

CHAPTER 5
FACTORS AFFECTING IN
TEACHING-LEARNING
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5.1 Introduction:

English is a potent vehicle of communication which serves as a link language in a multicultural and multilingual society like India, and also serves as a global linguistic mediator. It is a symbol of learners' aspirations for quality in education and it plays a major role in the field of communication globally. An understanding of and a command over English language is the most important determinant of access to higher education, employment possibilities and social opportunities. The (un)fortunate historical accident in the form of India's encounter with the British brought English in our country, and its continued presence in our classroom eco-socio-political and cultural discourse for different reasons demands re-thinking of its role and its significations. English symbolizes in Indian minds, better education, better culture and higher intelligence and therefore acquiring adequate knowledge in English for learners is inevitable in the present scenario. The changing time has witnessed the growing importance of English language in all walks of life which can't be denied.

English has been caught in the ceaseless flux of Indian life at the present time. There are a lot of political incidents championing the opposition to the learning and use of English. Nevertheless, English is being studied /taught in a greater or smaller degree in schools, colleges and the universities all over the country. Because of rapidly increasing web of educational facilities, rural areas too, have been enjoying the facilities of the institutions. But the irony is that though English is widely studied, it has neither helped in raising the level of learners, nor made them learn English as a language for the communicative skill.

The students of mother tongue medium schools in India have to face many problems in English learning due to their adverse environment and unpleasant circumstances that they have to go through. In India, English is taught as the second language in educational institutions where the students find themselves unable to express in English. They have no idea of proper sentence structures, and do not know proper pronunciation, spellings and grammatical rules. In most of the situations, majority of students interact in mother tongue inside the classrooms. Grammar – Translation method is the predominant method of teaching English in most of the cases. Nowadays most of the institutions are with mixed ability students of different levels of attention, interest, learning styles, speed, maturity, types of intelligence which pose challenges to teachers. Teachers' aim is to reach all the students by monitoring them in a variety of ways to achieve effective teaching. Students of the mother tongue medium schools assume English as a subject and do not realize English as a language of communication used globally.

Teaching of English suffers from the general malaise that afflicts the educational system of India. It has been dawned upon the country's educational policy-makers that if English is at all learnt and taught then it should be learnt and taught well. This implies the learning and teaching of English in terms of the well-known four basic skills of language learning, viz., speaking listening, reading and writing. Listening and speaking are the two neglected skills in classrooms in India. English is spoken variously in different parts of the country, which has 18 officially recognized languages and nearly 1652 dialects, according to the 1991 census of India. In learning to speak English, the mother tongue generally interferes with its pronunciation. The learners as well as the teachers speak English with regional language habits. Since English is not a medium of instructions in schools and colleges in India, Indian students cannot practice and perfect their English pronunciation. Even during the English periods, most teachers teach English without giving the students proper practice in speech because they are not properly equipped enough to practice it. The result is that after learning /teaching English for many years at school and college, most people cannot speak the language with intelligible accuracy.

Listening is an important skill in language learning and yet it is most neglected in Indian class rooms. It is neglected because the teachers take it for granted that learners automatically acquired this skill without any special training. But they are unknown of the fact that it is an active process. Good listeners must possess good understanding of phonetics and rules of grammar. They must relate the patterns of intonation, weak forms of sounds and rhythm of connected speech.

The most important practical problem related to the teaching of English in India is the presence of large number of learners. All the learners don't come from the same socio-linguistic and socio-cultural backgrounds. Generally, teachers are reluctant to divide the class into groups or teams. Some care has to be taken over the allocation of students to groups to make things better. It is essential that the members of each group have to be naturally congenial. The teachers may find that they have to make a few changes before the groups are all happily settled. It is practically impossible in Indian class rooms that the groups are approximately equal in ability. There are many varieties of group and tutorial methods.

“Peer teaching”, “role play”, “group activities” are rare in Indian classrooms. In India, teachers speak and students simply play a passive role. The learners don't take part actively in the teaching learning process by asking questions and interacting with the teacher. Many lectures given by the teacher are ineffective due to problem of delivery, pace and production. To overcome this problem, the teachers must involve their students to work in pairs, groups and teams and prepare term papers, projects, etc. In the mother tongue medium schools, students are not generally encouraged to go for projects, seminars and conferences. Therefore, in spite of being taught English in school and college for several years, learners fail to learn the language: they cannot write in acceptable English of their own, cannot use English appropriately and fluently in speech and often cannot understand conversations in English.

The teaching of English in India has been text-oriented since the beginning (colonial times) because the British Government's policy was to create a class of Indians who would act as a buffer between the British and the Indians. Therefore, elementary knowledge of English was needed for a class of Indians. Objectives of

teaching and learning English have undergone a drastic change in the years after Independence. But English education in India is still text-oriented and the same continues even after sixty or seventy years of independence. But the bookish knowledge of English that is provided in the schools does not help the learners at all. The prescribed syllabus doesn't develop the communicative skill among the students as the literature part in the text is taught for the sake of aesthetic purpose only. The grammar included in the syllabus is also not taught for communication purpose but for the examination need of the students.

In the near-total absence of atmosphere for the natural and progressive flourish of English in India, we cannot conceive of a situation in which English would be used for verbal communication except big shopping centers in metro-cities, elite clubs and pubs, a few English medium schools and colleges and top level government offices. A handful of status conscious technocrats and bureaucrats speak English as a matter of prestige and pride. Therefore, the learners don't get enough scope for picking up English from society through social transmission. Sometimes, for some learners, use of English is limited to class room interactions only. Frequent changes of Govt. policies often result in frustration. These policies often add more complexities to the learners for learning English as a second language. The basic pattern of educational evaluations in India is "summative". Summative evaluation is designed to assess the total achievement of the learners during the end of a course. The learners go for "guessing questions" and "suggestion bank" theory. They cut short their syllabus accordingly and begin preparation only a few months before the examination. One test and that is at the end of the course may fail to judge the competence of the learners. The learners carry their anxiety to the examination hall because they know that the examination is "do or die" situation for them which is not a mark of progressive growth of education. On the country, "formative evaluation" i.e. the process of giving/taking regular feedback to both the teachers and learners is more reliable and valid which is not at all used in the schools of India.

Teachers always play the most significant role in the teaching of English in bilingual patterns of contemporary India. Decision makers should make things

flexible for the teacher. The success of teaching /learning depends on the performance (and the willingness to perform) of the teachers and the availability of teaching/learning climate. It should be free from politics and other issues of distraction. Teachers should be upgraded and trained to meet the changing needs of the learners. Teacher training institutions need to be a platform for exchange of ideas. Most of the states in India have adopted functional communicative approach to teach English at the secondary level. Interaction in English is the motif of this approach. There is a big gulf between the desired goal and the present practice in Indian classrooms. Only a creative mind, free from all prejudices can change things for a better tomorrow. Teaching English in Indian classroom situation is not an easy task where most of the circumstances instead of favoring the teaching –learning process, stand as a barrier making the whole process a tiresome one. Gokak’s remark in this regard is quite apt as he says, “Teaching of English in India is in chaotic state today”. English teaching in Assam and especially in mother tongue medium schools had to face lot of difficulties. This study examined the factors responsible for the poor quality of the teaching of English as a second language in mother tongue medium schools in Assam with special reference to the Manipuri medium schools of Silchar sub division of Assam.

To guide the study three research questions were posed. The questions examined the following three variables: (1) Frequency of the use of instructional media; (2) Frequency of the use of instructional techniques; and (3) The school learning environment.

A questionnaire was distributed to 130 students across the six Manipuri medium schools of Silchar. Results revealed that English language teachers do not frequently use modern instructional technologies and variety of teaching techniques in their English language lessons. It was also found that students learn under harsh environment, completely unfavorable for learning English.

5.2 The Problem behind Teaching-Learning Process of English in School Level:

Majority of the students who study in mother tongue medium schools do not have ample opportunity to study English Language except in the classroom. Though, the students are encouraged to learn the use of English, the content of these English courses are grossly inadequate for the students to acquire requisite skills in effective use of language for communication and for the give and take of social experience. In order to study English as a second language and be successful at it, the student must be helped by the teacher to acquire skills in the four language arts skills; namely: Speaking, reading, listening and writing.

The way English is taught in our schools today is to a great extent responsible for the deterioration of the standard of English in India. The problem of declining standards of English in India is to a great extent due to the aims of English Education in general and English Language Teaching in particular. The aims of English Education and Teaching are certainly very lofty and there are inadequate means to realize them. The policy makers have forgotten that English is not the Mother- Tongue of Indians. We must accept that the standard of its teaching has deteriorated vastly and that is why it is essential to know the problems of teaching English in India in the school level. With the poor performance of students in English language in Assam, educators, parents, employers are worried and it has become a matter of concern today. Therefore it is very necessary to find out the factors responsible for the poor performance of students learning English as a second language.

In this chapter the researcher has attempted to trace the factors that affect teaching and learning process of English in the Manipuri medium school in Silchar subdivision of Assam and suggested some remedies for them. The teaching of English in Manipuri medium schools have a many-sided problem which is similar to any other vernacular medium schools of the state in particular and India in general. Those factors and their remedies will find place in detail in the following lines of the study.

5.3 Factors Affecting in Teaching- Learning Process:

There are many factors that affect in teaching and learning of English as a second language which are common for all vernacular medium schools in India. However, the researcher has observed the following factors which are predominant to affect the Teaching-Learning Process in the Manipuri medium classroom:

5.3.1 Lack of Clear-cut Policy

Lack of clear cut policy is highly responsible for the poor standard of English in Indian classroom. The study group (Teaching of English in India (1967) states, “The state governments don’t have a fixed policy for teaching English. There have been too many changes and too often”

In Assam too there have been frequent changes in the policy of the government towards the teaching and learning of English. Though English is taught as a compulsory subject, only the pass mark is taken into consideration. Moreover the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA) has implemented the policy of ‘Education for all’ where all the students up to 8th standard have to be promoted to the next class even offering remedial class to the poor learners. Some learners are so dull that even after giving remedial classes they are not able to qualify. Some teachers instead of taking remedial classes promote all the students without considering their quality which imparts an evil tendency among the students not to bother for getting qualified which affects the quality of the student. As the percentage of low achievers has been ever increasing, the Government has decided not to consider good marks in English as essential for admission into a course of higher studies in government schools. If we are to aim at good standards in English, it is high time that the Government takes a strong decision to formulate and implement appropriate policies that promote students’ learning of English.

5.2.2 Lack of Exposure to the Language

The students of the Manipuri Medium schools suffer from the problem of lacking the exposure of English as they are exposed to their mother tongue in their family and surroundings and do not get adequate opportunities either to listen to or speak in English. They listen to English only in the classroom and that is only in the English class having duration of 45 minutes per day. The teaching of the other subjects is mostly done in their regional languages as the medium of instruction is the vernacular languages. Because of the poor social and economic backgrounds, they neither get enough exposure to English outside the classroom nor enough opportunities to improve themselves in speaking it. This naturally reduces their use of English and results in a poor competence in the language.

5.3.3 Non-availability of Suitable Teaching/Learning Material and Insufficient provision of audio-visual aids:

Teaching second language is a highly skilled job. With the progressive advancement of technology, traditional classrooms have been supplemented by the blessings of educational technology. Televised lectures, audiotapes, computers, programmed text and language laboratories are not dream now. These languages –teaching aids can be used in the classroom process. Only the continuous flow of lecture by the teacher in the classroom may prove to be monotonous for the learners. The learners may look for the something exciting and motivating. But, the fact is that most of the teachers do not take any help of these aids, even these teaching aids are not available everywhere in India especially in the rural areas. Learners in the schools of many remote villages (in India as well as Assam) still learn without a roof. Therefore, the age old fashion of black board and the chalk prove to be enduring, endearing and versatile in teaching of English in Indian classrooms.

Effective teaching specially depends on suitable teaching/learning material and sufficient provision of audio-visual aids. In Manipuri medium schools teachers are unable to teach English effectively due to the lacking of Teaching-Aids. Many teaching/ learning materials like — good textbooks, workbooks, and handbooks

for teachers, TV, radio, charts or other useful visual material — are essential for effective teaching. Unfortunately many teachers and students are not provided with these materials. Hence, sometimes the teaching and learning becomes more imaginative than practical. There is no audio-visual aid available in the school for the teachers to use it for effective teaching. Government is reluctant to provide these aids and the schools don't have enough funds that they can afford to buy those costly materials.

5.3.4 Dearth of competent Teachers:

Most of the English teachers of Manipuri medium schools of Assam are incompetent to realize the significance of English in the new global perspective and respond accordingly. They fail to revise their aims in the new setting and to teach English effectively within the limited period of time. Teachers have a lot of responsibility rest on their shoulders which has to be realized by them and it has to be done before it is too late. T.P.Reddi in his presidential Address said in October 1977, "We, the teachers of English, are keenly alive to the responsibility that rests on us. We have to see that English is taught at all levels and taught well and its standards are properly maintained".⁴ The teachers of English of Manipuri medium schools do not keep themselves abreast with the recent developments in the field of theories of learning and teaching, which stands as a barrier of teaching their students effectively.

Secondly, the problem of dearth of competent teachers arises due to the lack of teachers who are specialized in the method of Teaching English. Most of the teachers are not properly trained who lack the knowledge of methodology of teaching English and therefore students are not benefitted by them. Even the teachers, who are trained, received their training from the Indian teachers who lack native like proficiency. Even the materials and methodology used in these training programmes are outdated sharing the same limited experience over and over again. There is hardly any scope to improve intuitive and spontaneous knowledge of the language. Though there are institutes like CIEFL, RIEs and,

ELTCs to train teachers of English, they are hardly enough for the large demands of the Indian teacher population.

5.3.5 Defective Methods:

Though it is often said that good teachers are more important than good methods, but an efficient teacher can improve remarkably the quality of teaching by applying good methods and techniques of teachings. The methods and techniques used by the teachers of the Manipuri medium schools of Assam are faulty and out of date. The programme of teaching is carried out by inefficient methods in classroom. The learners as well as teachers do not realize the importance of English as a language of communication and they lack the confidence to speak in English. The main reason is that the students have been taught the language through grammar – translation method. This method makes them dependent on their mother-tongue. So, they need more practice for testing their proficiencies.

Some of the teachers are so conservative in their approach and they are not ready to learn new methods and techniques of Teaching English. Most often it is witnessed that they are teaching using only the lecture method and they are very much comfortable using it and they ignore the other methods of teaching. Teachers do not involve the students to take active part in teaching learning programme in the classroom. The oral work which is the soul of any method is totally neglected and given importance on writing from the very beginning which is an advanced skill to be learnt. Students are not given exposure to the use of language. Language is taught by the rules and learnt by rote memory. As a result, students fail to achieve any command over the use of language.

5.3.6 Lack of English library and laboratory:

Lack of library and English laboratory is one of the major problems in Manipuri medium schools of Silchar subdivision. The schools lack enough materials text books and reference books needed for English language teaching. The schools don't have enough stock of grammar books, books on spoken English etc.

Language laboratory is a distant dream for the teachers which the students have never even heard of.

5.3.7 Variation in English syllabus:

The syllabus of mother tongue medium schools is completely different from the English medium schools. The syllabus of English medium school is up to date according to the demand of the time compared to the mother tongue medium schools. The syllabus of the English medium schools is very systematic following the demand of the time and the students and they are arranged in chronological order which lacks in mother tongue medium schools.

5.3.8 Defective textbooks and curriculum:

The next important problem of teaching English in schools is defective textbooks. There is a mistaken idea that the standard of English is raised by the prescription of difficult books. Speed in reading can be achieved only through the provision of books which students can read with comprehension. Where books are beyond the ready comprehension of students, distaste for reading is created. This unwelcomed attitude is one of the obstacles which the teacher has to overcome. The syllabus provided by SEBA does not fully satisfy the present objectives of the teaching of English. Books are often prescribed which reflect English life and culture and are less understood and appreciated by students. Books containing common vocabulary and common themes would have been more useful. The purpose of any prose book is to enable the students to develop the stock of words and thus such words can be used in our daily lives are certainly more useful.

The syllabus and text book provided for the mother tongue medium schools are not attractive and suitable for the students. The syllabus lacks the communicative approach which is the prime need of it to make them useful for day to day life. Moreover, there is no close coordination of the syllabus from one class to another. The grammar taught in various classes doesn't follow any chronological order unlike the English medium schools.

5.3.9 Faulty Examination system:

One of the factors responsible for the deterioration is the pattern of question-setting. Generally, the methodology of teaching is fashioned on the type of evaluation, though it should not be so. Our examinations of English encourage the students for rote memory because many times the questions are based on summarizing either a poem or a narration. The language skills are not tested to any appreciable degree. Speech skills are totally neglected. Teachers also find it very difficult to motivate the students in the class because the students always aim at memorizing the notes from low-standard guides and reproducing them in the examination. The teacher also teaches only those aspects which are important for the examinations. Students, teachers are not given proper orientation and teachers are to be blamed for this. While learning English students are generally expected to be proficient in spoken English as well. But they are not able to possess this ability to develop the power of written and oral expression in the classroom situation. Though in the evaluation system some marks is reserved for internal tests i.e. spoken English, but in most of the Manipuri medium schools the test is not even taken and students are simply given the mark. Teachers evaluate their part of oral test even without caring the merit of the students. Though a lot of responsibility is thrown on the shoulders of the teachers to make their classes interesting and learning of English fruitful, many teachers do not even care to meet the demands of the situation and don't successfully perform their duties.

5.3.10 Defective evaluation procedure:

Since our evaluation system is based on examinations it can't measure the development of a pupil in English. Most of the students give prime importance not on learning or acquiring knowledge but on passing the examination and while doing so they take the help of cramming or indulge in copying or other unfair means.

5.3.11 Apathy of the government:

Though English is being introduced as a compulsory subject from class 1 to graduate level but it is noticed that no definite step has been taken by the government to impart quality education to the students of the government schools. Until the last few years thousands of vacancies were not filled lying in the primary, secondary and college level. Most of the teachers teaching English in higher classes in the schools did not have English as special subject. They are simple graduates having neither pre service nor in service training to help them acquire proper knowledge on the subject.

5.3.12 Use of Mother Tongue in the Classroom

Another significant factor affecting the teaching learning process is the attitude of teachers and students towards using mother tongue in ESL classrooms. The teachers are well aware of the disadvantages of the excessive use of mother tongue, but they ignore it saying that their use of mother tongue depended on their students' specific needs most of the time. They defend themselves saying that they have to use it with beginners and low achieving students to help them understand the new language. The researcher wants to shed the light on another problem as well encountered by Manipuri ESL learners, which is the use of the first language (L1), i.e., Manipuri, in ESL classrooms. It is noticed that many Manipuri learners switch to their first language (L1), i.e. Manipuri, in ESL classrooms as almost 75 % of the Manipuri students prefer to use L1 in ESL classrooms, especially when they could not express their ideas in second language (L2), i.e. English. Nation (2003) adds more reasons that justify learners' use of L1. Learners tend to apply L1 either because of their shyness, lack of proficiency, or being unmotivated to communicate in L2.

5.3.13 Little understanding of the aims of teaching English:

The primary aim of teaching English at this stage should be to concentrate on the fundamental skills of the language ability of the students namely listening,

speaking, reading and writing. It is of paramount importance that the teacher should know what his task is and what he is trying to achieve by teaching English. In the mother tongue medium schools, it is often observed that teachers do not have a specific plan of what to teach and when to teach and what they want to achieve by teaching it. Thus, they cover the whole course without reading its aims and objectives. They believe to go on with their job of teaching without knowing the difficulties of the learner. The teacher should be fully aware of the fact that his student's proficiency in English is not up to mark owing to the deteriorating standard of teaching in schools. Our objectives of teaching English should be practical and in keeping with the standard of proficiency achieved by our students.

We should emphasize on the main aims of teaching English is to develop the ability of students understand the language, ability to express themselves in short and simple speech, to read and understand books, journals and reference materials and to be able to express themselves in writing.

5.3.14 Shortage of time:

In the mother tongue medium schools, they have five to six classes per week for the teaching of English, but most of the time it is noticed that teachers rush for the syllabus completion rather than teaching the English language in true sense. They are in lack of time for doing other activities including different methods of teaching English like Role play, Play-way, Dramatization, etc. in the class. Most of the Teachers practice the Grammar Translation method, and out of 45 minutes of per lecture, half the time i.e. 25 minutes is wasted in translation and students gets just 20 minutes or less to listen to English Language. There may be a better understanding of the passage being studied this way, but the students, in fact, learn less English then they would have done if the teacher had taught the passage by techniques which use questions, illustrations and simple practice drills. The teacher also doesn't have time to carry out the interaction with the students in English.

5.3.15 Unsatisfactory supervision:

The next problem is due to the unsatisfactory supervision by the teachers. The teachers in most of the schools are least bothered about the students. They only guide the clever students, who are always very active in the class, and for others they develop a negative attitude. Most of the teachers fail to supervise the student's homework or their potentials. The teacher should try to help the students who are weak and should try to sort out their learning disabilities by supervising them from time to time.

5.3.16 Problem of mix ability classroom

A classroom is always filled with students of different abilities, interests, and needs and giving individual interests to each of the students is not always possible. In Mixed ability level classroom, the teacher has to follow different strategies of teaching to every learner, who have different potentialities, skills, interests and learning needs. It is well known that every student has a different way of learning, and learns and progresses at different speeds. As most institutions are usually multi-ability level, teachers find teaching such classes a very difficult and demanding task as it involves planning lessons which include a rich diversity of tasks corresponding to a variety of learning styles and abilities. The classroom is the only environment for the learners, where they should use this chance as much as possible. However, some of the students find it difficult to speak in the target language for many reasons, ranging from interest to confidence, from age to knowledge. Other students, however, would like to express everything they think or feel by using the new language i.e. English. As a result, some students may take an active part, while others do not speak for the entire lesson.

Teachers need to identify the problems of mixed ability classes and try to come out with the solutions of eliminating them. There are several strategies that a teacher can use to deal with the situation.

Students work with different pace – those who are more advanced cope quickly with the tasks or get impatient when the teacher has to repeat an

explanation, while students who have a lower level of knowledge and skills complete tasks more slowly. Active learners finish the tasks given quickly whereas the weaker one cannot complete in time and may lose their confidences. Consequently, mixed abilities may result in classroom management problems. Every learner has individual interests and needs which form their attitude to the subject matter. It is not possible for the teacher to know each student's level of interests and needs. Some of the learners have difficulties speaking the target language for various reasons, while other learners are willing to express their thoughts and ideas in the target language. As a result some students participate actively in the lesson and others do not. Thus extrovert learners tend to occupy the teachers attention while shy learners are suppressed. Most language text books are designed for an ideal homogeneous class and students react in a different way to them due to their individual differences and preferred learning styles. Thus a teacher faces difficulties finding appropriate teaching materials and resources that fit the needs, individual language level and interest of all students. The tasks included in the lesson should correspond to the language level, and abilities of learners. But slow learners can't participate because the tasks are too difficult for them.

In order to give all students the chance to benefit from their lessons, it is vital to take into account their differences and plan lessons or activities within the lesson accordingly. To be able to do that future teacher of English need to know what are the possible problems and solutions of working with multi-level classes.

5.3.17 Inability of the Teacher to solve the Students Problems

The teachers of English also face difficulties to solve the problems of students. They had to teach fundamental elements of language and the conceptual idea of the prescribed texts. The conceptual idea of the texts often has nothing to do with the real life and therefore have no influence in the life of students. Students are not interested to understand and go to the depth of them and try to study them only for the examination purpose. Therefore, they reflect more on the notebooks which are published by different inefficient writers.

5.3.18 Socio-psychological problems:

The next problem is due to the Socio- Psychological Problems, which influences the teaching of English in their own respective Ways:

1. Lack of Motivation:

In learning a second or a foreign language, motivation is the crucial force which determines whether the learner embarks on a task at all, how much energy he devotes to it, and how long he perseveres. It is known as a complex phenomenon and includes many components, such as, the individual's drive, need for achievement and success, curiosity, desire for stimulation and new experience, and so on. As students do not find any immediate need for English, their interest naturally slackens. Similarly, as there is no immediate reward for their achievement, the interest decreases. The poverty and the insecure sociological conditions also force them to neglect the language. In addition, learning a foreign language is not an easy task and the much needed exposure and practice are not available to achieve fluency in the use of the language.

2. Lack of Communicative Need:

The primary motive for learning a language is that it provides a means of communication. A person is, therefore, most likely to be drawn towards learning a second language if he perceives a clear communicative need for it. The extent of this communicative need depends upon the nature of the social community in which the person lives. The Manipuri learners do not feel any practical need to learn the language as knowing their mother tongue alone can serve their communicative purpose within the social community they live in.

5.3.19 Inability of the Teacher to understand the difference between the teaching of literature and the teaching of language skills:

One of the reasons for the declining standards of teaching English is the inability of teachers to understand the difference between the teaching of literature and the teaching of language skills.

Everybody knows that the study of a language is not an end in itself, it is a means to develop one's power of expression and comprehension can be achieved by mastering stylistic elements of the language. According to A.K.Sharma: "English language teaching in India, you will agree with me, has suffered a lot – so much that our students who pass intermediate or degree examinations with English either as a compulsory or as an elective subject, can neither speak nor write correct English. May be, because the emphasis in our schools and colleges has always been on the conceptual content and the stylistic content has been neglected so far".

5.3.20 Laid back attitude of both the teacher and the student:

The next problem is due to the laid back attitude of both the teacher and the student. The teacher in most of the schools are so lazy that they neither come to the class well prepared with all the relevant knowledge so that they can give enough information to the students related to the text. They usually carry only the text book to the class and try to read and explain it. The students are lazy too, so they try to get the easiest way out to get through the examinations by collecting and referring to the notes easily available in the book depot. It's observed that the students hardly visit a library for referring books.

5.3.21 Problem of correlation of English with other subjects and life:

Most of the teachers are unable to correlate the English language with other subjects like History, Geography, etc. The teachers face the problem of correlation as they are very confused to correlate the unit neither with their lives nor with the other subjects. Because of this the students too face difficulties in comprehending the text.

5.3.22 Teacher's and student's Regional Dialect affecting proper pronunciation:

This is a very crucial problem with most of the teachers teaching English. When the teachers try to speak English, they carry their own regional dialects into English. They have difficulty in pronunciations and are not cautious about the stress and intonation of their own speech. They teach incorrect phonetic transcriptions, pronunciations, stress and intonations to the students. In the Silchar subdivision of Assam the regional dialect is Bengali which has its influence on the teachers and students of Manipuri medium schools as it is the lingua franca of the region and the teachers and students of Manipuri medium also have to learn the language to communicate with the people of other communities. Bengali which again has a different phonemic structure influences the Manipuri speakers of the region.

5.3.23 Mother-tongue interference:

Most of the problem of speaking and learning English arises due to the interference of mother-tongue. Both the teachers and the students of Manipuri medium are very fluent in speaking their own mother-tongue. But they forget the essence of pure language. They forget that the every language differs in stress, intonation and pronunciation. The Manipuri teachers and students, whose mother-tongue is Manipuri, pronounce the English words with inaccurate pronunciation, stress and intonation present in their mother tongue. Similarly when they speak English words in the midst of a sentence of their mother tongue or when they speak English sentences they speak in their own way of stress, intonation and pronunciation.

5.3.24 Problem of concretizing the abstract idea:

The Teachers faces a serious problem of concretizing the abstractness of the novel, poem, passage, words, etc. They face difficulty in creating live pictures in the eyes of the students. The Teachers sometimes mix up the ideas and create

jumbled pictures in their student's eyes. They have insufficient audio-visual aids for teaching English. So they sometimes get scared with such problems and try to skip those ideas and look forward to their syllabus completion. The students find it difficult to understand the abstract idea and so they are unable to comprehend the lectures given by their teachers in English.

5.3.25 Teacher's failure in arousing emotions in students:

Most of the teachers fail in arousing the same emotions in the minds of their students as expressed in the text. They are unable to arouse the same feeling of sadness or delight in the hearts of the students so that they get moved by the poem or prose piece and feel the eagerness to share their own experiences. But this type of experience is rare in classroom teaching in the Manipuri medium schools. In fact the teacher is always in a hurry to complete the portion and feels that it is waste of time to arouse emotions and interact with the students.

5.4 Remedies for the Problems of Teaching English in Manipuri medium school:

To solve the above mentioned problems, a systematic approach of teaching English should be followed. The teachers should also aim teaching primarily not knowledge but skill. On the basis of field observation, therefore, the researcher has identified the strategies for the improvement of teaching English in ESL classroom.

5.4.1 The Policy regarding the Place of English should be well-defined:

English offers vast opportunities in all the fields of learning. The policy regarding the place of English in our education system should be well defined. This should be determined keeping in view its use and vast opportunities in the field of science, technology, social sciences, philosophy, area studies, journalism, international trade and diplomacy.

5.4.2 Utilizing the different methods of teaching learning process:

The teacher while teaching English should use the different methods of teaching English to the students. The different methods will make the teacher's teaching and the learning of the students effective. Language education usually takes place at a language school. There are many methods of teaching languages. Teacher should try to experiment and find out which method is most effective for the student in that particular environment. Some of the methods of teaching English are as follows:

1. The grammar translation method.
2. The direct method.
3. The series method.
4. Variation of direct method.
5. The oral approach/Situational language teaching.
6. Audio-lingual method
7. Communicative language teaching.
8. Language immersion. Minimalist/methodist.
9. Directed practice.
10. Learning by teaching.

5.4.3 Building a rapport with the class:

When the teacher enters the class, it is very important to create a bond with the student. A welcoming smile to the students and a greeting may serve the purpose. When a bond is built between the student and the teacher, they will find learning the language easier. It may also help the students to interact in the class and they will feel free to express their views to the teacher.

5.4.4 Building confidence for the language in the students:

At the first meeting itself, the teacher should train the students to ask some simple English questions, and give their answers. Many teachers of English as a second language make the mistake of beginning with the alphabet. But when students are trained to ask questions, students' interest in the language is built.

Then they come forward with confidence and higher hopes of learning. They have the feeling in their minds that 'learning English is fun' and it inspire the students to learn new things every day. Starting out with the alphabet cannot achieve this. In the same manner, if the teacher emphasizes more on the language learning skills than the portion completion, learning English would be more fruitful at the school level.

5.4.5 The teacher should keep in mind the aims of teaching English:

The teacher should always emphasize on the aims of teaching English. It will help one to teach effectively. These aims are:

1. To enable the students to understand English when spoken,
2. To enable him to speak English,
3. To enable him to read English,
4. To enable him to write English.

The teacher must know the standard of attainment to be reached in each class.

5.4.6 Improvement in the teaching facilities:

Special efforts should be made to ensure that teachers get proper teaching facilities, including space, books, and teaching aids. The school libraries should subscribe good journals, newspapers etc which may enable the teachers to know the latest developments in the field of English Language Teaching.

5.4.7 Government should play active role:

Government should play an active role in the development of English language teaching in the country. Research in the field of methodology, materials production, textbook writing and original research in English should be liberally financed.

5.4.8 Starting a thought process in the students' minds:

It should be made a very firm rule, that there will be no other language spoken in the class other than English. This will be very difficult at first, especially in a mother tongue medium school where the students are more inclined to their

mother tongue and believe in translating new English words into their own language to learn them. This tendency should never be encouraged in the classroom. Rather the students should be encouraged to try their best to speak English. Teachers should be gentle with them when they speak English. Teachers should exhort them to think in English. This is a mammoth task, and can be achieved only after some weeks, or probably months, of teaching. But the teacher should not be disheartened and keep on continue the process.

5.4.9 Competent teachers should be appointed:

Special efforts should be made to ensure that teachers of English themselves possess a good command of English. A competent teacher only can make the classroom teaching more effective. He can enliven his students and create interest among them to learn new things. Therefore only the competent teachers should be appointed, and they should always update their knowledge from time to time.

5.4.10 Eradicating the Socio-Psychological problems:

The efforts of the teacher should be in eradicating the Socio-Psychological problems of the students, by motivating them and giving them some responsibility. The teacher should increase the interaction session between him and his students, which will overcome the lack of motivation and communicative needs in the students.

5.4.11 Building basic communication skills in the students:

Teachers before teaching his students the sentences given in the book, must develop a basic communication skill with his students. He should always speak with them and converse with the students about day-to-day things and activities in simple English. He should continue doing it until the initial icebreakers are done with. While trying to talk, they will learn to express themselves. As long as the student attempts to talk in English, teachers should have patience and make it a point to listen.

5.4.12 Internal tests should be made compulsory:

As most of the schools in Assam, the government rule pattern of conducting English classes is followed. The schools have 6 lectures for English per week and it consists of theory lectures and one spoken English class. Certain internal mark is reserved for the spoken English class, but still many students feel it is waste of time and they remain absent. These classes should be made compulsory to every student, if the student fails to be present in the spoken English class, then he should not be given the internal marks and should not be allowed to appear for the final exams.

5.4.13 Removing barriers to Language communication:

The teacher should try their level best to remove the language barriers which comprises of difference in languages, culture, and behaviour. The teachers should avoid the use of jargons and regional dialects during the delivery of lectures in English.

5.4.14 Handling Mistakes with care:

The mistakes made by the students in the class, have to be handled deftly by the teacher. The students should not be made feel too embarrassed to make any further attempts in speaking the language. Students should feel that the teacher is kind to them, and might always think if they commit some errors; the teacher is always there to correct them. Students should also be inspired to point out the mistakes of each other and correct it among themselves. When this happens, approach of correcting the mistakes will be easier.

5.4.15 Strict supervision:

The school authorities should see that the teacher is well conversant with good methods of teaching. The examination pattern of the school should be improved. Necessary Audio-Visual aids should be made available to the schools.

5.4.16 Carrying on the process:

The teachers should be patient while teaching. He should remember that his students are not native English speakers – they will not be able to even ask him their doubts. So he must be patient with them and encourage them to express themselves. Only his perseverance will help them do it. Teaching English as a second language is really fun if a teacher can do it in the right sporting way. He has to make it fun for the students too – that's the way they will learn better. If a teacher can make the classroom an interesting one, then alone he can remove these problems and teach students effectively for better results.

5.4.17 Handling properly the mixed ability classrooms

- 1) The teacher should adapt some of the materials to make the language simple. He should design own teaching materials. He should use visual teaching materials to grab the students' attention and to motivate them to get interest in the subject.
- 2) Teacher should give a different level of tasks to the slow learners. He should reduce the number of choices or should not give the more difficult choices in multiple level exercises. He should include open-ended tasks which help learners work at their own pace. He can form groups of weaker and stronger students separated from each other and give different tasks to these groups. Stronger and quicker students must be engaged with more complicated tasks, whereas the weaker students should be given a simpler task or they should be allowed to work with the teacher as a group member.
- 3) Teacher should try to know the learners, their language level and interests. He should try to find every single student's strength by offering a variety of activities.
- 4) He should try to find the strengths and preferred learning style of everyone. He should also involve and encourage the shy learners. Extra work should be given that the students would enjoy doing on their favorite topic. They would be more enthusiastic to work on such projects.
- 5) Teacher should help students; learn to respect diversity in terms of skills and abilities. He should prepare additional activities for the active learners.

5.4.18 Incorporating technology

The internet makes it possible for students to view videos of activities, events and places around the world. Viewing these activities can help English language learners to develop an understanding of new concepts while at the same time building topic related to the background knowledge.

5.4.19 Experiential learning

Teacher can provide opportunities for English language learners to acquire vocabulary and build knowledge through hands-on learning. He can also help connecting learning to prior knowledge. In order to make learning more meaningful, teacher should connect a new topic to an experience or event from the learners' background. This can support the learner in making connections between vocabulary in their first language and English.

Conclusion:

A close study of the above mentioned factors make the point clear that effective teaching needs lot of effort on the part of the students, teachers, parents and above all government. Negligence from any one of them can ruin the whole prospect which is really unwelcomed. To make the whole process a successful one it is very necessary for each of us to take active part in it. To eradicate the problems the educationists too need to plan the whole programme in a systematic way.