



EFFECTIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AT PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LEVEL

Dr.R.Karthikeyan,
A.A.M. Engg. College, Kovilvenni,
Thiruvarur District,
Tamil Nadu, South India.

Introduction

English though a foreign language, has always occupied a unique position in the educational system in India. Despite the fact that it received a great set-back after Independence and it continuous to be a major language and also having a prestigious position in our Indian society. After independence, it received a hostile treatment not only at the hands of political leaders but also eminent scholars and students. Though Mahathma Gandhiji strongly opposed educating the Indians in English, on the other side he accepted for the development of the nation and joining with other countries for many political and economic movements. English language in India has been allowed and spread-over the country. In particular, for obvious reasons, English has been the medium of instruction, administration and law and the main vehicle for communication with the rulers in all the states of India.

Teaching English at the Primary Level

An accepted truth is that, most of the rural pupils are very talented on their curriculum except the English language at the Primary and Secondary education. As far as the English language is concerned, it is a second language and the students of all levels have always fear on English like the people of Indians how they feared in those days. Another fact is that the primary education system is not giving importance to the second (English) language. The pupils of all levels are having fear and show their unlikeness on English due to its vast vocabulary and sentence construction pattern. It can be overcome if we guide the teachers properly to educate the students and the fundamentals in a clear and simple way to attract the students' mind. The educationalist can find simple technique to provide the basic to the students of the primary and also to the rural students. The system takes to give the facility to the students of economically poor and must target the rural students, because they are far away from the reaching place.





Teaching of English at the Secondary Level

The secondary level education was aimed to develop the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing. But the condition at the stage in India, particularly in Tamil Nadu, there is a great question on this. By the end of SSLC and their HSC examinations the students are expected to perform well and good and they are capable in understanding the basics and fundamentals of English to create few sentences of their own at their levels, but the result is negative. The recent education system is clear and prompt to the students, it is understood that some more extra effort should be put in all the levels to make this handy. To overcome this problem, students as well as teachers who work at Government schools and few of the private schools who have also interest on this. If everyone is sincere on this, the real expectation and the target and aim we have fixed can be achieved at the earliest.

Problems of teaching of English at the Primary and Secondary Level

1. English is being taught as a subject in our schools and as a medium of instruction at all the places in India. It is realized that, by the time of the students join in schools they hardly know words in English. If the students are very strong at their English, they will be capable of knowing at least 500 words at the 6th standard and 1000 to 1200 words at the time of their state board examinations. But it is not at their respective stages. It is also one of the reasons why pupils are not able to shine in English. So everyone, including the parents should also take constructive steps for the achievement. For, the parents have to be completely aware on this first.

2. The size of the class room may also be one of the important problems at this level. The schools mostly private institutions are not proper on the criteria. They admit students and dump at the classes without proper facilities. The strength of the class is mostly in between 60 to 90 in numbers. It reflects the ineffectiveness of the teaching of all subjects in particular the second language of English. The teacher does not find any scope for individual attention to make the students good at their studies and also learning in English.

3. The physical condition if the classroom poses a serious problem at the primary and secondary education. It is closely related with the second language. Accommodating a huge number of students in a small classroom does not help in any way to learn and motivate. Often they huddled up together with very little space to sit. At the lower level, the condition is very even worse. There are single and only few class rooms available for the students till 5th standard. Learning the second language in such situations is highly de-motivating for students; it is equally frustrating for the teacher also.





4. Most of our schools are terribly ill-equipped in terms of necessary teaching aids, audio and video facilities for the second language learning. The most common aid available is at the class room the black-board. The second language like English and its teacher may use other facilities like audio-video system at their classes. So the poor facility at the class may lead poor result of their performance, particularly the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing.

5. Even if all schools were provided with different teaching –aids, the schools are with untrained teachers. At the secondary stage, the teachers are appointed on the basis of their master’s degree. Once on the profession, there are no or very little opportunities for their in service of getting training. Professional development does not simply refer to the knowledge that teacher profession. It also means developing necessary skills that would make their teaching effective. The purpose can be fulfilled only with the curriculum of teacher training programme. It can also do very little to help the teacher to grow. Teachers have to shoulder the responsibility of their own development. A majority of our teacher look towards an expert for a solution to their teaching problems. Most of our English teachers remain largely ignored of their changes taking place in English teaching/learning across the globe. They never bother to analyze, why English is to be taught in schools and what is expected of them. Since he/she does not grow, his/her students also do not grow.

6. Mostly teachers are using the traditional methods of teaching. Especially Grammar-translation method is present in one and other form in many schools. Grammar teaching takes much of school timings and the four skills resume little attention. Oral work is ignored and the whole session is devoted to preparing students for the annual examination. In order to improve, certain necessary steps to be taken to overcome the problems in teaching of English at primary and secondary levels. Teacher training programmes that concentrate not only on providing knowledge but also skills should be undertaken and it should be a continuous process.

Conclusion

Though the system has aimed the four skills, they should be taught in conjunction with each other. The government and management must be ready to update the facility at all levels of their schools. English teachers should be asked to take responsibility to upgrade them by presenting papers at different conferences and they must be well aware of publishing papers in journals in different publications about education and English language and its usefulness. A teacher should ensure that his/her teaching is appropriate to the class and it makes the students better and best. Hence, adequate facilities should be provided to all the schools. Well-furnished class rooms with all teaching aids, congenial atmosphere would go a long way in making our teaching of English purposeful. Quality text books should be provided with practical applications to inculcate and





that should be culturally familiar and linguistically appropriate to their respective levels. The other important is by giving some important events and that must be closely related to the students' development. Finally, teachers who teach English as second language must ensure that the presentation is more than 60 per cent in English at the primary and secondary level.

If all join together, the target fixed by the government and educationalist can be fulfilled soon. Then only students can overcome fear on English and compete with city based students with real taste at everywhere.

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