
Teaching English as a Second Language

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Abstract

Proficiency of a teacher cannot be judged by his/ her presence in the classroom and initiates communication with students in English language. It is the responsibility of an ideal teacher to make his/her students comfortable in his/ her presence first and then tries to know them and helps them to understand his/ her lectures.

A teacher must pay attention on both kinds of teaching- theoretical as well as practical knowledge so that he/ she may motivate his/ her students to learn this language with enjoyment and excitement and the students may have better opportunities in their professional career.

English is the most widely considered second language in the world and its assessment as a communicative currency means that it ensures consistent values of English across the world. Overseas English speakers in quest of employment or cram in English speaking countries need to acquire a language test to display their aptitude to communicate.

We can see that English language plays a crucial role in our globalised world. It not only provides a common platform for international trade but also drives global cooperation and thinking. It is breaking down the obstructions between cultures and opening doors to opportunities around the world. It can be seen that many tests of English language keep on playing a vital role in ensuring accurate and constant high standards for life in the actual world.

Key Words: Responsibility, Class, Employment, Opportunities, Standard.

Introduction

With the globalization in each and every walk of human- life, none can deny the importance of English language. There is no country which has been remained untouched with English. It has become a necessity to all those countries which want to be succeeded. If

we see our own India more than two centuries, we find that we have been directly and indirectly influenced by English language whether we talk about the field of education or trade.

Teaching and learning English in the classrooms become a challenge for the teachers where the students have any other language as their mother tongue or first language. Every educational system has its own certain objectives and plans a methodology for its students so that it may get its own desirable changes in its students. Success of each and every institute depends upon the experience which that institute has and with having this experience it does some changes in its teaching and learning process according to the requirement of the students and the time. Sometimes to follow the same race throughout the life may be better or sometimes it may be worse but it can only be known to experience. It is a learning experience and evaluation.

English has become a basic need if one wants to be a successful professional in one's professional life. Today, for a professional, it has become very essential not to be good but excellent in spoken English as well as in written English. One cannot separate oneself from these two unavoidable demands of professional world because it is sure that a professional has to participate in all kinds of activities at one's workplace and sometimes they may be presentation or group discussion and sometimes they may be report or proposal.

As English language has been accepted the global language, by choice or force, it will have been learnt if one wants to be succeeded in one's life. Sometimes one may feel anger or irritation when the idea of learning English language will come to one's mind that instead of being efficient and impressive in one's own mother tongue, one is running for a second or foreign language but it is not a matter of stress or tension because it is natural as one knows.

Usually, excellent books on all the subjects – Science, Engineering and Technology including Medical Science – are available in English in market. It does not mean that the books on all these subjects are not available in one's mother tongue in the market. Of course, they are available but they are very limited in number. One may walk all over India but in spite of communicating a number of languages by Indians, there is no single language that may remain unite across the whole country.

If we analyse all the above mentioned facts, we will know that the use of this language in speaking as well as in writing cannot be ineluctable in India. It has become an inseparable language as a second language or foreign language for all the countries whether it is not their mother tongue or first language. This is the effect of English language with the globalization.

As a global language, English naturally or automatically forces all the nations to have a good command over it for their lifetime development otherwise a country having inefficiency in this language may fall inferior to others and then none can blame it because it has shown its power all over the world.

Some Common Factors Affecting Teaching English As A Second Language

There are various kinds of factors that affect the teaching process in professional courses. There are a number of students who accomplish their schooling in their own mother tongue. Though they are very good in their core subjects, they remain very poor at English still. The students have an unknown fear and fever whenever they think about learning English.

In all these factors that are affecting teaching English, the environment and financial background of the family come first. It is rightly said that company makes a man. A child starts to learn things from his mother, father or in other words, from the environment in which he is being brought up. If we see the picture of our own country India, we will find that most of the parents are farmers and have poor family background in Education as well as on financial status. They desire and hope a bright and successful future for their children but desiring and hoping cannot do anything if they are not able to read, write and understand English. So in this condition they decide to engage their children in some jobs in order to money earn money so that their financial status may be better instead of wandering with them from school to school in the lack of money.

Next factor that has become a barrier in the path of teaching English is the infrastructure or the school buildings. Most of the schools or colleges do not have proper classrooms where the projectors are available and the students may watch the videos in English and understand how to pronounce the words correctly as English is their second language. In professional courses, mostly it is seen that the students are compelled to attend the lectures but it never matters that they are able to understand the lectures that are being taught by the teachers. For example, most of the time students complain that they are unable to understand the lectures because they are from Hindi medium and the lectures are taught in English. It happens in colleges while in schools, students are compelled to attend their classes under the trees even after several five year plans.

In India, majority of the students come from rural areas and also their parents are farmers and most of the time they are uneducated. If the nature fails, the survival of the farmers will be questionable. Hence, the students are mentally discouraged due to the family conditions.

But at the same time we find that there are also those students who are having enough background in basic education since their parents are educated and they do not depend on the nature much. There are many parents who send their children in English medium schools and hence, they (the children) do not find much difficulty in pursuing their higher education. Moreover the families who are living in towns and cities and hence, they have easy access of quality education. They are scoring good marks in examination. It proves that they are having good writing skills in English. But it will not be enough to be a successful professional because written English as well as spoken English both have become the requirement of the professional world. Hence, the students must be given the required knowledge about written English and spoken English from their pre-schooling so that when they join professional courses, they may able to understand the lectures and make themselves better to take part in all the activities in this competitive era.

Teaching English As A Second Language

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), US, defines English language proficiency in this way: A fully English proficient student is able to use English to ask questions, to understand teachers, and reading materials, to test ideas, and to challenge what is being asked in the classroom. Four language skills contribute to proficiency as follows:

1. Reading - the ability to comprehend and interpret text at the age and grade appropriate level.
2. Listening - the ability to understand the language of the teacher and instruction, comprehend and extract information, and follow the instructional discourse through which teachers provide information.
3. Writing - the ability to produce written text with content and format fulfilling classroom assignments at the age and grade-appropriate level.
4. Speaking - the ability to use oral language appropriately and effectively in learning activities (such as peer tutoring, collaborative learning activities, and question/answer sessions) within the classroom and in social interactions within the school.

Hence, the teacher should keep in mind while teaching English as a second language to the students.

Instead of introducing English as a subject for the engineering students, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Technical University, Lucknow, has prescribed the subject Professional Communication for B. Tech. First Year students so that the students may learn how to communicate in English and how to behave in professional world. It has been prescribed a theory as well as a practical subject so that the students may make themselves good in writing

and speaking both. By taking part in all the activities whether they are written or spoken and they make themselves confident to face all the challenges of this post-modern era where English becomes a foundation for professionals. The key concepts of this subject are as follows:

1. Language/ Communication In Context
2. Writing Skills
3. Speaking Skills
4. Reading Comprehension
5. Listening Comprehension

The university has also given the details of the lab sessions based on the above key concepts so that the teachers may feel comfort when they have to teach their students English and the students may feel comfort when they have to learn English as a second language.

Conclusion

In our own country India where majority of the students come from rural areas, teaching English them as a second language is not easy as the others think. Hence, it automatically becomes the teacher's responsibility to check the students' family background and their capacity to learn English before delivering the lectures. The government should focus on education system and order to all the universities to prepare the syllabus after analyzing the demand of the era. Therefore, it is necessary to go for a detailed discussion as to whether the existing curriculum is fulfilling the need of the hour and suitable to the students in achieving their goals, the present methods for testing the proficiency of the students are suitable and opinion and suggestions from the teaching faculty members of the English language in profession and technical institutions are to be obtained. Taking into consideration of all the above points and undergoing a detailed analysis, a real solution may be found out for the betterment of the students as well as society.

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