



Reducing Fear of Learning English Among the Students of Secondary School Level in Rural Areas -Teachers' Role

KEYWORDS

Reducing fear, rural area, secondary level students, learning English skills, teachers' role-strategies etc.

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ABSTRACT *This present article focuses on a few salient features on how secondary school level students with L1 medium from rural areas suffer from inferiority and anxiety in learning/performing abilities in English language skills. Despite contributions and strategic approaches of teachers, the students could be able to reduce their apprehension and excel in attaining millennium development goals as proclaimed by academicians.*

INTRODUCTION

"Fear is your enemy. Defeat it"- Franklin D. Roosevelt

The role of teachers is crucial in developing language skills of the learners. Teachers require playing a vital role in reducing the fear among students in teaching/learning English especially at the secondary school level in particular rural areas. The students hailed from rural backdrop with medium of instruction are L1 since the beginning largely affected by the anxiety of learning English. There are several reasons for the apprehension of the students in terms of learning English as a subject and performing language skills.

Students apprehension for learning English can be categorized as under mentioned.

1. Sociological factors
2. Psychological factors
3. Economical factors

Sociological Factors

The factor affected fear among the students of rural areas is sociological one, as they have not been exposed to the urban environment of learning English pattern and gaiety. Lack of English knowledge in the family may also be the cause of anxiety. Seclusion from spoken environment of English and no predecessors early before in generations exposed to English language may also be one of the causes (as this in case of first generation English learners).

Psychological Factors

The students afflicted with psychological problems such as inferiority, neurosis, anglo-phobic tendency, anxiety over learning are caused mostly in the students especially whose learning medium of instruction in L1. Apathetic behavior, reluctant attitude towards learning English may also be one of the affected reasons.

Economic Factors

Besides enthusiasm and interest, the anxiety is caused due to discrimination in economic terms while the comparison is made with affordable classes. The large section of have not's despite being encouraged affected by the fear or anxiety as they have been kept at arm's length in financial provision for pursuing English medium schooling at secondary level.

In fact, secondary level schooling is the foundation stage

for students to mould their careers into professionals. This is quiet possible when students build up considerable communication skills from secondary level. There are certain strategies to reduce fear or anxiety among the learners and for this the teachers must play a pivotal role.

In true sense, the fear of being humiliated either mentally or physically must go away from the minds of the students. The students should be prepared to be bold enough to perform good language skills. To face down fear, it is needed to boost them that certainly whatever they are frightening, won't happen. In anxiety most of the students may not deliver their ideas or thoughts well. So it is to be reminded several times to feel free and relaxed. Being prepared is considered as an important of all. Students at the secondary level of schooling need to associate each and every thought and gather all the points, assimilating context with complete meaningful pattern, practice remedial exercises and recitation immensely helpful for them to overcome or reduce fear or anxiety. Here teachers are real role models to inspire and motivate innate abilities of students with appreciation and applause. In addition to this, special focus should be laid on etiquette and body language of the students.

Strategies to Reduce Fear or Anxiety among Students

The teachers may

1. Understand how learners receive language teaching
2. Keep an eye on the students class room behavior
3. Regular monitoring on the comprehension abilities and responses of the students
4. Advise the students to stand of mirror to observe how they look like while speaking
5. Encourage students language abilities in making simple sentences and corrections immediately
6. To keep them in good posture while speaking
7. Provide constant encouragement for reading news papers, story books in simple English
8. Provide activities such as one minute talk to five minute talk for extempore speaking
9. Focus should be on good accent and pronunciation
10. Students must be arranged into small groups and allot easy and entertaining topics to create interest towards English.
11. Avoid discouraging students and be more conscious in identifying weaker, slow learners and problematic stu-

dents

12. Diagnose the reasons for their rigidity in learning English and suggest suitable remedies to solve their anxiety problems
13. Special counseling classes must be arranged for slow learners and weaker students
14. Scope for starting conversations with strangers to get accustom to overcome or reduce fear or anxiety when speaking such as speak yourself or introduce yourself, respond/express your views may be presented.

Besides above listed suggestions one essential principle need to be adopted and implemented is PPP (Practice-Practice-Practice). The teachers should encourage students to start conversation among them and with strangers to overcome their anxiety.

CONCLUSION

Thus this article explores how to break the barriers of anxiety of learning English by following appropriate strategies with the crucial role played by the teachers especially whose background is L1 hailing from rural areas.

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