used to:

- Identify students' knowledge and comprehension of the passage.
- Determine the clues students' depict effectively to construct meaning.
- Assess the students' vocabularies and subject

knowledge.

- Encourage students to monitor for meaning while reading the passage.

#### IV. MATERIALS

The following resources may be used as materials for the exercises:

- Comprehension Passages

##### Process

- The first and last sentences should not be omitted.
- They should be provided equal place in order to not to omit.
- Students' should read the entire passage before filling the blanks.
- They should be encouraged to fill each blank.
- They should be motivated to re read the completed passage.
- The words that should be omitted from the passage should be selected carefully such as:
- Every fifth word or other criteria.
- Content words which carry meaning.
- Parts of speech to assess students' use of syntactic cues.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Classroom learning is an interactive effort between student and teachers. Unless the students are receptive the teacher cannot help the student in learning process. The student should come to class with open mind to absorb the given concepts in isolation or as a group. Team work really helps the students to absorb language easily. Along with teacher's influence they will have the impact of their fellow students. The teacher initiates the class but this should not be continued but this can be taken to control the students by their active involvement in the language activities. Classroom learning is more vibrant when all the students involve and focus towards learning the target language. This can be possible when suitable language activities like word prediction, word walls, News paper Activities and Graphic organizers introduced to fulfill the needs of the students. The above mentioned activities can be used to prepare students to understand the use of language. The learners will enhance four language skills listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

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