

Quandary over Teaching and Learning English

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Abstract: Teaching and learning English as a second language has always faced certain amount of problems. Although students spend a long time in English classes they still do not achieve desirable Command over the language. Thus this paper tries to find out the problem areas in teaching learning English.

IndexTerms: Quandary, Idiosyncratic.

I. INTRODUCTION

English language holds a ranking position in India. Even after so many decades Britishers left India, no native language has come to replace it. It is really difficult to come across some educated person who can speak any native language without making use of any English words. India is the third largest English speaking country in the whole world. Teaching English is the matter of difficulty in country like India where English is not the first language. Now a days it is still urgent to discuss what to teach and how to teach English as second language taking into account its vitality on international means of exchange of information and experience.

II. QUANDAIRES:

2.1 Pronunciation difficulty:

It would be a lot simpler to pronounce English if the written form resembled the spoken form more closely. Amongst the most confusing bits are silent letters –r, l, b, h, k, n, p, s, t & w are all silent some of the time. Then there are letters that can be pronounced in lots of different ways –‘s’ can be pronounced as /z/, ‘t’ can be pronounced in at least 5 ways, and an ‘n’ can become /m/ or /ŋ/. And that’s just consonants –English contains 19 vowel sounds, but it only has 5 vowels to spell them with, so who could possibly guess that ‘good’, ‘food’ and ‘blood’ all contain different vowel sounds (/ʊ/, /u:/ and /ʌ/)?[1]

2.2 Vocabulary difficulty:

Learning vocabulary is a very important part of learning a language. The more words you know, the more you will be able to understand what you hear and read; and the better you will be able to say what you want to when speaking or writing. The vocabulary we know can be divided into two groups –passive vocabulary and active vocabulary. Passive vocabulary contains all the words that you understand when you read or listen, but which you do not use (or cannot remember) in your own writing and speaking. Active vocabulary is all the words you understand, plus all the words that you can use yourself. Special problems involved in vocabulary understanding, such as polysemy, the word’s idiomatic usage, false cognates and distinction between homophones, can also be solved by the context and the dictionary.[2]

2.3 Grammar difficulty in English:

Students can have various difficulties and problems in learning English. They can make different mistakes in English pronunciation, grammar, orthography and vocabulary usage. There is a connection between the native language of a learner and the particular difficulties in learning and using English, and the kind of mistakes a learner typically makes in English pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary as there is native language interference in learning and using English. Vocabulary is one of the most comprehensive and difficult aspects of English for foreign learners to master thoroughly. They should first concentrate on learning the most frequently used and therefore most important English vocabulary for their practical real life needs. Multiple sense English words and synonyms (words with a similar meaning) present special difficulty for foreign learners. Other difficulties in learning and using English vocabulary include fixed word collocations, phrasal verbs, idioms, proverbs and regional differences in vocabulary usage. There are differences in English usage in English -speaking countries in terms of spelling, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar.[3]

2.4 Spelling and punctuation difficulty:

Idiosyncratic spellings mean that it’s often difficult to guess how to spell an English word based on how it sounds, which impedes the learning process. Although there are plenty of recurring patterns (such as words ending in “-ing”, “-tion” and so on), there’s often no substitute for learning spellings by rote, because there are plenty of exceptions to rules, meaning that logical deduction doesn’t always work (Look at the word “pronounce” or “pronouncing”, for example, and watch what happens to it when it becomes “pronunciation”. The second “O” has disappeared, contrary to what one might have expected.) What’s more, the English language contains numerous homophones –words that are spelled and/or pronounced the same, but that mean different things– which makes it harder to learn the vocabulary and harder to ascertain the meaning from how the word sounds.[4]

2.5 Lack of attention and willingness:

It is always found that students show low proficiency in learning English. This factor is one of the most important obstacles in learning English. Most students are not interested in learning the language and just think about passing the course, thus because

they are not interested, they do not listen to their teacher and do not learn anything, even if they learn something they will forget it quickly, because they are tired of its repetition. English teacher should encourage the students to learn the language by repeating. This encouragement should not be verbalized, but some awards should be considered to increase the motivation and interest in students. Students should be encouraged to repeat the language, because the language.[4]

2.6 Lack of immersion:

Due to this factor student are unable to learn the subject thoroughly. This immersion towards English maybe due to the pre conceived notion that English as a second language is difficult to understand. Concentration depends on these factors: Fatigue and insomnia, Environment, Family problems. When all these factors are eliminated, the student can do their best to learn the language and gain a good score. Another difficulty in English teaching relates to those students who attend English classes outside of school. These students have higher academic level than others and listening to repetitive low -level content for them is unattractive and boring.[4]

2.7 Translation method:

Translation method is widely used in rural areas. It helps the learner to understand the content of the text but bars from learning the language. The main purpose of teaching the language is kept aside and the teaching of content and theme is given importance. Translation method is thus a great problem in learning English.[4]

2.8 Lack of Repetition And Frequent Practice of Students:

Since students are not interested to learn English, so they will be tired of repeating and practicing the language. If the language is taught by the use of audio and video, then the students will learn it within a short period of time. We should use the specific methods which are from the experiences of teachers in order to motivate the students in learning English.[5]

2.9 Low hours for teaching:

There is major complaining about the amount of time devoted to the course and it is believed that in many cases teachers cannot teach all the subject in limited time. The students learning motivation is low and on the other hand the content volume is high and teaching in short term is very difficult.[5]

2.10 Lack The Proficiency In The English Language:

Unfortunately ,most high school teachers are not fluent in English and they are unable to teach the English language orally. They teach English in the form of written language to students and this is not a hundred percent learning. English teaching is best done when the teachers teach the language orally and have very little use of mother tongue in classroom So that students could imagine they are in a foreign country. Therefore the student will be obliged to speak English and he/she can learn it better.[5]

2.11 Mother Tongue Interference:

Most of the problems arise due to the interference of mother tongue in speaking English. Both the teachers and the students are very fluent in talking their own mother - tongue. But they forget the essence of pure language. When they speak in their mother -tongue they sometimes use English words in the midst of the sentences. They forget that every language differs in stress, intonation and pronunciation.[6]

2.12 Difference in English:

English is pronounced in a very different way from almost all other languages spoken in various state in India. English is spoken with different accent in different parts of the country.

III. Conclusion:

If language is taken away from the society then there will be no civilization of entire society. language is flesh and blood of human culture.it is the source for understanding the great minds of past by studying their written document. English is the language of science, of aviation, computers, diplomacy, and tourism. Knowing English increases your chances of getting a good job in a multinational company within your home country or of finding work abroad. Thus if we want to give our youth a global vision then it is our utmost responsibility to teach them English language thoroughly.

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