



PROBLEMS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH IN INDIA AND A ROLE OF TEACHER

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Abstract

India, this is a multilingual country and home to many languages. It is self-evident that importance of languages is growing more with the need for greater communication within the country and outside. India is recognized with incredible linguistic, genetic and cultural diversity; it is the second largest country in the world with outstanding ethnicity with world's fastest growing economies, having approximately 1.18 billion population, out of which nearly 550 million is a learning population. In addition to regional and national languages there is also a need of an international language, a language that may be commonly used by all the nations' at least in international affairs. It helps in promoting worldwide understanding and integration of world cultures (Saini, 2011). The present paper will throw light on the aspect of problems in English language learning in India as it is second language and how teacher influence their English language teaching learning.

Keywords: ESL, ELT

The linguistic multiplicity of our country is both gratifying and demanding (Saini, 2011). English occupies an important place in Indian education system. It has become more important part of Indian education system during last decade. English occupies a great place in the school curriculum and in higher education. At school level, English language is primarily used as a medium of instruction for all branches of studies.

For school children, English is placed as a compulsory secondary/third language throughout the country. Every secondary school child has to learn English as a subject, usually for six years but in some cases for three years only. Learning a second language that is English depends on various factors such as understanding of the nature of language, mastering the four skills, classroom conditions, availability of proper resources, way of teaching English, exposure to the language, incorporating new and innovative means of teaching, activity based teaching-learning and the use of different technical resources and equipment which assist teachers to teach effectively. Some of the common problems faced by teachers and learners are as follows:

- Influence of mother tongue and regional language is somehow creates hindrance in learning a second language. No two languages are same. Each one differs from other in sound system, structure and vocabulary. No extra effort is needed to learn a mother tongue because there is no influence of any other language but while learning English, there is pressure of mother tongue which obstruct learner to learn language.
- Much importance is given on the memorization of grammar rules, enlarged vocabulary and sentence structures which do not allow learner to command over the language skills. Learners become passive throughout the teaching-learning process.
- English is introduced as a subject in curriculum which does not allow the scope of language learning. Students attain the textual knowledge only because much emphasis is given on getting the good marks in the examination. So students become less motivated toward learning a language.
- The over-crowded classroom is one of the major problems as it does not allow the teacher to pay attention on each and every student problem in language learning and to solve it individually. Students

do not get opportunity to learn this language due to insufficient time of practicing the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Teachers focus remains on completing the syllabus so they do not give any feedback to students.

- Teacher need to employ different methods to teach English. But the classrooms are still dependent on the text books and blackboards. In most of the school and colleges teachers are still using conventional methods of teaching English. Students find it difficult to comprehend the abstractness of play, drama, story and poem. If a poem on patriotism is going on in the class, so the student must have the same feeling of patriotism. This kind of practice is hardly found in the classroom. Due to unavailability of proper resources, good teaching material and less scope of integration of technical resources and then utilizing it properly create problem in learning a language.

Keeping in view, the above discussed problem, the role of teacher become very important to a great extent. It is up to teacher to create interest among the learners towards language learning by employing the different methods of teaching. In addition to regional and national languages there is also a need of an international language, a language that may be commonly used by all the nations' at least in international affairs. It helps in promoting worldwide understanding and integration of world cultures (Saini, 2011). Teacher should create a learning environment where students have given chance to practice the language skills and use the language with ease and comfort outside the classroom. The knowledge of subject with ability to teach effectively helps the learner to command over the language. The motivation given by teachers to use language freely without the fear of being proven wrong works a lot.

Regular feedback given by teachers makes the learners more confident. Teachers should provide opportunity for the maximum exposure to the language in the form of conducting classroom activities such as group discussions, role playing, and language games and to express their creative ideas by writing on different topics.

Needless to say our classrooms are still dominated by text books and conventional teaching methods of English which fails to develop the proficiency level among students (Position Paper on teaching of English, 2005). It is very important that second language classes should be equipped with right type of teaching

material, audio-visual aids and appropriate technical resources. In India, teaching of English suffers due to inadequacy of these resources. Though English learning begins in the primary level and goes on till the end of college education but the standard of English reached by students in general remain poor. This is because of the unavailability of the conducive environment and lack of resources. The ultimate aim is to make the learners self-sustaining and capable of communicating effectively with others in every sphere of life so the proficiency of teachers in language help the learner to acquire the skills. Hence, teacher need to plan that what kind of teaching method will be appropriate to which level of learners. Selection of proper teaching aid and technical resources to teach different topics of English proves beneficial for learners to learn language. In the context of language learning, behaviorists says that mind is a blank state, for cognitive such as Chomsky, the language was already there in the human mind, hard-wired in the form of a universal grammar and for Piaget, language is constructed through an interaction with the environment (Position Paper on teaching of English, 2005). To prepare the students with knowledge and skills, there is need to think about the teaching methodology and teaching training at higher level of education.

In such scenario, role of language teacher educators becomes very important (www.knowledgecommission.gov.in/report2009). Teacher educators need to explore some new and innovative methods of teaching which would enable them to train pre- service teachers during teachers training programme. According to Julian Edge and Sue Garten(2012) , a sensitive teacher who takes into account the characteristics of different learners can create the conditions in the classroom where the greatest number of learners can be successful.

By keeping in view the functional aspects of English in every subject discipline, opportunity in the field of science, medicine, technology, education, commerce, journalism and other related area teachers must encourage their students towards mastering the language skills. Emphasis should be given on the aims of teaching English which enable the students to understand English when spoken, enable to speak well, enable them to comprehend the idea of the written text in the form of passage, composition, essay. School colleges and teacher training institutes need to take steps to train and upgrade the knowledge of English teachers time to time. Listening to good English speech, good pronunciations etc have to be encouraged. Students' ability to comprehend the content after listening the content enriches them with sound system. In this way, students get

chance to have good examples of various type of poems, speech, dialogues, discussions, lectures and debates.

Thus, schools, colleges and teacher training institutes must provide language labs, audio-visual aids to create good learning environment for language teaching and learning.

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