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Teaching English: Opportunities and Challenges

*Dr. Manish Bhatnagar

Abstract

Teaching English today has become a challenge itself, in an increasingly flat world with globalization, and advanced technology. In a globalized world where the communication of different countries is interlinked, events in one country affect the other. Rethinking to teach English in terms of role, relevance and future, has therefore, become imperative. The continuous change in technology requires teachers to be engaged in a constant learning process. But the competitive environment presents a plethora of opportunities for English teaching in the various educational institutes. We live in an intensely interdependent world in which all immense differences of culture and historical experience are compressed together in instant communication. If there is existence of language conflicts there can be no peace. Need of today is also discussed in this paper. In the process of maintaining respect for all the languages and acceptance of English as a world language, we can try for world peace, but we ourselves must become more peaceful and tolerant with one another, within our own ranks. The highway to globalized world is to maintain the teaching of English as an essential component of secondary education system in the era of globalized world. People all over the world must accept English as a universal language and maintain respect for every other individual languages. A brief description of teachers' role for teaching English is given in this paper. This paper also discusses some opportunities and challenges of teaching English. Teaching English today has become a challenge in an increasingly flat world with globalization and advancement of technology. The continuous change in technology requires teachers to be engaged in a constant learning process. But the competitive environment presents a plethora of opportunities for English teaching in the various educational institutes.

Introduction

We live in an intensely interdependent world in which all immense differences of culture and historical experience are compressed together in instant communication. The highway to globalized world is to maintain the teaching of English as an essential component of secondary education system in era of globalized world. People of the world must accept English as a universal language and maintain respect for every other individual languages. A brief description of teacher's role for teaching English is given in this paper. This paper also discuss with some opportunities and challenges of teaching English. A language is a means of communication.

*Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Jain Vishva Bharti, (Deemed University),
Ladnun, Rajasthan: bhatnagarmanish9@gmail.com

What we feel or what we know, we have to convey the same to others. In order to convey appropriately, we need a tool. That tool is language.

There are many languages in the world. One among them is English. Learning of English became common in various countries at the time of colonization by the British. But now English language does not belong to English people only but to the people all over the world. English is considered as a secondary passport. If you know English well, you can go to any part of the world. Thus, English is essential in every walk of life.

Relationship of Language Structures

Language is only one of the codes we use to express our ideas. Languages continually change; their statistics are —non-stationary. Not only do they change continually with history, as social conditions in general alter, but they may show a difference, at any particular time, as environmental conditions differ. The relationship between the whole structure of a language (grammatical formalism) and the outside world associations (its semantic functioning) is extremely complicated; it is essentially empirical and above all, varies between different languages.

India is a multi-national, multi-lingual and multi-religious country. This fact was partly realized by the founding fathers of the constitution, when they were assigned the task of drafting it. But unfortunately full recognition to the fact that India before the partition was and continues to be after the partition a conglomeration of various nations and nationalities, has not been accorded till this day. The problems that crop up time and again pertaining to the language issue have their root in the non-recognition of the above fact. The frequent demand for the recognition of certain languages and dialects as being raised at different points of time is just an indicator of the feelings of the people. Since language happens to be the most important ingredient of the nation, most people want to live with their national identity and do not want to lose it at any cost.

Techniques of language Teaching

The techniques of language teaching are, to understand the students' beliefs and attitudes, to meet the anticipated objectives, to keep the syllabus short, precise and attractive, to indicate the advantages and possible disadvantages, to make the term easy for compliance. The learning should be the goal of teaching but not the mirror image of teaching. The teaching should be based on real-life needs & provide opportunities for skill-practice. Teaching should encourage the learners to evaluate themselves. A language teacher needs to take pains to teach all the lessons well. The class

should be made lively and humorous; the emphasis should be on teaching than on testing. The methods adopted should not pressurize the students. How a thing is done in class is a technique. A technique is implementation – that which actually takes place in a classroom. It is a particular trick, stratagem or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective (Anthony 1972).

The psychological level of analysis attempts to make clear the psychological conditions necessary for learning to occur. If certain process variables influence educational outcomes, they must do so through influencing pupil's psychological state and processes. A vast number of psychological concepts, principles and processes have been identified as underlying affecting teaching. These includes: attention, memory information processing transfer of learning, reinforcement, feedback, motivation, ability, expectations and self-concept, to name some. Overall, it appears that there are three main aspects of a pupil's learning crucial to a consideration of effective teaching.

- Pupil must be attending to the learning experiences.
- Pupil must be receptive to the learning experiences (in the sense of being motivated and having a willingness to learn and respond to the experiences).
- The learning experience must be appropriate for the intended learning outcomes (taking particular account of pupils' initial knowledge and understanding).

These three aspects form the basis of the general conditions are required for learning to take place. Pupil learning can be defined as changes in pupil's behaviour which take place as a result of being engaged in an educational experience. Gagne has suggested that there are five main types of pupil learning.

- Verbal information: e.g. facts, names, principles and generalizations.
- Intellectual skills: knowing how and why rather than knowing that. These can be arranged in an increasing order of complexity, with more complex intellectual skills being built upon the similar ones.
- Cognitive strategies: ways in which the pupil able to control and manage the mental processes involved in learning, including strategies for attending, thinking, memorizing, and with novel problems.
- Attitude: an attitude may be defined as pupil's feeling towards some particular object or idea. The fostering of certain attitudes such as those towards ethnic minorities or towards school subjects are important educational outcomes.
- Motor skills: e.g. playing a musical instrument or operating a word processor.

Taking account of pupils' differences is a key factor in thinking about effective teaching. It enables the teachers to be more sensitive to the context of the educational experience to be set up and the desired learning by a particular group of pupils.

Teacher pupil relationship underpins number of different activities and situations assigned to the school. The challenge facing teachers is to establish and sustain the appropriate type of relationship

for the particular activity and situation, whether it be the need to exert authority, guiding a pupil with learning difficulty, or counseling a pupil with a personal problem. The most important quality of such relationship advocated here is that of mutual respect and good rapport. From the discussion of classroom climate and pastoral care, it will be evident that sound teacher pupil relationship lie at the heart of effective teaching. Students must be encouraged to express their opinions, but opinion should be backed up by facts whenever possible. The teacher should caution against swaying students' opinions simply because they differ from his/her own. The teacher should however, show students the opposing view if possible. Students should be encouraged to examine the different points of view on the same issue.

The teachers are not aware of self-learning materials and their uses. This should be incorporated in their training package in learning context. They must be trained to prepare such learning materials. Activity package and supplementary reading materials should be developed and supplied to schools. Promotion of self-learning will not only enhance competencies and learning levels of the children but individualized learning will also reduce burden of the teacher and he/she can devote more time in preparation of learning materials. Self-learning and group learning processes are to be created for every child at one time or the other. Hence a teacher cannot have direct interactions or the teacher cannot pay personal attention to each and every child, thus, self-learning is the most conducive way to facilitate learning.

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