Concept Mapping: A Pedagogical Shift in Language Learning

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Abstract:

There are numerous regional languages in India. Even though English is regarded as a foreign language in India, it is frequently used and frequently given priority. We have trouble learning English because of the influence of our mother tongue. English is primarily taught as a subject rather than as a language in most of India. As a result, students are unable to produce effective English language and even use English effectively in their daily lives because the concepts of the English language are given the least importance. As a result, the teachers must change the way they teach English so that it is taught as a language rather than a subject. Here, it is attempted to alter teachers' perceptions of English language concepts.

Key words: Concept Mapping, grammar, teaching, learning.

1.0 Introduction

Language plays an important role in our lives. This is because human beings use language to communicate and thereby progress in all fields. Without language, social and cultural progress is impossible. Latin and Greek are considered ancient languages, and most ancient literature was available in these two languages of hers. These ancient languages are believed to have roots in modern language learning. Over time, several languages have been found around the world. It is believed that there are over 600 languages used for communication. India has 22 official languages. Thus, it is easy to understand how important language learning is to us.

English is considered an international language because most countries around the world use it as their official language and most official communications are conducted in English. English is also an official language in India. All letters and official documents are available in English. India has several regional languages, but Hindi and English are used as common languages for communication. In addition, English also has a significant share in competitive exams in India, with around 20% of total grades coming from English and English Literature. If for some reason you move abroad, the only communication in that country is English. That is why learning English is all the more important for us as India will become a superpower in the next few days.

2.0 History of English Language Teaching in India:

English has been taught in India since before independence. The English trained the natives English. They needed slaves for their clerical work, so they produced learners while working for them like employees. I just taught and nothing more. This was the only instruction with English as the language. However, after independence, he continued the same process, uncovering wrongdoings exposed by the Kothari Commission in the late 1970s. As the Kothari Commission (1966) rightly pointed out: it was intended to promote Hindi, English and local languages in non-Hindi speaking countries. Then English will be properly taught in India. However, since English was not my native language, I still didn't have a proper way to teach it. We were teaching English the way they used it. Almost 20 years later we started teaching English as a language. As the 20th century witnessed great advances in science and technology, English has become very important for Indians as they need to communicate on a global platform.

As a result, English is considered an important foreign language in India. As the world becomes more globalized, our understanding of English as a global language is growing. The field of English teaching in India is expanding day by day due to the excellent and dedicated researchers who have contributed to English teaching and the many linguists who have made a name for themselves in the field of applied linguistics.

3.0 Various Methods, Approaches and Techniques used for teaching English:

Since ancient times, there have been many ways to teach and learn languages. But the true tradition of language teaching began in the language classroom at the end of the 20th century. Here you can see different milestones in the development of such traditions. The first method was known as the classical method or grammatical translation method. It was from the 17th century to his late 18th century that it was used for learning Latin and Greek. The focus was only on learners learning grammar rules and vocabulary. Learners were instructed to translate the language into the target language. Mother tongue was given as much importance as it was used in the classroom. Then came the era when it was necessary to eliminate the influence of the mother tongue, and the direct method appeared. No mother tongue was used in the direct method. The focus was only on learning the target language. Therefore, language-to-language translation in the classroom was limited. Students were instructed to use the target language in class. Then the outbreak of World War II made it necessary to use and understand the target language used by foreigners. Audiolingual

methods used to teach and learn foreign languages have emerged. It focused on the learner's ability to speak and emphasized the pronunciation of the language. Students learn languages by listening to them and produce them by speaking naturally. Then there are the various approaches and techniques that teachers use in language teaching today, etc.

With regards to language, it is believed that there is no best method or approach for use in all classes, as children in different classes have different levels of knowledge and expertise. As such, it depends on the teacher what instruction is needed in a particular classroom. Therefore, teachers should adopt that method or approach in the classroom.

4.0 A Pedagogical Shift in language learning:

There are different types of language teaching, adopted by teachers at different times. After more than half a century of teaching and learning English, India still struggles to develop effective English users. Students use the wrong sentence structure and make mistakes in creating accurate language. This happens due to lack of knowledge of concepts and conceptual knowledge of the language. Even they do not know the connections and relationships between different concepts. Therefore, before teaching students the language as a whole, learners should be taught language concepts and their connections to help them create effective language for themselves. Knowing concepts and their relationships automatically enriches your knowledge of language and its structure. This inspires them to become effective language producers and effective language users.

5.0 Concept Mapping:

Concept mapping was invented in the United States by Professor Joseph Novak, who worked at Cornell University. He is an American educator and professor. Professor Novak and his team worked on developing conceptual knowledge in science students and found that students struggled to learn scientific concepts. Then I found a way to teach scientific concepts through concept mapping. Concept mapping thus began as a tool for developing knowledge about scientific concepts. Over time, this technique has been used in all other subjects to teach subject concepts.

Definitions of Concept Map:

Novak, J. and Gowin, D. (1984) defined concept maps as,

"A concept map would be just two concepts connected by linking word to form a proposition."

"A Concept map is a schematic device for representing a set of Concept Mapping embedded in a framework of proposition."

Concept map is framed by two parts connecting each other. Concept maps are constituted by two main features: graphical structure and content. As Aguiar J. G. and Correia, P. R. M. (2017) discussed in their paper called 'From representing to modelling knowledge: proposing a two-step training for excellence in concept mapping', The structure is related to the visual aspects (Buhmann & Kinsbury, 2015), such as location and number of concepts and propositions, hierarchical arrangement of concepts, legibility and propositional flow, the presence of cross-links and navigation visual cues. There are circles or boxes, commonly known as nodes in which the concept are places. These concepts are connected with each other by arrows with descriptions how they are linked. These words are known as linking words. The concept map is developed using the previous knowledge of the students and used as evaluation tool to check the knowledge of concepts students know. Chang et al. (2002) quoted in the paper 'The Effect of Concept Mapping to enhance Text Comprehension and Summarization', concept map improves knowledge structuring and information encoding when summarizing texts. There are various kinds of concept maps but in language learning we mostly use hierarchical concept mapping as our language concepts are mostly developed on hierarchical manners.

6.0 Construction of Concept map:

The first and most important thing when creating a concept map is the issue of focus. However, since concepts in any subject can be linked to many other concepts, it is up to the teacher or the learner how they need to develop when creating a concept map. Once you have decided on your focus question, follow the steps to create your concept map. As

1. Put the first and most common concept at the top of the map.
2. List out the concepts related to the concept.

3. Bifurcate the concepts into two parts, general concepts and intermediate concepts from the list.

4. Find out how the concepts are connected to each other.

5. Start connecting concepts in hierarchical manner with the relation to each other.

6. Write down the linking words between the concepts to indicate the relationship between the concepts.

Examples of Concept Map:
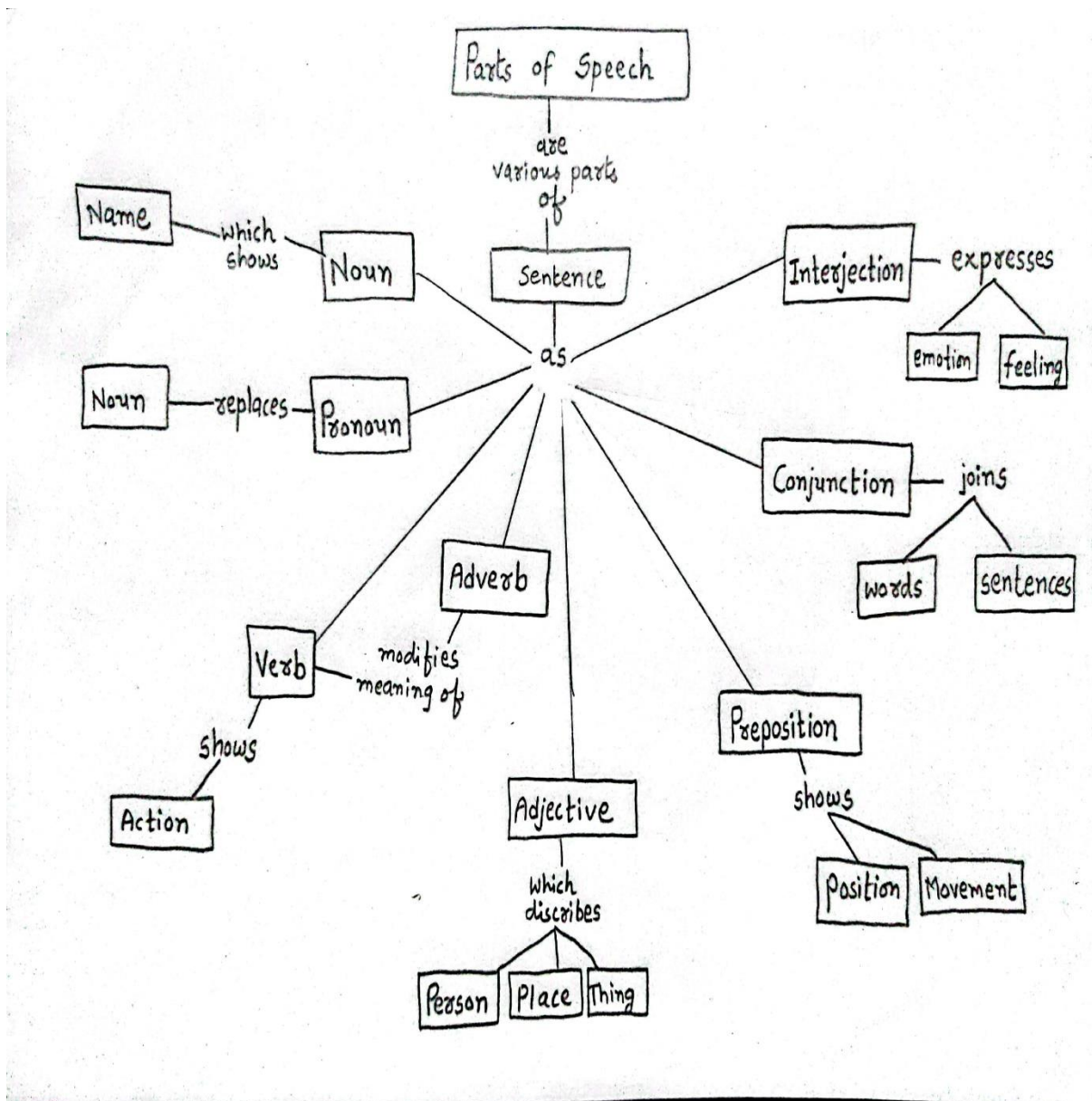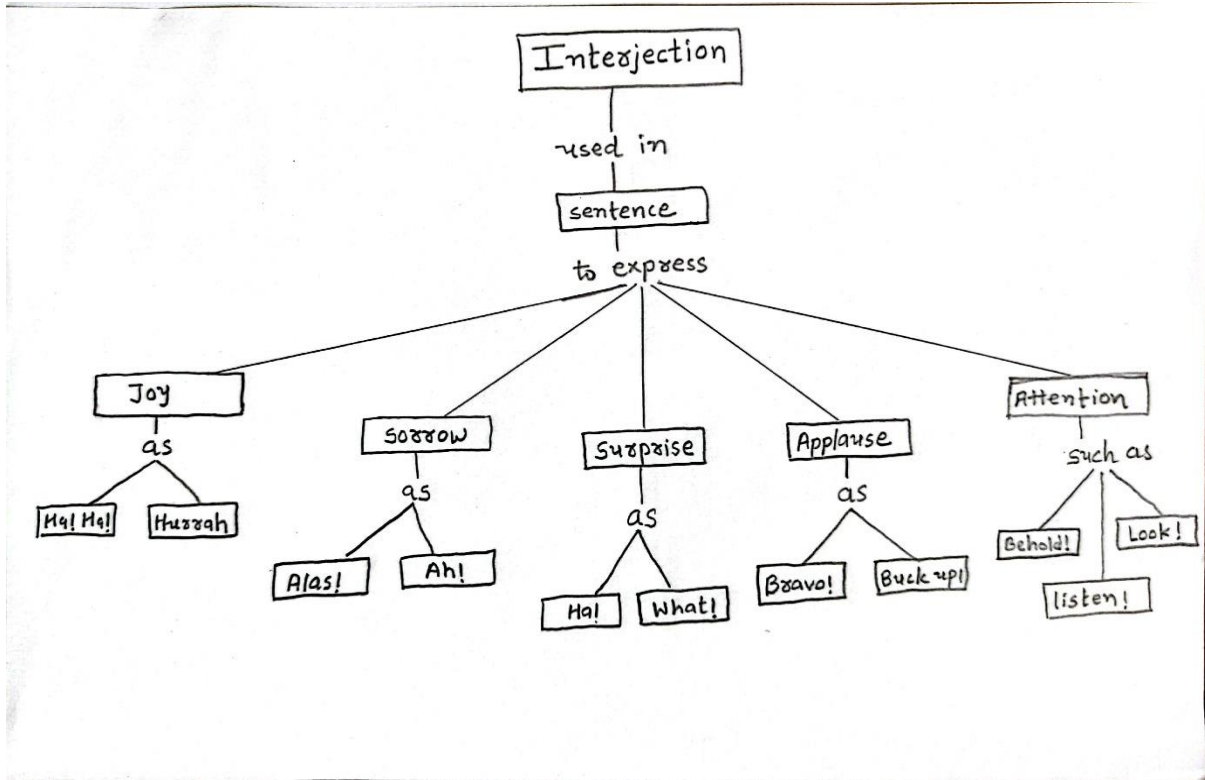
7.0 Benefits of Concept Map:

There are various benefits of concept maps as,

- Helps you understand the relationships between concepts.
- They develop cognitive stigma in students.
- Helps you remember information
- user friendly.
- Customizable.
- Useful in a variety of environments.
- Reduce stress
- Helps you understand complex topics.
- Can be used as both a learning tool and an assessment tool.
- Can do pair and group work to develop the learner's ZPD.
- Fun to use.

8.0 Role of Teacher:

The role of the teacher using concept maps in an English language learning classroom must be sensitive and teacher should know it. For that, these points should keep in mind while using concept maps in language learning classroom.

- The teacher needs to be knowledgeable about creating concept maps correctly.
- The instructor must be well-versed in the subject and possess a command of the material.
- The teacher must have outlined concepts connected to the lesson's main idea.
- Before entering the classroom, the teacher should create a model concept map so that he or she is prepared to create the map when students are unable to do so on their own.
- The instructor needs to understand that he is merely a facilitator or guide. He shouldn't run the lesson.
- It is suggested that classrooms be learner-centered. Only the proper learning environment should be maintained by the teacher in the classroom.
- Tasks in pairs and groups can be assigned so that students can assist one another.
- The teacher must have good knowledge of the subject and must have mastery over the content.

9.0 Role of Learners

- Learners should actively participate in classroom learning.
- They should work in groups and pairs for developing concept maps.
- They should try to establish the relationship between the concepts.
- They should help each other in learning process as to develop ZPD.
- They should try to construct their own concept map.
- They should maintain their attention while the classmates are constructing their concept map and learn from it.
- They should concentrate in the class while development of concept map and participate in the process.

10.0 Conclusion:

In a nutshell, every stage of language learning necessitates a change in approaches. It must be appropriate given the circumstances and the class. The teacher should lead the class in language learning based on his knowledge of the classroom's conditions. The modern era necessitates a change in language learning methodology, and it is the responsibility of the teacher to implement the proper methodology in his classroom. Today's learners struggle to understand concepts clearly and apply them in their language production and everyday conversations. As a result, concept mapping will assist students in learning language concepts while also fostering their cognitive and creative abilities. Concept mapping would genuinely alter how language is used.

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