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## Guidelines for Teachers to Conduct ELT Classes in Karnataka

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### Abstract

English language in India is no longer just spoken by elite in the cities, but is used extensively by the masses for educational, business and various other purposes. This has resulted in an extensive public demand for a more rigorous introduction of the teaching of English language within the school education system. As a result, many state Governments like the governments of Karnataka, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Assam have introduced English at the lower primary schools. The Government of Karnataka favoured an early introduction of English language in schools under the pressure from the public, political parties, parents and other stakeholders. It initiated a policy in October-November 2006, announcing the introduction of English from the academic year 2007-08 from classes I to IV at the same time. A six-month period was made available to make adequate preparations. After collecting the opinions of majority of the teachers in two years, the State Government revised the first and the second standard resource books in the year 2009-10. Some intellectuals stood in favour of implementation because of many reasons. We can see six kinds of arguments in favour of implementation of the policy of teaching English from first standard.

**Keywords:** ELT, Resource Books, Activity Books, Story, Rhyme, TPR Activities

Each Resource Book contains 25 stories, 30 rhymes and songs which children listen to and have to repeat, 50 pieces of contextualized dialogues, 20-25 games to play and learn the language and about 20 total physical response activities are given. In the resource book, they instructed the teacher community on how to deal with the text and teach English language. Some of the instructions are given below:

### 1. Understanding the learners

All learners have acquired some knowledge of English words used in their surroundings. They can understand the language you speak with your gestures, facial expression and support of pictures etc. If they are active in the classroom, they are participating in the learning process. They are not shy. They have no inhibitions. They can create language. They keep making mistakes. That is sure way to learn.

### 2. Understanding the text

The Resource Book has all content listed above in different forms. The teacher has to use those contents in the classroom as per the guidelines given.

### 3. Time

The teacher has 5 periods per week to teach English and they are reflected in the time-table.

#### 4. Packages for learners

The teacher has different activities books for each class. “My Book of Pictures” for Class I, “Fun with English” for class II, “A B C of English” for Class III and “English Around Us” for Class IV with lots of pictures and activities for learners.

#### 5. Use of Activity Books: By Teachers

The learners are given the Activity Books to help them learn the target language. Pictures are given for each story that the teacher narrates. The pictures describe the events/episodes in the story. The pictures are followed by the activities. There are activities for colouring/sketching/sequencing/writing pictures etc. Learners complete those activities as per the instructions of the teacher. The activities are related to the story narrated. So, it is advised that the activities are taken up after narrating the story.

#### 6. Use of Activity Books- By Learners

Learners need not see the pictures given in their activity book during the first narration. The teacher may be using TLM and gestures. Let them try to understand what the story is about. While narrating the story for the second time, the teacher may ask the learners to open the relevant pages and see the pictures.

#### 7. Use of the Resource Book

It is not to be used as a text book. Do not read out stories in the class. Instructions have been given in the beginning of each story. By reading the instructions, the teacher has to plan accordingly. It is not necessary that the teacher narrates stories in a linear order.

#### 8. Methods of conducting class

- The teacher has to conduct the following four activities compulsorily everyday:
  - Narrating stories -15 minutes
  - Rhymes -10 minutes
  - Dialogue practice -10 minutes
  - TPR activities -05 minutes.
- Language games can be conducted once in a week, or when the teacher gets time after completing the 3 compulsory activities. May be, the teacher leave out dialogue practice or TPR activities on that day.
- The teachers can repeat some activities/stories/rhymes if the learners like them and enjoy participating in them and learn well through such activities
- After completing 25 stories, the teachers can repeat some of them and narrate the other stories they know

#### 9. Planning the class

- After reading the text, the teacher has to select the stories, rhymes and dialogues he/she would like to use in the class. Do not read them out in the class
- The teachers can use the same text again if children prefer it
- The teachers have been trained in reorganizing stories for narration. They are advised to use those technique suggested there

- 10 teleconferences have been conducted to provide the teachers support in organizing learning activities. They are suggested to refer to the tele-modules supplied to them for more information.

### **10. Evaluation of the learning**

There is no need to test the learners. Let the learner absorb the language. Create opportunities to use language. Do not force them to learn by heart and repeat. Help them construct knowledge. The effort is only to provide a good exposure to English. It is not introduced as an examination subject in classes 1 to 4. By observing the learners, the teachers know how they are picking up the language. There is no need to conduct formal tests. The teachers are advised not to correct the learners if they make mistakes but repeat the correct version when they make mistakes. Allow them the freedom to use the new language without bothering about accuracy. Whenever the teacher speaks, show the learners the right way to speak.

### **11. Other materials which can be used in the classroom**

Apart from the Resource and Activity books, a lot of resources are available to the teacher in the school and in the town/village where his/her school is situated. They are told to use more local resources. The tele-modules given to them also speak about different resources. It is necessary for the teacher to bring in more materials to the classrooms as the learner grows more and more in learning aspects. A list of resources is given for the teacher to enhance his/her skills.

- Tele-modules of 2007-08
- Teacher's Handbooks prepared for the 3 days Spoken English Course conducted in 2008-09
- Children's Supplement in English News papers
- Other reading resources-RIESI Publication
- Websites/Internet
- Books, charts, flashcards etc., (DSERT, 2009: 09-12).

Thus, the policy makers enlightened the teachers with their objectives, curriculum and design of the resource books along with instruction to the teachers in the beginning part of the books. They had also given the information to the teachers how to handle the class with the description of five segments of teaching English such as narration of stories, reciting the rhymes, dialogue practice, language games and total physical response and why they elected those segments.

### **Trainings**

After the preparation of resource and activity books, then the government gave the responsibility of training teachers to the Regional Institute of English, South India (As per DSERT order S.S.A/PST/English training (07-08) 2006-07, dated 1.3.2007). It instructed the above institution to conduct the training during the summer vacation of 2007-08 i.e., from April-07 and May-07. According to its plan 1,12,250 teachers had to receive the training. In the first phase 10 days training was given to the BEO's and High school teachers and appointed them as Master Resource Persons. In the second phase, they were given the responsibility to train up the teachers of primary or secondary school teachers at the district level in DIET and CTE centers and

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appointed them as Resource Persons. In the third phase, those RP's gave 5 and 3 days *Face to Face* training to the teachers in taluk centers. In the fourth phase, RIESI and DSERT conducted 5 Tele-Conferences for the teachers. These were held every month at DIET and BRCs from the month of August 2007 onwards. There the teachers were allowed to interact with the experts and allowed to ask questions relating to the English language teaching and their problems while teaching the language.

Thus, the government made all preparations in order to implement the plan successfully. It tried to provide the trainings for all the teachers before beginning of the 2007-08 academic year, that is in the month of April and May 2007.

### **Conclusion**

With regard to context and debate around implementation of the policy of teaching English language teaching from the first standard in non-English medium schools in Karnataka, we can see the arguments against the implementation as well as in favour of it. In this scenario, the participation of educationists and psychologists in the discussion was very less. But, litterateurs and intellectuals of the state participated in a major way. The arguments were not limited just to teaching of English from the first standard but also spilled over to the debate on medium of Instruction. There is a lot of difference between learning English as language and adopting it as medium of instruction. When the caste issue came to the fore the Dalit and Backward Class opinions were mobilized to such an extent that it clinched the issue in favour of implementing the teaching of English from standard one. There were also instances of opinions being changed over time by some individual writers, as the question of "denying the opportunities" to Dalits and Backward classes emerged strongly. Thus, the question of learning English language in schools was also a question of political and social justice.

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