



English-Phobia: Causes and Remedies

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the causes and remedies of poor English teaching and learning in primary and post-primary schools and recommends measures to overcome them. Among the root causes of English phobia in schools are the imbalanced skills, poor examination system, lack of effective teaching aids, shortage of qualified English teachers, lack of adequate in-service teaching programmes, lack of proper incentives for English teachers and an inherent fear of mathematics. The study revealed that English-phobia exists among students, which is characterized by hesitation or shyness, feverish feelings in English class and difficulty of expression. Highlighted causes include poor student-teacher relationship, non conducive environment for English class among others. Genuine efforts should be made by all stakeholders in solving the problem to improve student's achievement English.

Keywords: Causes, Remedies English, English-phobia, students

INTRODUCTION

Despite the importance of English language in our society, it still suffers a great set-back in all of our institutions of learning. The secondary education is not left out of this educational/ language trauma.

It has been discovered that most complaints by students and teachers of English language is the alarming rate at which the class-size increases. The truth of the matter is that the first curriculum priority is language. Therefore English language as far as India is concerned provides the connecting tissue by which all other subjects are pursued. According to Hewitt and Stephenson (2012) teachers and researchers are well known for many years that

language learning process, no doubt, is very disturbing experience for many students. Examiners in general have been involved in exploring, recounting and sufficiently measuring debilitating factors in foreign languages. Gregerse and Horwitz, (2002) attribute that constant disturbance or nervousness has hostile affects on language acquisition. So there is need to tackle the problems related to oral competency. Young (1991) found that peers experience supreme fear in speaking the target language before, others in comparison of writing and reading proposes that to handle with language problems first there is need to recognize the speaking anxieties, negative evaluation and other factors which generate foreign language learning anxieties.

The fear of English

English is one of the major subjects in the school education which is considered as the toughest subject in existing subjects. Many school going students scarred of the subject like scaring from an evil. In India, the fear of English is spreading and students think they will fail in the subject but we believe if students have ethics to learn English than it can be the best or favorite subject. Many people have a deep-seated fear of English and English tutors see a lot of scared students. Some students have problem with grammar, some have complications with vocabulary, some have phobia of spoken English. Many of people think of English as an extremely tough subject that cannot be mastered. This negative attitude stops them from focusing on the subject/problem which they are tackling. This increases the speculation in their minds that English is too tough for them.

Suggestions to get rid of English Phobia:

- Practice the core skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.
- Surround yourself in English. Put yourself in all English speaking environment where you can learn passively. The best way to learn is through speaking.
- It will be easier to remember the words if you try to remember an example sentence using that word rather the word on its own.
- Get help! If you don't understand something you have got to ask someone. Ask your teacher , classmates or friends for help.
- Watch DVD'S rather than TV. Its better to use something that you can watch over again to catch information you might have missed the first time.
- Newspapers are a good place to find passive constructs. Read through an article and see if you can find the passive sentences.
- Use English whenever you can.
- Don't translate into English from your own language. Think in English to improve your fluency.
- You can't learn English from a book. Like driving a car, you can only learn through doing it.
- Once you have a basic level of English explore the different ways you can say the same thing.
- Think about your strong and weak points. Write down which areas you want to improve on and work on improving them. Ofcourse, don't ignore your strong points.

English games to try out with kids:

- **Choice words:** Perfect game for using words in different contexts. A word card is drawn and students must come with a phrase using that word. Players compare answers and score one point for each phrase that other players have not thought of.
- **Quizmo:** Familiarize students with vocab words with this bingo like game. Game boards feature synonyms on one side and antonyms on the other. Students must determine whether their cards contain a synonym or antonym for the word called out by the teacher.
- **Rhyme out:** This triple- rhyming card game is loads of fun! Each card gives 3 clues and a “ rhymes with “ hint. Players must come with the correct rhyming words.
- **Blurt:** Students listen to a definition, then race the other players to shout out the right word first!

- **After words:** A think-quick game for vocabulary practice. Students must quickly come up with a word that works with the category in play AND begins with the last letter of the last word played.
- **Word Waffle:** In this mouthwatering multiple-choice game, students must ‘waffle’ between two answers. If they pick the correct answer to the vocabulary question, they keep all their waffle toppings; if not, they give half of their toppings back to the kitchen.
- **Word –A- Round:** This game is harder than it looks! Each card features a word printed in a circle. Players race to determine where the word starts and read it aloud.
- **Wordical:** Students try to build the highest-scoring word by rolling the vowel dice and combining it with their consonant cards.
- **KaBam:** A crazy- fast word building challenge. Be the first to build a word by adding one or more letters to the letter cards
- **That's it!** Draw a topic card and then race to shout out answers until someone says the exact word written. Get the most right and that's it.
- **Sentence Scramble:** The object of this game is to form as many sentences as possible with a color – coded set of word cards. Each set is a different part of speech- verbs, nouns, prepositions, etc.
- **Charades:** Break your class into two teams, and have one individual from each team act out the same word. The team is to correctly guess the word first scores a point.
- **Pictionary:** Break your class into two teams, and one individual from each team draws a picture on the board. Drawers cannot use letters, numbers or symbols in their drawings. The first team to guess the word correctly scores a point.
- **Scattergories:** Choose ten categories with your students {e.g. types of pets, city names, sports etc. }. Use an alphabet to determine the letter for each round of play. Set a timer for three minutes, and students must think of one word for each category that begins with that round's letter. Students score one point per word, and the person with the most points at the end of three rounds is the winner.
- **The dictionary game:** Choose an unusual word from the dictionary and spell it for your students. Each person creates a fictional definition for the word and writes it on an index card. You write the actual definition on another index card. Collect and shuffle the cards, and then read all the definitions. Students must try to guess which definition is the real one.

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