

STRUCTURAL AND SITUATIONAL APPROACH: A PEDAGOGICAL VIEW IN COLLEGE LEVEL

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1.1 Introduction:

Every language has its own phonological, syntactic, morphological, and lexicon-semantic systems. These systems have been functioning according to our socio-cultural and sociolinguistic settings. The socio-cultural systems underlying English have interacted with those underlying major Indian languages. These interactions have generated a new variety of English with its sub-varieties. It is the setting that gives a language to its distinctive colours and flavour. There are many reasons to say that it is and it will continue to be different from other varieties in English. A natural consequence of the social conditions is the immediate environment in which Indian English is spoken. Mostly the students are learning and improving English through the materials like daily news paper, journals, radio, and television to which they are exposed in their daily lives. When these students are entering in to the classroom the targeted language makes a clash in their mind. Learning from the material which is not prescribed has been clashing with the standard variety to which it is exposed in the class room as a subject or as professional journals. When the learners have understood the structure of the language along with the context of their learning material it becomes very easy to read the material which is not prescribed.

1.2. Language Learning:

Language learning is a skill in which an event can be affected. Mukalel says it as ‘the process of socialization.’ The learners get the constant stimuli from the environment like media and study materials. The active interpretation makes the learners as the effective participants. As a communication is a two- way process, the learner is required to attend what the instructor is imparting to perceive. By the active participation the learner must find the lesson content interesting and ready to competed with other stimuli. For this process the learner needs attention. Attention is a function of sense, perception and instincts. In the classroom, the learners perceive very little in the form of lesson content. At the same time, if something attracts their attention and impels them it leads them to concentrate on it. There is no single method in teaching language. Here the situational approach and later the structural approach have been used to stimulus the learners learning ability. In the process of learning, the situational approach and the structural approach are connected together to improve the reading skill of the students. It makes the students as a good reader. Through these both approaches, reading becomes a very easy task

to the students. They can be free from phonetic difficulties and it is very effective in developing their written comprehension also. It increases the interest and confidence among the students. By the good reading skill one can understand the situation and structure of a literary work.

1.3. Structural Approach:

In Dash words, the semantic aspect deals with words and the meaning of words. The phonetic aspect deals with the pronunciation and its spelling of the words. The graphic aspect deals with the shape of the letters and the written form of a particular language. The last one is phonographic aspect which deals with the style of writing in a target language. It is the formation of the literature. English has been retained as the instruction of scientific technological, medical education and law. It is a gate way of world culture and it makes the world smaller. So as a target language English has been taught in the form of four aspects. To concentrate in these four aspects the learners should need some methods and approaches. In this way the structural approach helps the teacher to train the students in these aspects. In structural approach, ‘structural’ means the structure which contains letters, words, phrases, sentences, etc. The word ‘approach’ means ‘moving closely’, when a person wishes to move closer to a language this structural approach will help. The structure deals with sound structure, word structure and sentence structure. According to the sound the learners spell the letters; these letters make the words and the words make the sentence. F. G. French defines this as a basic principle of structural approach. In this listening and speaking precede reading and writing. The correct listening skill repeats as speaking skill. The speaking skill makes the learners to enter into the reading practice. By the progress of reading skill the learners begin to write. Structural approach is mostly emphasis on students’ activity. Sunanda says the structure has two patterns as ‘word pattern’ and ‘sentence pattern’.





1.3.1. Patterns in Structural Approach:

The word pattern is derived as subject-S, verb-V, object-O, A-adjunct, compliment-C, IO-indirect object, DO-direct object, and parts of speech. The sentence pattern is derived as SV, SVO, SV IO DO, SVC and so on. The structural approach has the fixed order to develop the language skill among the learners. Following the sentence pattern the students learn types of sentence, voices, speech, degrees and simple-compound-complex. An example follows as,

You are a doctor.
 Are you a doctor?
 A doctor you are!

In these three sentences, the words are same but the arrangement of words is different. It is called as sentence pattern. Teaching point is a grammatical term in which the teacher emphasizes on the grammar in teaching structure. In this, the teacher makes a target, as selecting words or phrases. For example, when a teacher has a target to teach the demonstrative pronoun this, that, these and those.

Table 2.1. Demonstrative Pronoun.

S,O	Demon.pronoun	Usage	Picture
1	This	This is a square.	
2	That	That is a square.	
3	These	These are squares.	
4	Those	Those are squares.	

In the sentence one ‘this’ is referred by a square which is near to the demonstrator and it is singular. So it has continued by singular auxiliary verb ‘is’. The second sentence is also a singular but it is in a distance from the demonstrator so it is marked by the new word ‘that’ which is called as demonstrative pronoun. The third and fourth sentences are marking the plural form of squares in the picture. So the demonstrative pronouns are followed by plural verb ‘are’. In the third sentence ‘these’ is referred to the squares which are near and ‘those’ is to denote the squares which are in a distance. Through these explanations with pictures as aids, the students can easily understand how to make the structure of a sentence by using these demonstrative pronouns.

1.3.2. Coherency in Writing:

Through structural approach one can learn how to arrange the sentences in coherent. In Dash’s explanation he says, teaching structure should be a continuous process. While introducing a new structure the teacher makes the students to look that the old structure. For example,

1. kala is an young lady.
2. She works as a teacher.
3. For past two years she has been working in a school.
4. Now, she is handling for tenth standard.

These sentences are unique in its structure and meaning. But the structure can be changed logically by using some connecting words. In this process the structure of the sentences will change but not the meaning.

5. kala is an young teacher who has been working in a school for past two years and now handling for tenth standard.

In the sentences 1, 2, 3, 4 each sentence has different meaning and all these four are talking about a particular person Kala. In the fifth sentence, all the details about Kala have united in a single sentence without changing its meaning. These type of combinations leads to a situation in the text. By using situation one can easily understand the structure of the context.

This approach is based on the structural view of language. In this approach speech is emphasized as the basis of the language and structure is very important for developing speaking ability... this approach suggests to present different structure in the meaningful situations. (Jain 166)

1.4. Situational Approach:

The reading skill can be developed by the situational approach. In this, at first the reader understands the situation of the reading text, next he understands the aim of the passage, and then he replies. Situational approach is also known as situational language teaching. British applied situational approach was developed by linguists. It had started from 1930. Many teachers are still using this. This approach is based on the structural view of language. In this approach speech is emphasized as the basis of the language and structure is very important for developing speaking ability. Here the language is just a habit formation. The language skill can be learnt more effectively if they are presented orally first and after in written form. With the help of the situation, the students can understand effectively, and can be mastered in the structure effectively and have durable process in the mind. Reading habits not only help the students to get knowledge and wisdom from the cultural of heritage but are also very helpful in passing their leisure periods. Fluency in reading means, the ability of reading a printed text rapidly and with

ease. Fluency in reading can be tested by the reading comprehension. Reading comprehension means understanding a passage or to get deepest meaning of the passage. A comprehension exercise enables the students to understand the content of the given text and to infer and interpret the information and meaning for it. “Composition is an art of self expression. Through this the child expresses his thought, ideas, feelings and observation. He can express it both orally and also in a written form”. (Dash, 103) Reading comprehension is a complete process which involves a number of skills and strategies. It is an active process of mind in which brain starts to extract information from the given text.

1.5. Empirical research:

Empirical research is an observation with the researchers’ own experience on a particular subject. Wikipedia defines empirical evidence as, “the record of one’s direct observations or experience.” The researcher makes a record on the knowledge of what has gained from the experience. This experience is called as empirical evidences. These empirical evidences are used to analyze whether the research work is quantitative or qualitative. A researcher should have theory regarding the topic which has to investigate. A researcher makes a qualitative form by the quantified evidence. These details are collected as data. These data collection is based on observation which is followed by induction and deduction. The observations are the collection of organized empirical facts. These facts convert into formulating hypothesis which is the deducting consequences and they are used as testable predictions. These predictions are tested with the new empirical materials and these outcomes of testing are called as the evaluation. This hypothesis is the final result or the further scope of the particular research.

The empirical study can be divided into two categories which are called as the qualitative research method and quantitative research method. In quantitative research the data is collected in the numerical form. It has been done at the prior part of research. The qualitative research is a collection of data which is collected in the form of text, images and sounds. These datas can be formed by the observation, interviews and documentary evidence and it is analyzed by qualitative analyze method. The researcher has the own choice of selecting qualitative or quantitative research. This project has been focused on the qualitative research method. This qualitative empirical research method has been done on the situational cum structural approach with the help of twenty students from the first year of B.Sc Maths (CA). They have been belonging to N.M.S S.Vellaichamy Nadar College (SF wing), Nagamalai, Madurai. These students are already having Communicative English paper as their additional credit course. So it is an easy task for the researcher to develop the qualitative empirical research on situational cum structural approach. At first the students have been made to read the stories to understand the situation and their knowledge has been tested by the structural approach. The questions have been selected on the basis of: ‘verbal question’, ‘wh questions’, and to test the vocabulary skill in which the questions are based on identifying the correct word, synonyms, and antonyms. *David and Goliath* and *Little Match Girl* are the two stories, which have been administered for the reading comprehension.

Table: 1.1 *David and Goliath*

Questions and Answer

S.No	Question based	Right	Wrong	Total
1	Goliath’s nationality	17	3	20
2	Identify the apt word	20	—	20

3	Understand the situation	20	—	20
4	Give the synonyms	19	1	20
5	Give the antonyms	19	1	20
6	Total	95	5	100

1.6. Interpretation on Table 1.1.:

At first, the story *David and Goliath* has been taken for analyzing. This story is about a brave young boy named, David, who saves his country, Isreal, from Philistine. Goliath is a giant from Philistine. He threats the Isrealians and at last he has been defeated and killed by David in the battle field. The first question is ‘Is Goliath an Israelian?’ This question is answered properly by seventeen positive respondents and three respondents have given negative results, ‘No.’ It is identified that three students are not able to understand the nationality of Goliath. The second and the third question have been identified rightly by all the respondents. The questions are, ‘David ___ to fight Goliath. (volunteered/ agreed)’ and “ You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of Lord Almighty,...” Who told this line?’ For the question, ‘David _____ to fight Goliath. (volunteered/ agreed)’, the answer is ‘volunteered’. All the twenty students have given the right answer for the question. The next question, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of Lord Almighty,...” Who told this line?’ has been made to test the students’ understanding of the context. The students have proved that they are familiar with the context of the story.

Following this, to test the students’ knowledge in finding the apt meaning for the sentence which is situated in this story’s context, nineteen students are answered correctly. The question is, Find the correct meaning for *carcasses*. a) Remains b) skeletons c) bodies d) shells. In the context the apt answer is ‘bodies’. One of the students is not able to find the correct meaning of the context. The respondent has suited ‘skeletons’. The meaning is right but it is not a correct answer for that context. The last question is to test the students’ acquiring knowledge on finding the opposite word for a particular word in a locale. The question is, ‘Find the correct antonyms for the *italic* word: It took some *persuasion*. a) Accept without delay b) accept without argument c) lead d) stop ‘ the correct answer is ‘accept without argument’. Nineteen respondents have answered perfectly but one has not been able to select the apt word.

Table: 1.2 Little Match Girl

Questions and Answer

S.No	Question based	Right	Wrong	Total
1	Understand the relationship	20	—	20
2	Identify the apt word	20	—	20
3	Give the synonyms	19	1	20
4	Finding the reason	15	5	20
5	Give the antonyms	15	5	20
6	Total	89	11	100

1.7. Interpretation on table: 1.1:

The second story *Little Match Girl* has been admired by the students to do this comprehension. The second story deals with the story of a little girl who has tried to sell the matches but fails miserably. But she is found some magic while lighting the matches. The results of the questions have been taken to interpret. The first question is ‘Did the poor girl find her grandmother in the brightness?’ The answer is ‘yes’. This question has been answered by all. This reveals that all the respondents have improved their understanding of the story. Following the first, the second question also has gained full positive response. The question is, ‘She had been _____ on the last evening of the year. (Gifted / frozen)’ which is to test the ability to identify the correct word from the background of the story? The right answer is ‘frozen’. The third question is, Find the correct synonyms for the *italic* word: The goose jumped down from the dish and *waddled* across the floor. a) Shuffle b) lean c) swing. For this, the correct answer is ‘swing’. Nineteen respondents have answered correctly and one has selected the wrong answer. The next is ‘Why the little girl ran away with little naked feet?’, this is to give the correct reason and it expects that the result is in the statement. ‘The little girl ran away with little naked feet because she has lost her slippers and she supposed to run across the two carriages.’ The last question is, ‘find the correct antonym for *roast*: a) Baked b) cooked c) raw d) boil’. The response is ‘raw’. Nineteen respondents have positively selected the correct word but one is not able to select the meaning ‘cooked’.

1.8. Sum Up:

Following these observations the first story *David and Goliath*, out of hundred 95 correct answers has obtained. While analyzing the respondents’ situational and structural understanding it has varied according to their acquired knowledge. The first question of understanding the nationality, three of them have answered wrongly. Here the respondents have the problem in understanding the situation which is the nationality of Goliath. One of the respondents has answered wrongly for both the synonym and the antonym. This particular respondent has the dilemma in matching the correct word for the situation and has the difficulty in giving the correct opposite word. Here the respondent has met the problem in vocabulary which is one of the components in the structure of a language. The second story, *Little Match Girl*, has gained eighty nine correct out of hundred and eleven wrong. One respondent has the dilemma in suiting the correct word for the situation. But the same respondent has the difficulty in structuring a sentence also. One of them has the problem in identifying the situation that whether the child met her grandmother. Five have suited the wrong answer for the antonyms. Another four have the obstacle in making sentence. Among the twenty respondents on has answered wrongly for the situation of the first story and the same respondent has answered wrong to an antonym which has come under structure of a language. As the result of both stories four respondents have complication in identifying the situation and ten have the obstacle to concentrate on the structure of the English language. The end of this empirical research views that the first year college learners need more care on learning the structure of this language.

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