

CHAPTER-6

Remedial Measures and Conclusion

Chapter 6

Remedial Measures and Conclusion

In the preceding chapters we have discussed some of the problems relating to phonological, grammatical and cultural difficulties in learning English language by Manipuri ESL Learners. Although there is no effortless panacea for problematic learning English, perhaps in this concluding chapter it can be expected that this chapter attempts to give a direction or make a way for how to elude the problems in learning English and also to show some possible devices or remedial measures for improvement while learning English language particularly by Manipuri speakers.

Some suggestions will be made as how these difficulties may be overcome in a systematic way:

1. Suggestion for the phonological problems.
2. Suggestion for the grammatical problems.
3. Suggestion for the cultural problems.

6.1 Some of the solutions or remedial measures for the improvement of the phonological problems are:

- (i) Before learning the phonemes, the students must make clear where the vocal organs are, and learn to control the vocal organ. We must depend on the principle of phoneme to instruct the imitation exercise because consistent

practice is the best way to access successful language learning.

- (ii) The most important is to distinguish between English and Manipuri articulation, to know the pronunciations that do not exist in Manipuri and to practice until they finally have a good command of the articulations. Particularly, those consonants and vowels sound that Manipuri students have problems in acquiring them.
- (iii) English consonant sounds that faced pronunciation problems by Manipuri ESL Learners are / f , v , θ , ð , tʃ , dʒ , ʃ , z , ʒ /. The learner should be encouraged by the comforting knowledge that “no language uses any sound which a foreigner cannot learn to pronounce perfectly” and that “there is no such thing as an unpronounceable sound in any languages in the world” (Trager & Bloch 1942 *Outside of Linguistic Analysis*, pg.8).
- (iv) English Vowel sounds that caused difficulties for Manipuri ESL Learners are:
- English vowels /æ , ʌ , ɑ: , ə: /
 - Comparison between /e/ and /æ/
 - Long and short English vowels pairs / i , i: , ɔ , ɔ: , u , u: /
- One of the greatest challenges for non-native English

speakers has been distinguishing between these two sounds/vowel pairs.

(v) Imitation is often regarded as the most effective way to learn pronunciation. Both in class and after class the teachers should argue the students to do more imitation exercise, but imitation should be based on scientific knowledge of English phonetics. Language is the kind of physiological phenomenon, and it is the product of vocal organ of human beings. Therefore, we must understand how our vocal organ work and we must know the name, the place, and the function of every vocal organ. Before learning the phonemes, the students must make clear where the vocal organs are, and learn to control the vocal organs.

(vi) In fact, the oral English of many Manipuri English teachers are not ^{accurate}. To avoid the influence of teacher's speed is to listen many original British English. After listening, we should imitate the correct custom of pronunciation, including the sound, lips form and the size of oral cavity.

(vii) The teachers should set up a freely learning environment in every possible way, encouraging them to speak more and praise more for a little advancement.

(viii) We should learn to recognise that there are differences between some English sound and some Manipuri sounds and also to learn clearly and think about how sounds are made when we are listening.

(ix) Attention should be drawn to the specific problematic sounds that the students have.

(x) We should practice moving our jaw, tongue, lips etc. as correctly as possible so that we should be able to produce those problematic English sound clearly.

2 Some of the solutions or remedial measures for the improvement of the grammatical problems are:

(i) When teaching /learning personal pronoun, it must be emphasized to the subject-verb-agreement particularly agreement in the third person singular number, subject and number agreement and subject verb agreement.

(ii) Teachers should teach well the difference between the masculine 'he' and feminine 'she' forms of personal pronouns and its case form 'his', 'him', 'her', 'hers'. Sufficient drills must be given to the students in the initial stages of learning so as to rectify unwanted confusion.

(iii) Unlike English, Manipuri does not have an article system. Therefore, the first and foremost step is to give Manipuri ESL Learners the basic idea about English article system and its usages.

- (iv) Since, Manipuri ESL Learners have not internalized well about the different usage of definite article 'the', they hardly have an idea that a noun phrase beginning with the superlative form of an adjective and ordinals number is always preceded by 'the'. They should be given appropriate instructions about the different usage of definite article 'the' along with sufficient drills.
- (v) Teachers should points out to the students that the definite 'the' should be use before a proper noun only when it is qualified by an adjective. It is not enough to tell the students that in English only nouns or noun phrases take articles. Teachers should also point about the usage of indefinite 'a' & 'an'. Where an indefinite article 'an' should^{be} used with words beginning with vowel sounds.eg. an egg, an ox, an ass etc. and with words beginning with silent 'h'.eg. an hour, an honest man etc. Indefinite article 'a' is used with singular common nouns beginning with consonents. eg. a boy, a cow, a hut etc. Also with vowel letters having consonantal value. eg. a university, a unit , a European etc.
- (vi) They have to be drilled intensively.Sufficient numbers of examples which take articles when adjectives precedes noun or noun phrase and contrast this with enough examples of other grammatical categories other than noun (verbs, adjectives, adverbs etc) which do not take articles. Exercises for using articles should also be devised. Needless to say, the students

should realize that the omission or insertion of articles is meaningful and significant.

- (vii) It would very helpful to use pictures when teaching or learning the concept of prepositions particularly 'in, on, at'. When students can see the word printed in the proper locative or a sentence in which the object is in the proper place in the picture, it is easier to tell the difference between how the words should be used in speaking and writing. When students can see how these words (in, on,at) are used by the pictures they see, they will associate the words with the pictures and internalize these prepositions into their vocabulary.
- (viii) Exercise on the use of these prepositions can also be given that it should include questions in which the students fill in the correct word to make a grammatically correct sentence as well as looking at a picture and filling in the correct preposition for each place.

6.3 Some of the solutions or remedial measures for the improvement of the cultural problems are:

(i) It is not easy to teach cultural background knowledge. Firstly, teachers must be acquainted with the differences between the two linguistic cultures. Teachers can provide cultural information, as well as make students express themselves correctly in different occasions, and the latter is more important.

(ii) To make the learning of English interesting and useful for the learners, Manipuri English teachers will have to take cognizance of the relationship between language and culture. 'Cultural understanding becomes a problem-solving device' (Whiteford, M.B. and Friedl, J. 1992).

(iii) Cultural concepts should be introduced smoothly to enhance the students' language skills and foster understanding while showing respect for the students' first language and cultural background.

(iv) Teaching material is also important. Teachers should use good native English videotapes and films in teaching, and then organize interactive sessions. When watching videotapes or seeing a film, students and teachers should pay much attention to the scene of daily life, such as conversations between shopkeepers and clients, dialogues on the telephone, chat in the street, etc. After that, teachers and students may exchange views

and replenish each other. Next, teachers should explain cultural factors involved in the material with purpose.

(v) Teachers should encourage students to read extensively, including novels, magazines, and newspapers etc. They should also guide students to accumulate relative cultural background knowledge when reading material. Through enormous reading, students' understanding of culture will become ripe and complete.

(vi) Teacher should pay attention to proper language forms as well as suitable use of language in the classroom. Furthermore, remind students to pay attention to details such as pronunciation, intonation, countenance wording, gesture etc.

(vii) We should hold some lectures about cultures and customs, comparing Manipuri culture with western culture.

(viii) While teaching, teachers should attach importance to cultural differences and study these differences. They should not only help students to learn a foreign language, but also to learn social and cultural background knowledge. Only so, students can widen their knowledge and thus further learn English well.

(ix) Language teachers must instruct their students on the cultural background of language usage, choose culturally appropriate teaching styles, and explore culturally based linguistic differences to promote understanding instead of misconceptions or prejudices.

- (x) We should raise the awareness of the importance of culture in language teaching and studying because making culture a part of language teaching/learning will make the conversation sparkle. To bridge the cultural gap, effort should be made by both Manipuri speaker English teachers and Manipuri learning English.
- (xi) Difficulty may also be attributed to the environment in which language is acquisition occurs. In case of Manipuri students, most of them tend to use Manipuri language while interacting with their family members and friends in their home environment as well as in school. Hence they hardly use English outside their language classroom resulting in their weak performances in their speaking and writing. The problems are most obvious when it comes to examination. It is always difficult to find students writing their essay with very few grammatical errors. Therefore, teachers should encourage students to speak in English with their fellow students in school or in campus and create atmosphere in class that is conducive to learning the language. Students should be advised to listen good English from available source-radio, television etc. They should listen for good pronunciation and understanding. Above all, teachers must frequently remind their students that when they speak or write in English they must think in the target language i.e. English, so that they do not bring in any feature of Manipuri their mother tongue.

(xii) Since, there is a natural order in development of student's communicative competence in second language teacher must be aware of this and make use of this to build communicative competence. These consists of memorization, formulaic expression (greeting), talking to self, elaboration, request for clarification and role playing. Making use of material resources in the class: classroom should contain charts/pictures, maps and globes, posters, books, catalogue, magazines, puzzles, science equipments, computer software etc. The teachers of English are non-native speakers. It is not their first language. Consequently, there is likelihood of the teachers going wrong while teaching English. Therefore, not only do students need more exposure to the language, but the teachers too need to be well exposed.

With all these points mentioned above, it is hoped that it would bring about a greater understanding of the pedagogical and psychological factors that would to help to overcome those difficulties that faced by Manipuri ESL Learners while teaching/learning English.