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## Problems In Teaching English As A Compulsory Subject

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### ABSTRACT

*English has been playing an important role in our educational system as well as in our national life. English was supreme in the pre-independent India. It was the language of administration, a compulsory subject at the school and college, and the medium of instruction for some subjects at the school and college, and for all subjects at the University level. English still occupies an important place in our educational system and life of our country. Further it also occupies an important place in courts, commerce and industry. Besides being a link and library language in India it is our major window on the modern world. It is impossible to disagree with Nehru's observation, "The language of English is our major window on the modern world". Infact, English language is holding and will continue to hold a unique position in India. In the process of teaching English, a classroom teacher faces various problems in his day-today teaching activity. There may be problems related to the pronunciation, reading and writing or problems related to students attitude towards his studies, subject and teachers. However, the society has to look up to the betterment of their youth.*

### Keywords : The aims/ objectives of teaching English language

Language is a precious possession of mankind. It is the expression of human personality in words whether written or spoken. It is impossible to think of a rational being of a society without implying the existence of language. Hence language is "a system of arbitrary sounds signals with which normal human beings interact in a given speech communal."

#### The aims/ objectives of teaching English language :

It has become essential in the present world, to have ability to convey and receive ideas and information through English language. It has become the most pervasive medium of communication in all walks of life. Nehru has rightly remarked that English is our major window on the world, which keeps us informed about the advancement taking place throughout the world. Metaphorically it has been said that English is the window through which one can see the progress taking place in the scientific, technological, cultural, literary, social and economic fields. Apart from that the students of commerce have to communicate with the world around for various purposes. But in today's competitive world it has been observed that often many brilliant students are not selected for good jobs, merely because they are unable to express their ideas in English during the selection process.

Hence, English plays an important role in the field of education. It is taught as a compulsory subject in most of the states in our country. And our aim as a teacher of English as well as commercial communication, teaching in commerce faculty is to make them good managers so that they can manage any jobs related to business, trade commerce or industry, in their real life.

#### Problems :

Though various theories, approaches and methods of teaching in English language have been developed on the basis of the experience of language teaching, but sometimes these experiences are found irrelevant when a teacher teaches to students related with commerce colleges, English as a compulsory subject and series of problems arises.

College education is an extension of the school education. During this level the students are expected to become familiar with different theories and fields of knowledge. Therefore they

are taught different theories or the theoretical aspects of texts so far as the teaching of English language is concerned. The syllabus prepared for them concentrates on skills like reading, writing, comprehension, speaking and grammar skills. But the unfortunate fact is that a large number of students are found not in a position to read spellings of words correctly. They are not able to construct a correct sentence. In such circumstances the task of teaching becomes a great problem for the teachers of English.

The syllabus has to be completed within the given time limit. On the otherhand students have to appear for examination so they expect that a teacher should prepare them for examination. Therefore a teacher has to spend his teaching time in dictating notes that orient the students for passing the examination. If it has not been done by a teacher the bazaar is always ready with the shortcut success in the form of guides. The bazaar teacher (one who gives tuitions) is also always available in every 'Gali'. Ultimately the knowledge of English our students possess is rather insufficient and incomplete.

Generally in commerce colleges, it has been observed that English as a subject is more or less neglected. In otherwords, due importance is given to the English subject in most of the commerce colleges in Gujarat. As a result, the students of commerce are more attached and involved with numbers and figures, with Rupees and paise, with thousand, and lacs and so on i.e. They forget the whole A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z of English language and English literature but remembers only Rs. in the English alphabet. As a result, they are deprived from enlightenment of literature which is also necessary in the making of a man, alongwith 'profit' and 'loss' in their life.

This is because there is a lack of supportive teaching environment so far as English language teaching is concerned in commerce colleges.

Today, students evaluate themselves on the basis of the score of marks. They have become exam oriented and are more interested in having good mark sheets rather than having a complete knowledge of the subject. Hence the practical situation of commerce students is, they are simply unable to

communicate in English or even fail to fill – up the forms related to Bank correspondence etc.

This is the current scenario of the system of Gujarat University Education producing thousands of commerce graduates every year.

The true tragedy of a student arises in S.Y.B.Com and T.Y.B.Com. The knowledge of students regarding English subject is so poor that they are hardly able to differentiate between a novel or a drama ? A question arises to digest the text and remember the names of characters appearing in text.

A part from that in S.Y.B.Com and T.Y.B.Com the subject of English is combined with commercial communication and the weight age of marks to the textual portion is very low. Hence some students in order to secure passing marks totally avoid the textual portion and only prepares the portion related to commercial communication. The students with such mentality are often skipping classes of commercial communication in S.Y. and T.Y.

Hence to avoid such situation and to stop students, bunking the class, the textual portion should be made compulsory.

One of the greatest problem that the very system of teaching English is a large number of students in a compulsory English classroom. There are almost 130 – 150 students sitting in a classroom where it becomes impossible for the teacher to pay personal attention on the students.

The teaching of English depends upon many factors vitally connected with it – upon the attitude of the teacher, upon the attitude of the student, upon a suitable course of studies and finally upon an honest text – book committee. One of the most important factors that subscribes to the success of instruction is the adequacy of text books.

The first consideration in choosing texts is their suitability for the students. The text – books should indeed be of the highest possible quality – books of small print, poor paper, lacking in good illustrations and of unlovely binding do not have any appeal for readers (students) and do not give them any pleasure in their reading, inspite of the best efforts of the teachers. Hence, nothing but good and attractive editions can also capture the interest of the students in college.

#### **Solutions :**

The two important qualities a teacher, in the subject of English requires are –

- (1) To remove the student's fear while speaking in English and
- (2) To make his lecture interesting. The students will remain present in class if they come to know that something is imparted in the class. We should not disappoint the students even if errors are committed by them during teaching / learning process.

Every hindrance should be taken as a stepping stone for the better future. We should use mother tongue freely but should not translate everything we often use translation under the impression that is as it helps them to comprehend the English text. But this is a very harmful misconception. In my opinion

translation is neither necessary nor helpful, because when the teacher begins to translate everything, the students stop processing the English text, and they just wait for the Gujarati version. If the students are not making any effort to comprehend, they are not developing the ability to understand themselves. Of course, the teacher can use Gujarati (if necessary) while teaching English to create the background, to explain complex concepts and to give detailed instructions about some tasks in the classroom. Because Translation is harmful firstly it kills the student's effort to understand and secondly it kills his confidence.

A teacher can also assign the students some self learning tasks. In this age of mass media and internet, at least some of our students should be encouraged to use these sources of learning. The teacher only needs to point out interesting programmes and websites and follow it up with some discussion in the classroom.

The Gujarat University has formed workbooks / Journals for English as well as commercial communication. The workbooks contain all types of questions which teach the students practically how to utilize the theory and language work. So mere emphasis should be given on this. But due to untimely availability of workbooks / Journals, the whole practice of dealing with it has become just fun of many colleges.

A kind of motivation has to be produced among the students to learn English language, so that he may realize what he gains from this language, what the language gives him and how many forms of achievement depend upon it.

Do not correct the errors of the students immediately while teaching / learning process of English language in particular. Because when a student is trying to express something, may withdraw his attempt and decide never to open the mouth in future, in the class-room in any case. Thus sometimes the immediate correction of error of the student can prove more harmful rather than helping him. The teachers should learn to tolerate or ignore minor errors, sometimes in order to develop self confidence among students.

Thus we talk about the English language teaching system of education with grudges. But the fact is, our craze of learning English has increased day by day, which is in the real sense a need and demand of the growing young generation in the present world. We easily blame the system of education, but the unfortunate fact is that we have never consider a the diversity of our nation in marking of our system of education. According to Swami Vivekanda, "Education is a man making process". So while teaching it has to be taken into consideration that we make man fit for our society. The group of the students for whom the system and skill is made must remain in focus. And the teaching / learning of English should be integrated with the whole process of education. Further, in order to make English language teaching an interesting process in commerce college, some creativity and novelty must be brought, by seeking the opinions of other learned academicians.

Lastly, in the present scenario we must think of new steps and strategies to make English language teaching more relevant to the needs of commerce students when they take up a job in their real life.



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