
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT IN TAMILNADU – PRACTICAL AS WELL AS PROFESSIONAL PERSPECTIVE.

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Abstract: If we really want to develop a teacher along with experience, we have to challenge our traditionally-held beliefs and views on the teaching methods and bravely try out new methods. To ensure improved outcome from students, the teacher's committed and competent skills are needed. A committed teacher understands the needs of developing oneself before helping others. For a successful professional, the teacher has to maintain high standards of personal and professional integrity. This paper aims to discuss about the possibilities of English Language Teacher development in Tamilnadu and how to overcome some of the difficulties in teacher development.

Key words: Teacher development, Time management, Professional commitment.

Introduction: The teaching of English Language is started becoming extremely professional and competitive nowadays in Tamilnadu. English Language teachers have to keep on updating their knowledge to meet new challenges in this field. More often, personal beliefs and lack of motivation are the barriers for teacher development. Research shows that effective development in teachers' practices can positively affect students' learning. In this context Ur (1996) writes that "teachers with twenty years' experience and those with one year experience repeated twenty years" (p.317). If we really want to develop a teacher along with experience, we have to challenge our traditionally-held beliefs and views on the teaching methods and bravely try out new methods. This paper aims to identify the factors needed for professional development in teachers of English in Tamilnadu.

Upgrading Knowledge: Bachelor's degree or a Master's degree in English Literature and a degree in Education is providing a very little or no knowledge in English Language Teaching. It is most needed for Indian teachers of English to study some specific courses in ELT such as Master of Arts in Linguistics and Master of Arts in ELT, Post graduate diploma in ELT or participating in-service education and training programs. If a language teacher is having good knowledge in soft skills will make the language teaching a successful effect. Sound subject knowledge of the teacher will make all the art of teaching meaningful otherwise all the techniques and methods will be futile. Students always admire teachers who can give the reason for learning and the same time who is not only teaching but also practicing. In this regard, the teachers have to upgrade their knowledge as they wish from their students. We can better understand this by the words of Wallace (1991:3), "training or education is something that can be presented or managed by others, whereas development is something that can

be done only by and for oneself."

Competent Professional: To ensure improved outcome from students, the teacher's committed and competent skills are needed. As a competent professional, the language teacher should not hesitate to use different kinds of methods and tools like Technology-Assisted Language Learning (TALL), Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL), and Social Media Assisted Language Learning (SMALL). To prove their excellence in teaching, the language teachers should know how to go beyond the text to make the teaching both informative and pleasant. By teachers get together, seminars, workshops and newsletters, the teachers can get an idea about the challenges that other teachers are experiencing in their class rooms, and what are their views about that issues, in addition, how they reacted to that situation or how they managed their situation and lot of other information related to teaching. This kind of healthy platforms of discussion will make the teacher really good learner as well as a good professional who can create a healthy atmosphere in classrooms.

Personal Effectiveness: Teachers' language use in the classroom proves the personal effectiveness of the language teacher. Creating and encouraging an atmosphere for interaction in the second-language session is also one of the personal effectiveness of the language teacher. Maintaining a personal diary, and knowing about the students' first language, culture and history will also help the teacher to be effective in teaching the second language. Especially in Tamilnadu, the classrooms are filled with multi-lingual students. So, it is a basic need for effective teaching which will come from the teachers' knowledge about the students' first language. We can better understand by the words of Wright, Horn and Sanders, "More can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor." A committed

teacher understands the needs of developing oneself before helping others. For a successful professional, the teacher has to maintain high standards of personal and professional integrity.

Challenges In Teacher Development: Time is a big barrier in the teacher development. Because of various reasons, the teachers are often facing lack of time especially female teachers. Instead of all the challenges, it's the teachers' duty to realise the importance and need for their day to day improvement not only as a person but also as a professional. To achieve their professional excellence, they should learn to plan their time for their personnel as well as professional development. In rural areas the teachers have less interest in learning computers; this issue is making teacher development as a tough task in rural areas. The technology in Language Learning is the most important tool in teacher development which is not accepted by most of the teachers in villages because of their practical difficulties in using them. It's our government's duty to enhance and help the teachers to develop themselves for the future of Language learning, so that the learner can get good chance and hope of language learning in Tamilnadu.

Practical Excellence: Practical and advanced methods of teaching will help the teacher to teach language effectively. Each teacher's working environment differs in many ways as their challenges also. Sharing their views with other teachers and the same time learn about other teachers' practical difficulties will help the teacher to improve their knowledge about teaching. For example, International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL), Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), The English Language Teachers' Association of India (ELTAI) and several Special Interest Groups (SIGs) is making a platform to share and learn about the experiences, issues and solutions in all the aspects of language teaching. The teacher has to know all the technologies used in Language teaching and ready to practice the techniques in the language classroom according to the students need and bringing excellent result will prove the teachers' practical excellence.

Professional Commitment: Professional commitment in teacher can bring new generation which will be good for the society. The committed teacher is always the role model for not only to the students but also for other teachers. Teacher profession is meant for teaching and learning both. A good teacher always ready to learn new techniques and methods according to the need of the society and students. Its teachers' duty to maintain the language class free from dullness and the same time the teacher has to follow different strategies for an active

class room environment. In language classes, the students are always feeling that the same things are taught to them repeatedly what they learnt from the previous classes. This situation brings boredom, carelessness and lack of interest in the language classroom especially in the higher secondary and college level students, overcoming this issue and making the classroom informative and to meet the students need is a challenging task to every language teacher. This issue can be resolved by the teacher by giving information apart from text and it is always useful to make the language classes meaningful. Using different technologies for creative activities like Audio Resources, Art works, Language laboratories, photographs and slides will keep the language class more interesting, informative, and lovable, the same time goal oriented. Undoubtedly, more interacting sessions will be useful for more creative activities. Interactive sessions and group discussions will be helpful in idea generation, apart from language students, all other students' interest will be in their main subject. Understanding this nature of the student, the teacher has to encourage the students to discuss about their subject of interest in group discussion. At the same time day-to-day communication is also so important. It's language teachers' duty to make them understand that even the student who is standing alone and doing nothing also communicating with other people through his standing posture. Other people who are passing by that student will get some idea about the student through his standing posture, place where he choose to stand, and from so many things. If a student wants to become a noble person, he has to learn and concentrate on so many things and the communication comes and gets first place in this regard. Human life is designed in such a way that every person is communicating with each other through words or without words, how we eat, what we prefer to eat, how we dress, how we respect others and everything in the life is communication. We are always communicating, so it is more important and the language teacher as a committed professional can help the student to understand this aspect of communication compared to other subject teachers. This type of teaching gives the proof that the language teacher is a committed professional.

Conclusion: The teachers of English language have to go further to meet the challenges and understand themselves, students and their subject. It is a part of lifelong process of learning experience of teaching English language. To change the classroom behaviour, the teachers have to find out the reason for the students learning behaviour and give them alternative ways and provide solutions, so that they can learn from language classes. To improve and

achieve in their career, the teachers' should have the capacity and mindset to identify and correct their drawbacks as well as the knowledge about their own interest, skills and the ways to enrich their skills and interests. From the humanistic approach in the teaching and learning process will make the goal is to

be achieved in a noble manner. The dedicated, committed and professional language teacher can build the confidence and positive approach for English language learning among the student community.

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