



St. Xavier's College of Education (Autonomous)

[Re-accredited (3rd Cycle) at 'A' Grade by NAAC with CGPA 3.67]

Palayamkottai – 627 002, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India.

BEST PRACTICES

01. Title of the Practice

Strengthening English Language Proficiency (SELP)

02. Goal

The aim of Strengthening English Language Proficiency is to develop the communication skill of the prospective teachers in English. This practice will create more interest in writing and communicating in English among the students so that they grow as universal personalities.

03. The Context

Communication has become the major skill wanted in all the fields, especially in the teaching-learning process. English has become the widely-spoken and written language. To communicate with outer world and to develop oneself, the international language of English is very much sought after. It is a fact that a number of teachers are good in subject content but couldn't present the content effectively to the students and hence the class becomes a boredom.

It is to be noted that when the students go for higher learning in education, they are expected to have a sound knowledge of English. Moreover, the liking and passion for English has grown in multiples that the teacher is expected to communicate in English in all the classes; even the Government has introduced English medium sections in all the schools. Thus the prospective teachers are expected to have a sound knowledge in English.

04. The Practice

To strengthen the language proficiency, the college has designed a few strategies through which the students are drilled in the language of English.

In the first stage, a three- week or month long intensive English training programme is conducted where the morning sessions are dedicated for knowing the basic grammar including the types of tenses, sentences and parts of speech. This will enable them to construct sentences in the right way. The afternoon session are spent on practicing the learnt grammar through co-curricular activities.

Second stage as a follow-up, in all the semesters except third, every week three hours are spent on spoken English in the classroom along with regular courses. This is further enhanced by initiating the students to use the language lab every day outside the class

hours by dividing them into smaller groups; they have to listen to various types of conversations and lessons which is part of the package of language enhancement.

Third stage will be simultaneously training the students to appear on the stage on a particular day, which is named as English Cultural Saturday (ECS), once in a month. The students in different groups are expected to present programmes only in English.

At the Fourth stage the college assembly which is conducted by students every Monday, is expected to introduce two or three new words with usage in sentences and the whole assembly is conducted only in English. Fifthly, all the programmes in the college are organised in the language of English. Sixthly, there will be an ELT workshop for two days every year. This would help the students to gain the ways to use English language to express their views. Finally, the latecomers or maladjusted students are expected to read short story books so that they learn to read and summarise the content in English; this is called 'Positive Punishment'.

Thus every effort is undertaken to put the prospective teachers in the climate of English so that they smell, breath and speak English with peer groups, faculty and administrators.

The challenges and constraints will be: lack of constant motivation among students, the previous medium of instruction namely the mother tongue, use of mother tongue by the faculty during the practice of the language, the hesitation to spent extra energy and time for practice.

Evidence of Success

The success story can be enumerated from the performance of our students as they splendidly stage their cultural programmes on the stage on the ECS. Secondly the conduct of the college assembly on Monday amply exhibits the success of SELP; students stand with such a boldness and self-confidence in front of the audience. The programme of intensive English training and its follow up work helps the students to improve their communication skill. This could be evidenced by the employment details of our students who are selected through campus interview. The students are placed in the CBSE and Matriculation Schools easily as they have very good training in spoken English.

As we conduct English Cultural Show every month, they improve their communication skill by enacting the drama or debate. Stage fear of the students is reduced as they are given chance to exhibit their talents freely. Moreover, it develops the creativity of the students by way of staging variety of programmes. The students enjoyed this cultural show as everyone is having the chance to exhibit their talents and they feel proud as they could speak fluently in English.

05. Problems encountered and resources required

Problems encountered

- The students are not ready to speak in English in the beginning
- As the students are from rural area, they find it difficult to cope with the English training programme and one or two may want to discontinue the course but they are given counseling by the teacher educators so that they may continue the course
- As the number of students in the class is fifty, conducting oral exam for SELP is very difficult. But the teacher educators take pain in conducting oral exams for all.
- There is some difficult to find time for conducting English Cultural show and allotting time for practice.
- The conduct of Intensive English Training and ECS requires some financial assistance.
- More students are to be helped and motivated in purchasing the Oxford English Dictionary.

Resources required

- Well-trained persons with good communication skills
- Digital Language Laboratory to be updated.
- Financial support for the management as students are poor
- Motivation Hall for the conduct of activities
- Mini-Theatre / smart room for screening of Films, debate, discussion etc.

06. Notes

This best practice of ours is a long-time programme which has been evolved based on our experiences; number of minor details are to be worked out depending upon the local situations.

(ii). Visit to St. Anne's Rehabilitation Centre for the Mentally Handicapped and Home for Aged (ARCHA)

Title of the Practice

Visit to St. Anne's Rehabilitation Centre for the Mentally Handicapped and Home for Aged (ARCHA)

GOAL

The aims of the programme are to sensitize the students with regard to the reality of elderly people in the society, to be aware of the physical and mental struggles of the mentally challenged and to observe and analyse the problems of aged people and the differently abled children.

THE CONTEXT

As we are in the digital era, where the people are in contact with people at distance but not with their family members especially elderly people in their family and hence the sociability of the public is minimised. As most of the families are nuclear family, they are not ready to take care of their parents in their home, instead send them to the aged homes. Moreover disabled children are isolated in their families and forced to stay at homes. No one in the society bothers about the feelings of the aged and the disabled children. In order to know that the aged and disabled people too have human feelings and should be respected, our college began a new extension activity, a Visit to St. Anne's rehabilitation centre for Mentally Handicapped and Home for the Aged.

The Practice

The second year prospective teachers visit the home on all the working days in the evening from 5 pm to 7 pm in a group of five students. The Staff in-charge visits the home every day and registers the attendance of the students in the card specially printed for this visit.

The following norms are adhered to.

- Minimum five students will be sent daily to ARCHA to interact with the aged people and mentally handicapped children. Only five students are allowed every day.
- For every visit, the student teacher has to get the signature of the teacher concerned during or after his visit to the centre.
- Every student has to complete at least 9 visits in their B.Ed. programme.

The challenges and constraints will be: * Sometimes, the Aged are physically weak and not able to converse with them. * They expect some financial support which students are not able to.

Evidence of Success

The success of the programme could be visualised from the feedback of the students. They felt happy as they spent time with elderly people and special children in the home. Their attitude towards them was positive.

Problems encountered and resources required

A few students were not ready to interact with disabled children and some of the elderly people too are not ready to share their feelings.