

Review

Professional Ethics in English Language Teaching

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Accepted 4 July 2016

In this era of Globalization English language has attained a new meaning. Besides academic usage, it has grown as a world language and local adaptations like Chinglish and Hinglish have become popular. English it self is being enriched day by day incorporating new words from different languages spoken across the world. The challenge before us is the global expansion of English and the solution is development of English for International Communication. English language has become a practical tool for communication. Native speaker competence is neither achievable nor desired. Moreover functional competence alone has to be achieved. The question here arises about professional ethics in English teaching Though ethical code of conduct is well marked in all professions, teaching has till recently cleverly though erroneously avoided any such development. English language teaching is one of the most neglected. English Educators have stressed the need for professional qualification if teachers are to help students learn the language in an effective way. A fluent language skill is not enough for educators as English teaching is much more than supplying information. Therefore it is wrong to say that if one speaks English one can teach it as well. In this paper I propose to highlight the state of English language teaching today and also analyse the ways and means of developing professional ethics in English language teaching. English language teaching is a training and professional ethics if followed can bring good results.

Key Words: Professionalism, Ethics, English, Education

Cite This Article As: Tripathi R (2016). Professional Ethics in English Language Teaching. Inter. J. Eng. Lit. Cult. 4(6): 104-107

INTRODUCTION

In the twenty first century the English Language is a tool of communication between people of different nations. With globalisation the world has come closer than ever before thus making communication skills directly proportional to the success quotient. Language being the strongest medium of communication is now viewed from a new perspective. English language has been accepted

across the world. The universal acceptance of English owes much to the fact that the British had colonies all over the world. They promoted English for their own cause--primarily for facilitating administration, but it became a language of academic usage that opened the knowledge of the West to the entire world. In the Post-colonial era English language has developed as the

second language and education in English medium-- a legacy of the Raj-- has had an edge over the native language. Since political, commercial and academic discourses between different countries needed a common language and English became the chosen one as it was widely accepted.

Globalisation and English Language

Since in the globalised world today English is the language for international communication. The need today is of spreading English to one and all as it is the medium of interaction in the commercial world. It has to be developed as a tool for communication in this business world. The access to latest information technology is feasible with English language and progress of a country lies in the hands of information technology. So it is right to say that English language opens the door to success and progress. English language is not our native language so teaching of English plays a vital role. Educators have urged professionalism in English teaching. They have emphasised the need of professional qualification in the "art" of English Language teaching to make the students learn the language in an effective way. According to Edith Allen, an instructor in the English for International Students Program at Duke University, teaching English does not require fluency alone but also a broad range of interdisciplinary knowledge and training in linguistics education and speech pathology.

Professionalism in English Language teaching

Professionalism in English Language teaching is quite often lacking, Any one having a good knowledge of the language may not become teacher. Language teaching is not transference of knowledge but a training. For the ability to train in language one should have knowledge. According to Tony Wright professionalism is all about trust, expertise, reliability and autonomy. There should be service ethics, special knowledge, commitment to clients, and ability to take decision. Saud Mossa Alsalahi is of the view that the pedagogy of teachers' professionalism in teaching English are either the structured learning experiences provided for teachers, which is called by Leung (2007) the sponsored professionalism, and the more individual oriented education which is independent professionalism which might be termed as the core element in teacher education. The aim of sponsored professionalism is providing accountability of the training. There are a number of suggestions that can bring in professionalism in Language teaching. A teacher of English language should lay emphasis on the speaking and expression of the students than his own speaking

and therefore must have the skill of making students speak more and himself should speak less. The students should express their views to enhance confidence. Simply supplying information is not enough. The teaching pedagogy is therefore of importance. If the teacher forces the students to speak they first experiment with language. This self expression can bring an end to the inhibitions. Slowly and steadily he discovers how to communicate his thought. The teachers' speaking time can be reduced if the teacher realises that he is a trainer rather than a teacher alone. Endless information both verbal and in writing does enhance the ability to express. In a hockey field we find the coach giving directions for the game and hockey is played by the learners. Similarly in an English Language class the teacher should make the students speak out and express. He should provide what we may term raw material and the students should be made to express according to the directions.

The trainer of language should always remember that English is not a native language but is rather a working language. Two people with different native languages may communicate through English. So the purpose is not efficient writing skills but communication. Here it is important to discuss what type learning material should be used, but before that it is pertinent to discuss the various steps in teaching language:

1. The student has to be assessed in his knowledge of the language. In India, Grammar is taught meticulously but perfection in grammar does not essentially mean perfection in speaking the language. It is therefore of utmost importance to focus on the power of verbalizing his thoughts. This can be done through interaction with him in the language.
2. The need of learning the Language has to be understood. It should be very clear to the language teacher that people of all walks of life and of all ages can seek to learn the language. The approach that has to be used for a young professional of Law has to be different from that of a young management trainee. The need for a student is very different from that of a homemaker. The raw material therefore has to be different.
3. The students should be first exposed to vocabulary of about five hundred words which are relevant to him. He should be close to the pronunciation. Initially perfection of pronunciation should not be sought, instead they should be made to feel comfortable with it. Edith Allen at Duke University says that student arriving in America have a strong reading ability and strong grammar but lower listening comprehension and an inability to speak English well. They also have problems with pronunciation of certain sounds

like Sh, P and F. Unlike American students the students from other parts of the world are relatively less informal in an interactive class. To make an interactive class successful there should be informality for unrestricted inflow of language.

4. Audio-video assistance is needed for a proper language training class. Pictures of about 1500 common articles displayed and audio loudly pronouncing its name can help the students to correctly pronounce the words. Later on stories in picture form may be displayed. The students have to orally narrate the story, the correct ways and alternative ways of expressing are to be repeated by the audio. The incidents that have taken place and have been understood by the learners in their native language .can be displayed and they may be told to narrate in English. Later on they may be exposed to other issues that may be new to them. This will help them to express what they see before them.
5. Besides this, question answer sessions are useful for effective learning. If the student has the basic knowledge of English then at first often asked questions should be put. Learning methodology should be devised by the teacher of second language after analysing the problem areas to form the focus of training and material of training should be designed by the teacher. According to Francis, speaking and listening should be assessed in rigorous and varied settings. Language Labs are quite effective at this stage of training.
6. Once the students are conversant they should do group discussions on issues of common interests which shall help them to effectively express their views. The group discussions should be on issues that the students are interested in and so they have ample matter to speak about. Finally the students should be given familiar and interesting topics on which they can make presentation and must be made to present it, Edith Allen says that it is important that demonstration of real knowledge acquired is done. Thus students begin to write and talk about academic topics and social issues and affect them and connect them to the world they live in. The professionalism in teaching is the need of the hour. Professional ethics that provides a code of conduct to professions has been evaded by the teachers.

To bring in Professionalism in language teaching there are certain precautions that have to be kept in mind while conducting classes:

1. David Francis, a British Educator suggested an

alternative way regarding the heated debate over teachers' qualification issue. He has targeted literature, humanities and language in five countries, including Singapore and Indonesia for the past 18 years. He says that study skills and classroom management are key areas that make language acquisition real. Language, he says, is connected to thought, and students think well when they are doing something purposeful, responding to others or interacting with a teacher in a meaningful way. Language learning needs to be assessed in a real way not by answering multiple choice questions. Edith Allen says that the students are in the habit of looking up to teachers for supplying answers and do not encourage participatory learning that is process oriented and values critical thinking. The teachers should feign from assisting them in answering.

2. Valerie Ringrose in her article "The Professionalism in Teaching" says that the teacher's' personal life and professional life should not intermingle in one -- a universal taboo in the world of work.
3. Another aspect of teaching that is of importance to bring in professionalism is that the teacher should keep himself updated in knowledge. Earlier the teacher had full authority over his students. The students had to show absolute respect for the teachers. Times have changed children are getting to know their teachers better. They are for ever testing the limits of their teachers. Barriers no longer exist between them. The gap is narrowing. At such a time the conduct of the teachers is consistently and continuously scrutinized. The teachers have to be very careful about their conduct updated knowledge keeping in pace with the technological advancements. The teachers should draw a line between the two lives- the personal and the professional.
4. Like other developed countries teachers of English Language should be professionally trained. The TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) teacher across the world prefers some form of communicative teaching and beaming. She should first of all be competent in and comfortable with methods she wants to use. She can be innovative and select different teaching strategies from different methods and blend them to suit the needs of her students. A diligent TESOL teacher continually learns new techniques from her peers and her students as she interacts with them. She needs to know new directions in teaching of English to speakers of other languages. The teacher's own English speech pronunciation and writing should be as close to the "Standard" as possible the

lessons should be in standard language unaffected by native forms.

5. The teacher should be enthusiastic and energetic and the class should come alive in her presence. All the students should be involved in the drills and exercises conducted in the class. The relationship between the teacher and the class should be informal and free flow of conversation should be the priority. The CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) is the most apt approach in language teaching. This emphasizes the extensive use of English as a means of communication in a classroom.

In an article "Professionalism and Ethical Code" in English Foreign Language Teaching_(EFL) Robert J. Dickey, says that there is a calling for development of a system of ethical guidelines for ELF teachers in Asian settings. The concept of a code of ethics is important because it implies that all rules can be found in one place. This prevents professionals from being judged by individualistic standards.

TESOL draft of code for Foreign language/second language teachers as presented by M.S. Thirumalai stresses on basic norms to be followed.

1. A foreign language teacher shall not use professional relationship with students for private advantage.
2. He shall recognise his duty to manifest responsibility, individual initiative, and integrity in his teaching.
3. He shall act and shall be seen to act, with justice and fairness. there should be advancement in his teaching qualifications.
4. There should be a definite system of testing and grading. There should be transparency, accuracy and fairness in testing and grading.
- 5 Other topics of possible inclusion are development of teaching material, private tutoring, cultural conflicts and questions of classroom preparation.

CONCLUSION

English Language teaching has to be professionally managed. It is a myth that it is a task to be handled by mere knowledge of the language. With globalisation reaching every part of the world, communication between people of different countries is essential and English is generally the most popular of the languages. Specialised teachers with the use of Technology can give good results. Professional ethics is therefore essential in training the masses in English language.

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