

THE CRITICAL STUDY ON TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL TO THE SPEAKERS OF TAMIL LANGUAGE AT SCHOOL LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this thesis is to improve the teaching of English speaking skill. In this modern world everyone likes to speak in English. This speaking skill must be developed in the school level itself. Although many educationists introduced so many excellent activities, the speaking skill cannot be developed in the school level. What is the reason behind it? Why couldn't the teachers of English achieve this? There are many barriers in teaching English speaking skill. The first and the foremost barrier is that English is not the mother tongue of Tamil speaking students. There is no need to teach the speaking skill of one's own mother tongue. He learns it by naturally. But it is very difficult to speak a language like English, which is used in the school alone as one among the subjects. Tamil speaking students feel difficult to pronounce English words. There are many other barriers also like lack of vocabulary, lack of grammar skill, lack of qualified English teachers etc. Here I suggest some ways which can develop the English speaking skill. Introducing English sounds and simple listening activities in the primary level, choosing and make easy the existing activities, developing the skill of vocabulary, Grammar, Framing questions, teaching English as a skill subject, adjusting time and syllabus are the important suggested ways.

KEY WORDS : *Major window, link language, official language, store house of knowledge, excellent activities, twenty six letters. Forty four sounds.skill subject, basic grammar, rich vocabulary, small gifts. Affection and care.*

1.INTRODUCTION

1.1. THE STATUS OF ENGLISH IN INDIA TODAY

English is the most widely spoken language in the world. It is the mother tongue of more than three hundred and twenty million people and another two hundred million people use it as their second language. According to a census nearly Two thousand Indians use English as their mother tongue. Besides, quite a few Indian states and

territories have adopted English as the official language. One hundred and fifty years of contract had made English as an integral part of our Educational system.[1]

1.2. UNIQUE IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru admits English as our major window on the modern world. It is only with the help of English that we get information about the development taking place throughout the world. English is the link language. In the absence of English, a person from Tamil Nadu cannot communicate with a person from Haryana. English is the only language spoken by people all over the country. The correspondence between Union Government and the State Governments is mostly conducted in English. [1]

English dominates the field of trade and industry in the country because most of the works in these fields are carried out in English. Maintenance of accounts, audit and correspondence are done in English. English plays an important role in the social life of the country, the highly educated and sophisticated sections of our country find it more convenient to talk in English. English is the official language of administration. The UNO has given English the status of being an official language. [1]

English is the major storehouse of knowledge. Most of the knowledge is not yet available in Indian languages. Good reference books are found in English especially in science subjects. English is also the most widely used language in the mass media. It is the gate way of higher education. English plays a paramount importance in the country's national life as well as the educational system. [2]

1.3 THE RATIONALE FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

The rationale for learning English is to polish the behaviour of the students who face the present e-world. The knowledge and skill, the students acquire in schools will permanently reflect in their external behaviour. It enlightens them to become human seismograph as they make use of English for e-communication.[1]

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE

English should be taught as a language and not as literature. It should help the students to acquire practical command over the language. A good command over the use of English language is considered a social asset as it would install self confidence in an individual. English has become the powerful vehicle of our thought and activity. It is undoubtedly a language of modern scientific culture. In literature poetry and prose reveal the beauty and power of the language. Literature affects the man not only through his intellect but also through his senses and works upon his emotions. English should be taught for utilitarian rather than cultural purpose. [3]

In India there are many languages used. Everybody loves his mother tongue. They are not ready to accept Hindi. This made a shift in the medium of instruction at all levels from mother tongue to English in all the states. It is English language, which can bring greater and greater number of people in closer contacts with one another. [1]

1.5 TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SKILL RATHER THAN A KNOWLEDGE SUBJECT

English is a skill subject. Hence when teaching English it should be given more importance to the skills than literature. English language is called a complex skill consisting of the skill of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Among the four skills speaking skill plays an important role. Everybody wants to improve English speaking skill. A lot of methods are introduced by many educationists to improve English speaking skill. But their aim is not achieved. The existing methods of improving speaking skill should be reviewed for breaking the barriers to achieve the goal of effective speaking skill.

2. REVIEW ON EXISTING METHODS OF DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILL

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Educationists put lights on the importance of English speaking skill by giving various excellent activities. The spoken language is much more frequently employed in communication than in the written language. People invariably learn to speak before they learn to write. The teachers of English must be aware of the characteristic features of a good teaching.

2.2 TASK FOR DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILL

2.2.1 INDIVIDUAL TASK

- *Reproducing voiced sounds
- *Voiceless sounds
- *Vowel sounds
- *Rhymes
- *Completion of stories
- *Short speeches
- *Lectures

Among these tasks reproducing rhymes alone is easier than other tasks. [1]

2.2.2 PAIR TASKS

- *Dialogues
- *Debates
- *Free conversation
- *Declamation role play

The peer interaction is an effective means of acquiring some language features, which are not available in teacher fronted class .

2.2.3 GROUP TASKS

- *Reading game
- *Conversation game
- *Description game
- *Completion game
- *Word relay
- *Word building
- *Dramatization
- *Chain drill

These are very good communicative activities. If all the group members are not efficient, the game will not be successful or interested. In these group activities there is a possibility for all the students to involve in the activity. It breaks their shyness and hesitation. Role-play is an enjoyable way of practising conversational English. It gives the learners an opportunity to practise communicating in different social roles. Role play gives a boost to the conversational English and thereby oral fluency with appropriateness. Play reading promotes oral fluency. Question formation and answering are the main points in discussion. Teachers who do not use games are neglecting one of the most vital parts of teaching practices. Teaching becomes easier if the games are connected with the particular language item to be taught in the class.

Interview is a useful technique to get to know each other. It is an effective device for improving fluency. It gives a well modulated tone and speed of speech. In the extempore speech activity the main thing is that the pupil should have enough words and structure. If the learners control over a rich vocabulary, they can be fluent. [4]

Though having so many activities for developing English speaking skills students cannot be made efficient in speaking English. There are many reasons for this. The barriers should be found out and they must be rectified to improve the speaking skill.

3. BARRIERS IN DEVELOPING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL

Though having so many activities for developing English speaking skills, it can't be developed. English is taught as a knowledge subject instead of teaching as a skill subject. More importance is given to literature than language. It has its own difficulties when teaching English as a second language. The influence of mother tongue makes the learners feel difficult. The least importance is given to English subject in higher secondary level. Period allotment is not enough to practise all the speaking skill activities. Poor listening skill, lack of vocabulary and poor grammar skill are also the barriers in developing English speaking skill. The learners feel very difficult to pronounce the English words. In Tamil language the letters and sounds are equal, but in English the 26 letters have 44 sounds. The learners will confuse with these sounds.

The government school students don't have the interest in learning English. Their irregularity, unawareness of the necessity of English, their background, starvation, unhealthy condition, parents' carelessness and their income are also the barriers of developing English speaking skill among the government school students. The selection of English language teachers is also one among the barriers. Hence the students, parents, teachers of English and the education department are all responsible for these barriers. These barriers should be overcome to reach the goal of effective speaking skill.

4. THE WAYS OF OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS OF DEVELOPING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL

An efficient teacher of English can alone eradicate the barriers of developing English speaking skill. English should be taught as a skill subject. Among the four language skills it should be given more important to the speaking skill. Both Tamil and English languages can be used to teach in primary and middle school level. English subject should be taught only in English both in High school and Higher secondary level. In the initial stage the teachers of English feel little difficult to make the learners understand by their teaching. Later gradually the understanding capacity of the learner will be increased by the teaching of efficient teachers of English. To improve the listening skill the learners are made to hear a particular passage repeatedly. A particular number of selected vocabularies should be given according to each level to make them rich in vocabulary. All the forty four sounds of English language should be taught in the primary and middle school level. This will make the learners pronounce the English words correctly before going to high school level. The basic grammar should be taught in the middle school level. This makes the learners to speak the correct sentences.

The Government school students' interest of learning English can be made by learning English easy. The teachers of English must make the learners understand the necessity of English. Small gifts for their regularity can avoid irregularity. Above all the affection and care of the teachers of English on the learners will break all the barriers of English speaking skill.

5. CONCLUSION

Speaking skill is an important part of language learning. Speaking is perhaps the most demanding skill for the teachers to teach. The efficient teaching and affection of the teachers of English must achieve the goal of developing English speaking skill. Swami Vivekananda says, 'All the power is with you.' Yes the power of speaking English is with the learners. Practice makes perfect. The learners' regular practice and the teachers' encouragement can help to develop the speaking skill.

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