



MJAL 2:2 Special-Issue-February 2010

ISSN 0974-8741

ELT and the Teacher Responsibilities – the Realisation and the Response

Dr Krushna Chandra Mishra

ELT and the Teacher Responsibilities – the Realisation and the Response

Dr Krushna Chandra Mishra

Lecturer (S.G.) in English

GOVT.COLLEGE, BOMDILA

ARUNACHAL PRADESH

ELT in Indian situation is a matter that throws difficult challenges for the teacher of English. The multilingual set-up in this country requires a special orientation without which professional expertise is likely to remain a distant dream. The social and educational backwardness of large sections of a people living in poverty and misery leaves the scene complicated further. The learner background at all stages of education offers a problematic to understand the nature of which on one hand and to arrange for remedy of the same on the other acquire nightmarish proportions as a teacher with the real know of the nature of his job grapples with the world around him in a bid to making learning of English take place and that too to a reckonable degree. Further, literature-bound project that India follows religiously in a tradition of language-through-literature teaching works hard against the communicative ends of language teaching/learning. Patnaik (1991) evaluating the scene prevailing in India writes: ‘...the present day language planning and language education in India aim at progressively restricting the domain of use of English in this country. Language planners and planners of language education in India envisage that English must be ultimately used in this country as a library language. The government of India has taken the stand that for an indefinite period it must also be used as the associate official language is meant to perform in our country, in actual practice it would eventually function as the medium of communication among the various states of India, especially among the non-Hindi states. That is bound to happen; one can see that the two extremely important aims of language planning in our country to-day are (a) the enrichment of Hindi so that it can prove adequate to fulfil the task of functioning as the sole official language of the country, and (b) the rapid development of the regional languages so that these can be used in as many domains as possible. Consequently what



MJAL 2:2 Special-Issue-February 2010

ISSN 0974-8741

ELT and the Teacher Responsibilities – the Realisation and the Response

Dr Krushna Chandra Mishra

seems certain to happen is that except for a very small section of the people, Indians would tend to use English only in a very few situations in day to day life. This must be reflected in the programme of English language teaching in this country....” Further, Patnaik (Ibid) holds: ‘...The teacher of English in India is in a state of indecision on the issue of the variety of English which should acquire the status of the educational model.xxx The decision to advise the learner against the use of colloquial forms can be justified on the ground that since English in India is to be used in mostly formal and semi-formal situations, the General English courses intended to teach language to all learners must be designed in such a way as to teach formal and semi-formal styles.....” Gambhir (1991) holds: “...The most important thing for second language learners is to be able to acquire or assimilate rules as to what different structures may mean in different social situations in a given language....”, and again: “...The format of the classroom and teaching materials has to be as far as possible, close to natural socio-linguistic situations that a person is likely to encounter in the target society. The classroom should be less of a formal academic centre where the teacher is explaining how a language works and students are taking notes; or, a teacher is making students drill key structures of a language. A language class-room should emphasize activities which take place in real life communication rather than pattern rehearsal.....”

In continuation of the above, it is worthwhile to note that in the wake of the communicative teaching strategies, the teacher of English has to take note of how production skills have assumed the highest significance now. Gumperz (1982) and Green (1989) have laid emphasis on ‘pronunciation, grammar and discourse patterns’ and Tam (1997) has stressed the importance of ‘repetition’ in oral productions. Wilkins (1977) has underlined the role of ‘grammar’ and ‘vocabulary’ without which meaningful communication is impossible. Talagaki (1997) has suggested to make use of the promises held forth by ‘brain-storming, skits and interviews’ for communicative purposes. Rivers and Temperley (1978) have seen the usefulness of writing and speaking integration for reinforcement and mutual enrichment suggesting thereby also



MJAL 2:2 Special-Issue-February 2010

ISSN 0974-8741

ELT and the Teacher Responsibilities – the Realisation and the Response

Dr Krushna Chandra Mishra

the importance of the listening and reading skills in the communication-oriented success. Sheppard (1992) and Leiki (1992) recognize the value of ‘content feedback’ in writing alongside, ‘a limited amount of grammar, punctuation and spelling feedback’ for effective writing. Ellis (1994), Green (1993), Brustal (1975), Krashen (1981), Canale and Swain (1979) hold that ‘motivation’ is an important factor in student development programmes and in projects meant to ensure learning. Green (1993) emphasizes on the need for appropriate teacher work in terms of planning for sustaining motivation at the pre-teaching, while-teaching and post-teaching phases.

Green (1993) also draws attention to the fact that the teacher must recognize that in “large teacher-centred classes, students have little opportunity to deliver enough output to be judged fairly or receive constructive feedback to enhance feelings of security and success”. Indian class-rooms being especially ‘large teacher-centred’ ones, the need is to help/support the emotional state of the learners that is so vital to the language learning situations. Mishra and Mahapatra (2001) observe: “...the teacher’s task consists pre-eminently in strengthening the individual students’ resolution to progress on the basis of their successful learning experiences which the teacher necessarily critically most sensibly makes use of to stress the fact that confidence-level of the participating students is boosted and contribution-level later on in terms of involvement and dedicated hard work is remarkably upgraded on every subsequent teacher-student evaluation-based interaction. Here again, the teacher creates and fosters a non-threatening learning-ensuring atmosphere using his understanding of the students’ background – cultural, socio-economic and the like – which play important roles in determining learning success and the rate and pace of its consolidation.” Basturkmen (1994) requires ‘a more natural type of interaction in the class-room’ with a greater role for the students ‘in controlling the content and the flow of exchange’.

Against the above observations, it is quite reasonable to expect that the teacher understands his responsibility well and makes the Indian English second



language teaching class-room a desirably fruit-bearing one. The mission-mode approach, the inspired mind-set to do good to the learners and to the society as a whole is all that is necessary if the ESL teaching project has to be made into a success.

REFERENCES:

- Basturkmen, H. 1994. Using Learners' Writing for Information-Gap Activities, in English Teaching Forum, Jan.1994. p.50.
- Bustall, C. 1975. Factors Affecting Foreign Language Learning: A Consideration of Some Current Research Findings. Language Teaching and Linguistics: Abstract.8,1.
- Canale and Swain. 1979. as discussed in K.C.Mishra and N.P.Mahapatra, Exploring Class-room Strategies in the wake of E/IT-ELT Interface (Paper jointly authored and presented at National Seminar held at CIEFL, Regional Centre, Shillong on 16 – 17 Nov. 2001.)
- Ellis, R. 1994. The Study of Second Language Acquisition. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gambhir, V. 1991. Language Teaching and Discourse, in O.N.Koul (Ed.) Language, Style and Discourse. New Delhi: Bahri Publications. 1991.
- Green, G. 1989. Pragmatics and natural language understanding. Hillsdale.N.J: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Green, Christopher F. 1993. Learner Drives in Second Language Acquisition. English Teaching Forum, Jan. 1993.
- Gumperz, J.(Ed.) 1982. Language and Social Identity. Cambridge University Press.
- Krashen, S.D. 1981. Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mishra, K.C. 1996. English Literature Teaching and the Question of Students'



MJAL 2:2 Special-Issue-February 2010

ISSN 0974-8741

ELT and the Teacher Responsibilities – the Realisation and the Response

Dr Krushna Chandra Mishra

Development. NEIFES Proceedings Vol.1996.

- 1999. English Studies in the North East India – Defining the Approaches. (UGC National Seminar Paper Presented at C.I. College, Bishnupur (Manipur) on 1-2 Dec., 1999).
- 2001. Towards Autonomy in the English Teaching Class-rooms in India (Paper presented in the Seminar held on 30.8.01 during the 13th U.G.C sponsored Refresher Course in English (11/8/01 to 31/8/01) at Dept. of English, Dibrugarh University.
- 2001. E/IT & ELT: A few possible considerations of Interface (Paper presented at the National Seminar held at C.I.E.F.L., Regional Centre, Shillong on 16 – 17 Nov., 2001.)

Mishra, K.C and Mahapatra, N.P., 2001 .Exploring Class-room Strategies in the wake of E/IT-ELT Interface (Paper jointly authored and presented at National Seminar held at CIEFL, Regional Centre, Shillong on 16 – 17Nov. 2001.)

Patnaik,B.N. 1991.Stylistics and the ELT programme in India, in O.N.Koul (ed) Language, Style and Discourse.. N.Delhi: Bahri Publications. 1991.

Widdowson,H.G.,1983. New starts and different kinds of failure. In I.Pringle and J.Yalden (ed.) Learning the First Language/Second Language. London; Longman.

Wilkins,D.A. 1977. Linguistics in Language Teaching. London: Edwin Arnold.