

Problems in Teaching and Learning English

S. Kavitha, M.A., M.Phil.

Abstract

English has accomplished a great feat; it has made itself the global language throughout the world. No one can deny the fact that it has become a part and parcel of everyday life. Apart from all the cultural disparities, it holds a major role in the field of education, global trades, business, technology and so on. English has become unavoidable in the Indian education system. Though the role of English is inevitable, learning and teaching English in India faces many problems. Many students and teachers have always encountered certain problems in the process of learning and teaching the English language. Everyone has tried to overcome obstacles and difficulties in learning English, but unfortunately only a few people are able to tackle the hurdles faced by them in the process of learning. This paper is a brief review on some well-planned and organized ways to facilitate the process of learning and teaching English.

Keywords: English language, Indian Education system, Problems of learning, overcoming difficulties

The Important Role of English

English is the most commonly used language throughout the world. The importance of English is felt in the field of science, information technology, entertainment, education, business etc. It has also become compulsory for the people who work in multinational companies. It helps to pursue and obtain more career opportunities. People who have good command over the language excel in all fields. Learning English improves the individual's status and life style. Though there are great benefits from learning English, teachers who handle English and learn English face insurmountable difficulties.

The Difficulties of Learning English

Mother Tongue Interference

English language learning is faced with a myriad of challenges. Influence of mother tongue is one of the primary reasons why the students do not get acquainted with the English language. They use their mother tongue to learn the second language and moreover, they do not get adequate opportunities either to listen or to speak in English. Students feel easier to communicate in their native language instead of English. Usually, the students think and translate the content into their vernacular language which makes the process of learning a complicated one.

Adaptation of Bilingual Method in School

Majority of the students who come from rural background is in need of the bilingual method of teaching. This method can help the slow learners to some extent, but this method affects the whole process of learning the language. It does not show any progress and the attempt at learning fails ultimately. Students are not able to construct even one single flawless sentence after completing twelve years of study. The major reason behind it is that they study English for getting a mere pass mark.

Of course, it is very difficult to learn a new language in the limited hours, but still the teachers may have to insist on speaking in English during all the class hours.

Lack of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is an important part in learning a language. Learning vocabulary is a key skill for learning any language. It helps the speakers to convey their ideas efficiently. Many of the learners fail in acquiring it. They pay less attention in learning vocabulary which results in ineffective communication. Equal importance should be given to learning vocabulary just as in learning other skills.

Error in the Methodology

School study is an important phase in a student's life. English is introduced only at the first standard. Most of the teachers who teach English in primary schools have not graduated in English Literature. Good teachers of English are not found in India so the teachers of other subjects are made to compulsorily to teach English. The quality of teaching gets affected. Hence, English is not taught properly in schools. When these students acquire high school education, they carry the defective knowledge of English with them. A frequent change in the policy of the government is yet another reason why students lack good standard language. Introduction of English language to the students vary from one state to another. Uniform policy should be implemented for the efficient learning of language.

Lack of Time

People often complain that they don't have time to put extra effort into learning the language, but the important thing to deal with language is to learn it on a daily basis. There is no need to spend money to learn the language. Readiness to learn and consistent practice makes everything possible. Proper planning is necessary to manage the time.

Drawbacks of the Learners

Students are not interested in learning English. Students are afraid to use English language and they feel shy to communicate in English. They consider learning English as a compulsory matter and they learn it for getting pass marks. They actually do memorize everything including grammar, essays, poems, and so on. The students who score above 80 percent fail to use the language efficiently. They do not feel the pleasure of learning the language, rather they get frustrated. Lack of constant practice and patience is also one of the drawbacks of learning. Commitment is needed from the learner's side to master the language.

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:4 April 2018

D. Nagarathinam, Ph.D. and R. Vani, M.A., M.Phil. (Eds.) *New Perspectives in ELT – 2018*

S. Kavitha, M.A., M.Phil.

Students should inherit the habit of speaking in English wherever possible. They should feel free to correct their mistakes without hesitation.

Difficulties in Teaching English

Teaching is an art and an effective teaching skill is the important trait of the Teacher. Qualification, training and experience mold them as an efficient instructor. Though there are many efficient teachers in English, they fail to understand the mentality of the learners as well as the needs of the corporate who hire them after they complete their degree. They stick to the rules of institutions and universities. They toil hard to complete the syllabus and to make them pass.

Non-availability of Suitable Teaching Aids

Though there are numerous teaching and learning materials available in the market, suitable materials are needed to benefit the students. Even the teaching methodology is outdated. New materials and methodology is required to meet the challenging world. In addition to it, Good text books, work books, visual materials are also essential for effective teaching. In the present scenario, students are fed up with the same set of rules and regulations of grammar. Practical teaching is the requirement of the young generation. Their need is entirely different. Teachers should adapt some new methodology to create interest and motivation among the students. We cannot accuse the tutors alone for the existing problem. The syllabus framed by the universities is also making the learning process tough. The teachers are forced to complete the syllabus rather than making the students learn the language practically. Adequate practice is not given to students to learn the English language. They are not trained to face the daily life situations. Application oriented advanced grammar is not taught in schools and colleges. Many teachers are interested in developing the students and motivate them, but they are compelled to adapt syllabi.

Lack of Proper Aim

Many teachers do not understand the main aim of Teaching. They focus on grammar, writing, dictation and composition. Among the four LSRW skills, teachers aim at listening and writing. The urge to complete the syllabus and coach them for getting pass marks do not allow the student to speak in the classes. They are satisfied with the lectures and dictation given to the students during the whole period of teaching. The ultimate aim of teaching English language should be practice and activity-oriented learning of English. The use of Audio visual aids should be encouraged. Efforts should be made to improve grammar and its usage in everyday communication through illustrations.

Condition of the Classroom Atmosphere

There are nearly 50 to 60 students in a class and Learning is hampered in over-populated classes. Individual attention is not possible. A good teacher has to handle classes for all the students. To keep the class under control, the teacher gives monotonous lectures without giving a chance for the students to speak. A class strength should be reduced to 25, so as to monitor every individual in the process of learning. It is the responsibility of the teacher to keep the students awake and interested. It can be made possible by cutting down the strength. Many learner centric activities can be given to arouse interest in the minds of the learners.

Language in India www.languageinindia.com ISSN 1930-2940 18:4 April 2018

D. Nagarathinam, Ph.D. and R. Vani, M.A., M.Phil. (Eds.) *New Perspectives in ELT – 2018*
S. Kavitha, M.A., M.Phil.

Conclusion

Though the task of learning and teaching English is difficult, the teachers and students' sincere efforts will help them to overcome the difficulties. It is also the duty of the government and the educational institutions to implement a revised syllabus that should also focus on spoken English. These changes in the perspectives of learning and teaching will definitely bring forth a fruitful result.

S. Kavitha, M.A., M.Phil.
Assistant Professor
Department of English
TKSCT
Theni
Tamilnadu
India
Kavi.pro@gmail.com