

## The Importance of Teachers Training in English Language Teaching

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### **Abstract**

The heart of every educational enterprise, the force driving the whole enterprise towards its educational aims, is the teaching faculty. Hence the nature of the faculty, in both its overall composition and the characteristics of its individual members, to a large extent determines the unique character of any language program, the present article is an attempt to show the importance of training (pre-service and in-service) in English Language teaching.

**Keywords:** teachers training, English teaching, pre-service teaching, in-service teaching, teaching faculty

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Eskey, R (1988) believes that just as in any other field of specialization in which certificate or degree programs are offered, language teaching requires education and training. A major problem world-wide in the field of language teaching is the popular belief that anyone who can speak a language can teach it. The fact is, however, that language teaching requires a special combination of knowledge and skills that is always hard to find, and finding teachers who have it should be the first concern of any good administration of skill teaching.

The teacher, like the learner, brings to language teaching certain characteristics which may have bearing on educational treatment: age, sex, previous education, and personal qualities. Above all, the language teacher brings to it a language background and experience, professional training as a linguist and teacher, previous language teaching experience, and more or less formulated theoretical presuppositions about language, language learning and teaching. Teachers play a crucial role as they establish goals, adopt textbooks, develop curricula, prepare lesson plans, conduct classes, set standards, and evaluate students' achievement. They set the tone for the class, coordinate the learning activities, and bear the responsibility for teaching the material, they guide the uncertain, support the faltering, and encourage all to persevere and succeed. Most students do not have the knowledge, motivation, or discipline to succeed without the teacher, because they had experiences Learning English.

Teachers are the driving force in every educational enterprise so that the success or failure of any particular program rests largely on faculty development. The single most important feature of any program is the teaching faculty. Good teachers make good programs and good effect on student learning English language.

Johnson (1989) believes that the ultimate success or failure of a language program hinges on the initial decisions related to the hiring of instructors and the structuring of the faculty as a whole. Once the faculty has been organized, the continuing success of a program is dependent on development. In other words, providing an orientation for the program and its individual faculty members towards continual improvement is the key to success.

## II. DISCUSSION

### A. *Pre-service Training*

Widdowson (1990) says that pre-service preparation initiates the prospective teacher into the basics of professional activity. These are, in general, of two kinds: there are those which relate to the craft of classroom management and the use of routine procedures for organizing class activities, the tricks of the pedagogic trade. Here what is important for novices is the development of confidence when confronted with a new and demanding, indeed threatening, social situation, and for this they need to draw upon a set of established and reliable techniques and learn to feel secure in the straightforward business of actually putting them into practice, whatever their validity in terms of learning effect might be. Novice teachers clearly have to feel secure in their own role, and establish their own identity, before indulging in experimentation which could undermine their authority before they have actually acquired it.

The second basic element of initiation is that which relates new-comers to their fellow teachers, a process of acculturation whereby they become members of the group. This too inclines them to accept a set of conventional attitudes and practices. To adopt too critical or inquiring a position at this stage would be to run the risk of alienation. In their initiation into both the craft and culture of pedagogy, it is in the interests of novice teachers to conform in order to place their relations with pupils and fellow teachers on a secure base and so to get established in their role.

### 1. **Teaching a Real Classroom**

Most teacher educators point out the value of providing a "real" classroom setting for student teachers in which the students' goal is to learn the foreign language. Teacher educators may provide such a context through their own or an affiliated institution, or require student teachers to teach in a public institution.

Freeman (2002) claims that one obvious benefit of teaching a class is that opportunities are provided for student teachers to use their accumulated knowledge to make instructional decisions. Through teaching a class, they gain the chance to put their ideas about

teaching into practice. These activities give them the freedom to reconstruct their ideas about what to do in the classroom.

## **2. Classroom Observation**

One activity in which student teachers can participate is observation through classroom visits and video recordings. Student teachers and teacher educators have reported two connected benefits of observing the teaching act. First, some student teachers have reported that observation allows them to see teaching differently and learn how to teach. Observation can give them many different views of teaching. They understand how a lesson is being taught, what teachers and students are doing, and what media are being used by the teacher.

Second, observation makes them realize that there are unlimited ways to teach. They can understand that teaching is made up of behaviors and consequences of behaviors and that they are not limited in the behaviors they can use in the classroom they can understand teachers attitude, personality and students teacher relationship and motivation.

## **3. Investigative Projects**

A system of observation also sets the groundwork for investigative projects, which can provide student teachers with the methodology for understanding their own teaching processes and behaviors. One aim of investigative projects is to provide the opportunity for student teachers to gain a new awareness of the interaction that goes on in their classrooms as well as to consider how they would approach a lesson differently.

For example, a student teacher who asks 'How productive are group problem-solving activities in the target language?' may discover that students solicit much information from each other in the target language related to the problem-solving activity she may also find that students in her class get into the task more quickly when she writes instructions down on the blackboard.

## **4. Discussion**

Discussion about teaching is another activity for teacher preparation. It can be important because it provides opportunities for student teachers to discuss not only their teaching, but also their observations, investigations, and other experiences. Through this process, they have the chance to relate their experiences to those of others, to gain awareness of possible teaching behaviors and to consider their own teaching decisions. To provide content for discussion, student teachers can be asked to supply their findings from classroom observations and investigations as well as share video- and audio tapes of their teaching, transcripts of short scenes from these tapes, and lesson plans. If discussion centers on a description of teaching rather than on judgments, it can be quite productive, often allowing student teachers to enter into a problem solving process in which they share ideas about how

to solve a problem and work together in a decision-making process. There will be acceptance of the principle that all people can learn under the right conditions. An implication is that “if a program does not achieve the intended goals, then it is redesigned until it does. There are no learner failures, only program failures” (Fantini, 1986; p. 105).

### *B. In-service training*

In-service or continuing education for language teachers might include training modules focused on the use of new techniques, materials or equipment, or on the upgrading of individual classroom skills or areas of knowledge. In some cases, in-service workshops might be intended not only to upgrade and expand teaching capabilities but also to reorient teachers to cope with changing conditions in the field or in the society at large which might affect the priorities and objectives of the school or might require changes in the language program (Ferguson & Donno, 2001).

## **1. Teaching and learning**

One of the most invigorating things about teaching is that you never stop learning. The complexity of the dynamic triangular interplay between the teacher, the learner and the subject matter continually gives birth to an endless number of questions to answer, problems to solve, and issues to ponder. Every time you walk into a classroom to teach, you face some of those issues, from which you can learn something. You find out how well a technique works, how a student processes language, how classroom interaction can be improved, how emotions enter into learning, or how your teaching style affects learners. The discoveries go on and on – for a lifetime.

## **2. Classroom Observation**

One of the most neglected areas of professional growth among teachers is the classroom observations. Teachers should understand that seeing one's actions through another's eyes is an indispensable tool for classroom research as well as a potentially enlightening experience for both the observer and the observe. It has been said that observation is also a learning process.

## **3. Classroom Research**

The other area of professional growth among teachers is classroom research. You are researching ideas all the time, whether you know it or not. If, as a growing teacher, you have as a goal to improve the quality of your teaching, then you will ask some relevant questions, hypothesize some possible answers or solutions, put the solutions to a practical tryout in the classroom, look for certain results, and weigh those results in some manner to determine whether your hypothesized answer holds up.

#### **4. Collaboration**

The process of continuing to develop your professional expertise as a teacher is sometimes difficult to manage alone. The challenges of teaching in a rapidly changing profession almost necessitate collaboration with other teachers in order to stay on the cutting edge. Collaboration can take the form of gatherings of teachers at a number of different levels. When teachers get together, they want to cover a number of possible Issues: student behavior, teaching tips, curricular issues, and even difficulties tips, curricular issues, and even difficulties with administrative bureaucracy. When teachers talk together there is almost always a sense of solidarity and purpose, and ultimately a morale boost (Brown, 2001).

### **III. CONCLUSION**

#### *A. Pre-service Training*

The purpose of pre-service programs is moving the student teachers toward, or in relation to, a view of the whole of language teaching, that is to help the student teachers do a better job in future. Teaching can be seen as mediating between language and the learner within the formal context of the classroom. There are theories of language and theories of learning, but a theory of teaching can be drawn only from classroom experience, or at least can be informed only by that experience (Richards & Nanan, 1990).

Teacher education programs at universities have come under growing criticism in recent years. It is argued that they often fail to provide the relevant knowledge base that would enable student teachers to cope with the complex demands of the school setting and, more importantly, to become part of the social change process. The lack of learning-to-teach studies, particularly in foreign language teacher education, has undoubtedly aggravated the potential for failure. Learning-to-teach studies have discovered that the reason why subject knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge do not become part of student teachers' personal practical knowledge is mainly because they lack the credibility provided by practical experience. Learning-to-teach studies that investigate the development of teacher's beliefs generally claim that there is a lack of knowledge about students. As a result, there is a potential mismatch between teachers' implicit assumptions about students and the realities of their own student's abilities and interests.

Teachers often fail to appreciate the potential of their students' contributions to classroom discourse, and are uncertain how to respond to unexpected students' contributions, because they lack a repertoire of instructional routines to help them do so. Rather, they tend to perceive continued student initiations as off-task behavior and a threat to instructional management. Therefore, one of the many challenges for future teacher preparation programs is to enable per-service of English foreign language student teachers to encourage and incorporate student initiations into their instructional activities without perceiving such initiations as a threat to instructional management (Potter, 2002).

### *B. In-service Training*

If teacher preparation aims to perpetuate second language teaching as a profession, then training in the narrowest sense will not be adequate, and some broader educational goals must be recognized. Part of this education involves theory, so that the teacher will have a basis for thoroughly analyzing and evaluating the practical aspects of methods, materials, and curricula. The effectiveness of both the purely educational and the practical training aspects of the teacher preparation program can be increased by not maintaining the strict separation of these two components that is typical in most programs.

Arends (1989) states that for the lifelong professional, an important goal is flexibility in the teaching approach. This is partly a matter of attitude, and understanding that no one teaching approach is appropriate for every situation. It is also a matter of education and training, so that the teacher develops a wide ranging repertoire of knowledge and skills that can be called upon to meet the demands of a given student population or classroom situation. For long-term professional development, education can provide the confidence and the knowledge to continue to grow, while a practicum or pre-practicum course can, for example, provide experience in accepting feedback and implementing suggestions offered as feedback by another professional – a colleague or supervisor. Practical training provides the background for helping the teacher to understand what type of feedback is appropriate in different situations; training can teach the candidate how to give that feedback, both to students and to colleagues, in a way that will be the most beneficial.

They must be able to learn all the time, as the knowledge required to do their work twists and turns with new challenges and the progress of science and technology. Teachers will not come to the school knowing all they have to know, but knowing how to figure out what they need to know, where to get it, and how to help others make meaning out of it. Teachers must think for themselves if they are to help others think for themselves, be able to act independently and collaborate with others, and render critical judgment. They must be people whose knowledge is wide ranging and whose understanding runs deep. What this means is that becoming a teacher, like becoming anything else, is a process in which development progresses rather systematically through stages with a chance of growth remaining static unless appropriate experiences occur.

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