

ASSIMILATING VALUE EDUCATION INTO ELT

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ABSTRACT:

The teaching and learning of languages need not necessarily be focused entirely on the acquisition of language skills. While the primary aim of language instruction is enhanced proficiency in a language, we need to inculcate values- moral, spiritual, human, ethical, etc. in our teaching and learning activities. Language education emphasizes the four macro skills, namely reading, speaking, listening and writing. Universal values involving special people, the environment, social issues, health, science and technology may easily be incorporated into the curriculum. The values that go along with the teaching and learning are universal, English being a global lingua franca. For the attainment of world peace, language teaching may be able to contribute in various ways. These values could be incorporated into the teaching and learning activities of all the major language skills and their components. This paper addresses the issue of incorporating moral education in English Language Teaching where English is a second or foreign language, in light of the increasing calls for having teachers take on a more pro-active role in the moral development of their students while acquiring various language skills simultaneously.

KEYWORDS: Acquisition, macro skills, moral education, pro-active role.

INTRODUCTION:

“It is not that you read a book, pass an examination, and finish with education. The whole life, from the moment you are born to the moment you die, is a process of learning”.

– Jiddu Krishnamurti

Learning is a process, but making this process interesting, is a challenge. If the teaching pattern is adopted in such a way that it is offering more than mere lessons on the subject, one can be successful in making learning pleasurable. With English being the global language, it is almost impossible today, to measure the value of learning the English language. One is left with no option but to learn the language. This lingua franca has official status in at least 75 countries. If one imparts values and morals through this language, it would be a two-way process which would include acquisition of English language and value education. As substantiated by Bill Johnston in his book “Values in English Language Teaching” that:

English language teaching is not merely a matter of training students in a particular set of skills. Rather, the occupation of ELT is profoundly imbued with values, and these values are furthermore being complex and riven with dilemmas and conflict. Before taking into consideration, Value education through English language teaching, one should know what “Value Education” is.

Value Education: Its Meaning:

Value education simply means developing appropriate behaviour and habits involving inculcation of certain values and habits. It also refers to a wide gamut of learning and activities ranging from training in physical health, mental hygiene, etiquette and manners, civic rights and duties to aesthetic and even religious training. It fosters positive relationships and is an explicit goal aimed at promoting care, respect and cooperation. The main aim of value education is the ability to make moral judgement based on sound reasoning.

Value Education in school:

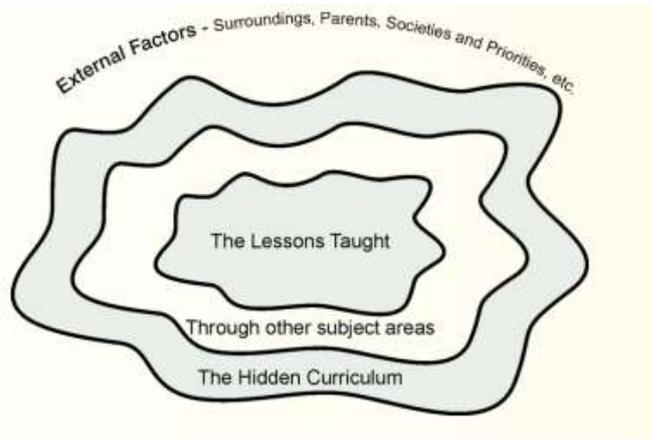
Perspectives about the role of the school and the teacher as agents of educational change have undergone major changes over the last half a century. For a long time, the teacher was seen as an individual with a sacred mission that people look up to, but then, in the 1970s and 1980s, the teacher was viewed as just another person who delivers information and allows learners to form their own views (Ryan, 1986). Recently, however, there have been calls for looking at the teacher as more than an information bank and urging them to take on a transformative role where they continue to deliver information but, at the same time, play a leading and guiding role in the life of the learners (Anderson, 1996; Brown, 1997; Crookes & Lehner, 1998). These and other educators feel that teachers and schools should ‘help children become ethically mature adults, capable of moral thought and action when facing issues such as drug abuse, indiscriminate shootings, and domestic, regional, and global conflicts (Ryan, 1986: 228).

INTEGRATING VALUES INTO THE CURRICULUM:

Values Education in schools is possible only when each individual stakeholder in the school – student, teacher, parent, management and support staff realizes its inherent worth for the well-being of the learners. This requires adoption and structuring of the curriculum in such a manner that optimizes the transmission and assimilation of values within and outside the classroom. Every lesson, routine activity and environment becomes value-centric and the entire gamut of relationships and processes in the school is thereby strengthened and empowered.

Curriculum Onion

Various layers of school practice which can influence the relationship can be represented as the Curriculum Onion’.



External Factors:

These are the factors to which the Values Education must be related e.g., School's surroundings, parental background of students and priorities of each society, and a framework within which the curriculum or the action-plan must be fitted.

Hidden Curriculum:

All the other things that are learnt during schooling in addition to official curriculum will also involve a host of values, such as performing botany practical's setting up a garden and thereby learning dignity of labour. Teachers' hidden curriculum could well be students 'informal' curriculum.

Through Subject Areas:

Values can be imbibed consciously by linking ethics to curricular areas. For example, through:

Languages- story and dramatization on social evils.

Science-values behind scientific research.

History-facing historical issues and reacting to them.

Social Science, Geography – How different living conditions affect cultures, value systems and behaviours.

Physical Education – Competition versus co-operation in sports, sporting/team spirit.

The Lessons Taught:

Values can be explored through regularly taught lessons. These need to be carefully planned while implementing the programme.

Researchers have found out that in general, 'effective moral education programs are integrated within the curriculum, rather than treated separately as special program or unit' (Nucci, 1987: 86). The calls for the incorporation of value education into school curricula have attracted the attention of educators in ESL (English as Second Language) and language arts as these school subjects have no specific content and could, therefore, use instructional materials and resources that are useful, interesting, and attractive to the learners. The interrelated topics of peace education, global issues, and moral education have been proposed as topics that could be imparted to the learners through the areas of language arts, literature, ESL, and social studies (Pereira, 1993; Ryan, 1993; Sanchez, 1998; Shumer, 1999).

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS TOOL FOR VALUE EDUCATION:

Values can never be taught in isolation. They cannot be transacted independently from the learning that takes place in the classroom and within the school. **It should be noted that „Values“ cannot be taught like a subject, i.e., like Languages, History, Science or Mathematics. They can only be inculcated through the situations deliberately planned while teaching various school subjects.** It is therefore imperative that Values Education be woven into the teaching of subjects. All Languages contribute to the development of skills like listening, speaking, reading and articulation of ideas. There are some values that are present in every lesson. They may be articulated directly or indirectly in the form of stories, processes or biographical references. The task of the teacher is to identify the apparent or hidden references to values and use them as reference points to initiate a discussion on values within the subject specific domain. A values centered approach in the classroom will add meaning to each class. Moreover, as students engage creatively in the classroom, lesson objectives will be realized effectively.

Of all the academic subjects, languages are the best means of communication. The students grasp the language easily and the teacher can integrate human values through curriculum. Inculcation of values through language teaching is a great challenge for a language teacher. Generally, people learn a language for communication. They learn a second language especially English for social mobility, to become a global citizen and for better socio-economic opportunities. The second language, which is an additional accomplishment, is related with their mind, intellect and understanding and also their spirit, heart and feelings. It is a language, which connects one person with the other and helps him to know more about others' views, ideas and outlook. Thus, it broadens one's mind, alleviates prejudices, widens outlook and brings people closer. Our values and heritage are preserved through language.

WAYS OF ASSIMILATING VALUES IN ESL CLASSROOM:

1. Poetry Recitation:

One way of inculcating values in students is through Recitation of good poems. Poems entertain the readers, refine their feelings, and develop their sensitivity, which ultimately make them better human beings. While reading the poems of '**William Wordsworth**', the readers should feel union with the spirit of Nature, which kindled the spirit of the poet, and he became one with Nature. Wordsworth has written-

—And I have felt a presence,
That disturbs me with the joy,
Of elevated thoughts and a sense sublime.

Whereas these beautiful lines of **Tagore**'s poem inspire a person to come out of narrow boundaries-

—Where the world has not been
Broken into domestic walls;

The learners can realize with '**Keats**': -

—Beauty is truth, truth beauty,
That is all ye know on earth,
And all ye need to know.

These feelings refine the hearts, elevate sensitivity and develop love for one and all. Thus over-flowing love, sympathy and kindness replace hatred, jealousy, animosity and violence.

2. Stories:

Language is also a great treasure house of good stories. These stories often provide good moral values. Through these delightful, entertaining and purposeful stories, great moral values can be inculcated. Stories of 'Hitopdesa' and 'Panchtantra' always provide some values. Stories like 'Midas Touch' make the learner think that money or gold is not everything in life.

In pre-independence period, Indian writers succeeded in evoking values of Nationalism and patriotism through their inspiring writings. In Bengal **Sharat Chandra Bose, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Rabindranath Tagore, Mahashweta Devi, Ashapurna Devi** influenced lives of millions through their socially relevant works.

Stories in language books are an effective tool in inculcating desirable values. Students can also be asked to elicit values from the story by themselves. They can be given opportunity to think and discuss and make up analogies, etc. Literature of all languages presents glorious examples of universal values.

3. Through examples of Great and Noble Persons:

Autobiographies, biographies and experiences of great and noble persons also impart ennobling and inspiring values to the learners. Spirit of self-respect of **Shri Jagdish Chandra Bose**, who refused to accept less salary than the British employees for the same kind of work, can inspire our young generation. A lesson on **Mahatma Gandhi** presents his vow to always speak the truth and to serve his parents. **Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's** wish to have his ashes scattered in the fields of his beloved country after his death may give birth to the same nationalistic feelings. **Dr. Abdul Kalam's** advice to the young generation to 'Dream always' may inspire children to be dreamers as well as doers to realize their dreams. Our youngsters can learn from the life experiences of these great and noble people who achieved heights of greatness through sheer hard work, devotion, perseverance and determination. Lives of all great men remind us that we can also make our lives sublime. **Abraham Lincoln's** letter to the teacher of his son may make a person learn the values of self-respect. He writes— "Teach him to sell his brawn and mind to the highest bidders but never to put a price on his heart and soul."

4. Values Inculcation through different Characters:

Through language, learners get a glimpse of the innermost depths of the complex human heart. **William Shakespeare's** 'Hamlet' and 'Othello'; **Charles Dickens** 'David Copperfield' present the timeless and universal characteristics of human nature. Proper understanding of these complex characters can make a person more kind, sympathetic and tolerant. In India **Ashapurna Devi's** 'Pratham Pratishruti', **Rabindranath Tagore's** 'Kabuliwala', **R.K Narayan's** 'The Guide', **Jai Shankar Prasad's** 'Titali' present a wide range of characters which make the readers aware of the subtleties and inner depths of human hearts and influence the readers to be more humane.

5. Story Telling:

Stories provide a wonderful way of engaging learners with ideas and situations at all levels. They allow for exploring and expressing thoughts and feelings through their characters, plot or messages. Whether it is Panchatantra or Jataka tales from the Indian tradition or Aesop's Fables or The Thousand and One Nights from other parts of the world, stories and their narration have been integral to human heritage.

At the primary stage, stories awaken interest and awareness among learners with respect to their environment and their natural curiosity can be guided towards inculcating values with respect to the school and family. Themes like respect towards elders, social interdependence

and honesty can be woven within stories and children can be asked to draw meaning or a moral message from the same. Similarly, leaving the story open-ended or asking a student to be a given character from within the story is an effective technique for communication of ideas, thoughts and beliefs of others.

At the upper primary and middle school level students can be asked to create their own stories based on given values that they consider to be important – Patience, Honesty, Discipline. They can also be asked to share anecdotes from real life situations that convey social prejudice or co-existence and ways to deal with social issues. For senior students, the teacher or any student can begin with a story and each student can contribute towards its completion.

Example: - This morning while coming to school, I saw a poor child begging for food... The water in the river began to dry up, so...

6. Enacting / Role play:

Acting is a way of presenting ideas through performing them out for an audience. This allows the students to engage closely with the content and context of a story or given situation. A focus on the message or its value as represented by the characters can be kept in mind as students involve themselves in writing the script, organize the performance and rehearse their parts. So also, role-play by students as their parents can be used to open a discussion on gender roles; those as a worker or peasant can be used to sensitize them towards the values of effort. As students assume the character of an individual from a given lesson, their learning will be more enriching and meaningful. It will also help improve their communication skills.

7. Group Singing:

Group Singing is important as values in the lyrics of the song remain in the consciousness for a long time. Group signifies the unity, towards a common purpose or goal, co-operation, discipline, self-restraint and the spirit to accommodate. Selection of a song is important and could be chosen to reflect any one or a group of values. Example: Rabindranath Tagore's poem, "Where the mind is without fear" will kindle sense of Self-respect, patriotism, need for true freedom and concern for our people.

8. Group Activities:

Group activities provide opportunities for learning of many values concurrently. Development of fundamental values of love, tolerance, cooperation, peaceful co-existence and respect for others is important. By working in groups, students learn the value of each other's sincere efforts, joy of doing one's best for the good of the whole group. The various group activities are Grammar Games, quiz program, Group discussions on the theme/moral of the given prose/poem, Group projects, etc.

9. Literary Skills:

Students can be encouraged to create poems, stories and drawings on a given topic. This provides them with freedom of expression.

- 1). Hold art, poetry and creative writing competitions with values as the theme.
- 2). Publish selected entries in the school newsletters and magazines.
- 3). **Journal writing** is a powerful strategy for internalization. It can take different formats. Story-writing on imaginative and life-related themes and characters would provide both affective and cognitive experiences. This kind of personal story-writing linked to one's own life and contexts, as the characters play out their life by gaining or losing values, becomes a powerful tool for personal reflection, values internalization and decision making.

4). Writing a diary for daily learning and activities, Creating timelines for self-improvement, etc.

10. Debate:

Debate is an activity that develops the ability to present logical arguments for and against a given topic, which can arise from social issues or contemporary concerns, e.g., ‘The Role of Women in Society Development is negligible’; ‘Spare the rod and Spoil the Child’; ‘Non Violence’; ‘Food and War’ and so on. Debating allows a two-way approach to understanding an issue. The skills of public speaking, critical thinking, confidence building, listening, presenting counter arguments and questioning an idea are developed. This method also identifies group leaders and enables students to think collectively and individually.

11. Drama:

Drama is used as a key pedagogy to enhance the teaching language and to develop the four different skills- reading, speaking, writing, and listening. The use of drama has, undoubtedly, made learning more engaging. The students learn values effortlessly when they are taught through drama. A newfound enthusiasm develops in their learning. When pupils enact a certain drama, they become confident to express their thoughts, feelings and emotions and also to respect others. It is a very authentic learning experience which ignites the imagination of the students. As drama is meant to be student centered, they are the ones playing the major roles and hence they get an opportunity to explore many different situations that put their moral values to the test.

12. Grammar instruction:

Grammatical competence is necessary and our learners should be able to produce grammatically acceptable sentences. We may complement this ability by giving them activities and practice which contain values content. This can be done with many grammatical categories. Some examples follow:

1. Subject- Verb Agreement

Use the missing subject or verb in the following sentences to show agreement between the subject and verb.

- a) The officer arrested for abuse of power and corruption.
- b)work hard for a living.

The values the learners are being indirectly exposed are that 1) the law will catch up with corrupt officers who abuse their position and 2) we need to show care and concern for those who work very hard to earn a livelihood/

2. Tenses

Fill in the blanks with the correct tense of the verb in brackets.

- a) Pupils in some remote areas still..... (walk) a long distance to reach their school.
- b) The snatch thief(try) to escape fast in his motorbike, but he was quickly apprehended by members of the public.

The values instilled here are 1) to empathize with residents in some rural areas for whom life is hard, and 2) to realize crime does not pay and to instill awareness among the citizens that combating crime is also our responsibility

3. Modality

Four examples of modal verbs are given to understand their meaning coupled with values.

- a) We **need** to include vegetables and fruits in our diet (have to).
- b) They **need not** break the law to voice their grievances do not have to).

- c) We **should** care for our parents in their old age (must)
- d) The authorities **should not** allow deforestation indiscriminately as it will affect the environment (must not).

13. Reading comprehension:

Passages selected for reading comprehension ought to include those which are related to some issues of concern which have been published in print or online. These may include topics associated with global warming, climate change, racism, honour killing, child labour, animal cruelty, child brides, pollution, globalization, free trade, free education, literature, music, statesmanship, feminism, good governance, etc.

14. Listening comprehension:

For listening comprehension practice, audio materials which deal with universal human values may be used together with other materials of interest concentrating on specific listening skills. Students may be asked to listen to a talk on recycling, evils of war, the pros and cons of arranged marriage, domestic abuse, treatment of refugees fleeing war and persecution, poems and stories which have values for the learners to contemplate, etc. The skills which normally follow a listening comprehension activity such as noting the gist of a talk, summarizing, presenting the information in tabular form, identifying important details of the discussion heard, taking notes, making inferences, etc.

CONCLUSION:

By its very nature, the ESL classroom is a place where students try to learn about a new language and its culture, a fact that renders the ESL classroom an ideal place for developing a well-balanced individual who is open to other concepts, beliefs, and attitudes. There is a need for the inclusion of culture in language teaching with the increasing emphasis placed all over the world on globalization and international and intercultural communication.

Language teachers can successfully inculcate various values through their sessions. Language teaching has an infinite capacity for assimilating Values Education. Language cannot be taught in isolation, away from social situation, nor can values be imbibed sans practice. Using good meaningful values-based text with language learning can invariably make the learners sensitive human beings and conscientious citizens. With proper planning and implementing different techniques, Value education and English language acquisition can definitely go hand in hand.

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