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## THE REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHING ENGLISH LESSONS

*Dr. Najm Abdullah Burhan*

College of Education, Maysan University, Iraq, Amara

Email: najim@uomisan.edu.iq

**Dr. Najm Abdullah Burhan: The Requirements for Teaching English lessons--  
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### ABSTRACT

Most of the world's English language teachers speak English as second or third language rather than as their first language. for many their proficiency in teaching English may not reach benchmarks established by their employers, so they must need to know the requirements for teaching English in their classes, raising the issue that is the focus of this article, namely, what kind of teaching skills in English is necessary to be an effective teacher of English? The article seeks to provide an overview of the requirements for teaching English lessons and improve English teachers` proficiency. so it describe the kind of specialized English teaching skills needed to teaching English in classrooms, and explore the relationship between teaching ability and English language proficiency, considers the impact of language ability on different dimensions of teaching, and raises the implications for teaching skills in English language.

### Introduction

One consequence of dominant status of English in many countries is the growing demand for knowledgeable, skillful and effective teachers of English. the skills that needed to teach English language are very important for teachers in different grades, where these skills make teachers have the necessary professional knowledge and functional English language skills to teach English effectively.

The burgeoning demand for English worldwide has led to demand for teachers that can be in the short term by employing in that role significant numbers of people who lack the appropriate qualifications. These qualifications included skills related to subject matter, skills related to pedagogy, and also skills about language proficiency (Young et al, 2014: 13-46).

Understanding the relationship between language proficiency and teaching ability has recently re-emerged as focus in second language

teacher education, particularly through work on teacher cognition and teaching knowledge.

Where the ability to teach English requires consideration of number of related issues, since in language teaching, language is both the content of teaching as well as the means by which it is taught. Unlike mathematics and other school subject, in language classrooms, language plays two roles as lesson content and as the means of teaching that lesson. So there are three interrelated are involved in teaching English which we call here content knowledge, pedagogical skills, and discourse skills. The distinction between these three aspects of teacher's knowledge and ability provides a useful analytical framework to help understand the nature of teaching English (Freeman, 2016: 32-40)

### **Content knowledge**

Content knowledge refers to teachers` understanding of their teaching subject. In the case of English this includes a variety of sources of language- related knowledge that derive from those disciplines in which language is the object of study such as linguistics, second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, and discourse analysis. From these and other sources, as part of their professional education acquire a body of knowledge about their teaching subject.

Content knowledge in itself does not provide a sufficient basis for teaching of a language. A student majoring in linguistics might be skilled in the use of systemic functional grammar as a resource for the analysis of texts or have a good understanding of the nature of English phonology, however such knowledge would not enable him or her to know which aspects of English grammar or phonology are needed at different levels of language proficiency, nor how best to organize a syllabus to teach them and what teaching strategies could be used. In order to do this another source of knowledge is needed that we will call pedagogical and ability (Richards, 2017: 1-24).

### **Pedagogical knowledge and ability**

This refers to the teacher's knowledge of teaching. It includes the teacher's subject matter knowledge, the repertoire of techniques and activities that the teacher employs in teaching together with the theories, beliefs, principles, values, and ideas which are source. Sometimes referred to pedagogical content knowledge, which Shulman suggested represents the blending of content and pedagogy into an understanding of how particular topics, problems, or issues are organized, and adapted to the diverse interests and abilities of learners, and represented for instructions (Ortega, 2013: 15-17).

Pedagogical knowledge and ability draws on content knowledge as well as other source of knowledge but in the process transforms it, since it is understood in the relation to knowledge of learners, the curriculum, the teaching context and to teaching methods. For example as part of their content knowledge teachers might be expected to know tense and aspect in

English or to know the difference between stative and non stative verbs. Pedagogical knowledge and ability refers to what teachers know about how to communicate the difference between tense and aspects to learners (Spada& Lightbown,2013)

So the distinction between content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge and ability has also been framed in terms of the distinction between declarative knowledge (knowledge about something) and procedural knowledge (the ability to do things). Which describe in these three areas (Freeman, 2016: 2-40)

- 1- Knowing about and how to use the target language.
- 2- Knowing about and how to teach in culturally appropriate way.
- 3- Knowing about and how to behave in target language.

This illustrated by the following table.

	Examples of declarative knowledge	Examples of procedural knowledge
About target language	The ability to explain grammar rules and their exceptions.	The ability to use grammar rules in speaking or writing
About teaching	The ability to explain the rationale for using jigsaw activities in language teaching.	Skills in setting up jigsaw activities in pair work or group work
About target culture	The ability to explain norms of kinesics and proxemics used by members of the culture during interaction.	Being able to behave appropriately in terms of nonverbal behavior and physical space when interacting with members of the culture.

However in teacher education course the difference between content knowledge (declarative), and pedagogical knowledge (procedural) depends on how content is presented. for example a grammar course could be framed either as content knowledge or as pedagogical knowledge and textbooks on topics such as these vary according to which approach to the subject they take.

### **Discourse skills.**

The third element is the teacher's discourse skills in English and the extent to which this provides the means to teach English. This includes the ability to maintain communication in English that is fluent, accurate, and comprehensive (Richard,2017:1-24)Teacher language proficiency was far from being as well-defined domain relying on highly routinized language and generally accepted phraseology such as is the case, with for example, air traffic controllers. Indeed, it was found to encompass everything that normal language users might be expected to do in the contact of both formal and informal communication as well as a range of specialist skills. These

specialist language skills include command of subject specific/ met linguistic terminology, on the one hand, and the discourse competence required for effective classroom delivery of subject content, on the other hand effective classroom delivery necessitates command of linguistic features. Directives are one of such features and are crucial in establishing classroom procedures and learning tasks. A range of questioning techniques is also essential if teacher is able to monitor learning understanding. the teacher will also need to use rhetorical signaling devices and simplification strategies to communicate specialist area of knowledge and render them comprehensible to learners (Elder, 2001: 9-19)

From the previous, Hobbs(2013) notes that initial teacher training courses offered in large numbers world wide and serving as an initial preparation for teaching, generally assume that the participant is a native speaker of English. they do not include a component on the teacher's language or the language of teaching. Instead the curriculum of such courses generally consist of units on content knowledge (usually referred to as language awareness and including basic features of the phonology, syntax and vocabulary of English), lesson planning, teaching skills, teaching practice and material preparation.

### **Methodology**

#### **The skills involved during teaching English language**

To determine a language teacher's ability to teach language effectively, there are four aspects (Elder,1994)

- 1- The ability to use the target language as both the medium and target of instruction
- 2- The ability to modify target language input to render it comprehensible to learners.
- 3- The ability to produce well-formed input for learners.
- 4- The ability to draw learners` attention to features of the forma language.

Drawing on the concept of decision making. I would suggest that these aspects of teaching language can be illustrated in relation to three phases of teaching: before teaching, during teaching, and after teaching

#### **Before teaching**

This phase refers to decisions teachers make prior to teaching a lesson. It is planning that teacher translate syllabus guidelines, instructional expectations, and their own beliefs and ideologies of educations into guides for action in the classroom. This aspect of teaching provides the structure and purpose for what teachers and pupils do in classroom. In the case of language teaching, a number of these decisions will reflect both the teacher's level of language awareness and knowledge as well as teacher's discourse skills. For example (Alexander, 2008: 51-53):

- Setting goals of lesson. In planning how to use a text as basics for a reading lesson the teacher's language proficiency can influence his or her choice of a literal comprehension task, rather than one requiring higher order thinking and communicative skills, which the teacher may have difficulty expressing in English.

- Using a written lesson plan opposed to mental lesson plan. Limitation in language proficiency may mean that the teacher is dependent upon a detailed lesson plan that identifies specific lexical items, structure and other language features, thus restricting the potential scope of the lesson, as opposed to use of mental lesson plan that allows for more unpredictable language to emerge during a lesson.

In general we can say that a teacher with limited language knowledge and discourse skills is restricted in the choice of activities available to him or her and may not be able to move beyond the prescribed syllabus, as would be the case if I were to teach French or Indonesian. Hence despite the considerable effort that had been made in many countries to promote communicative teaching methods, the continued use of grammar translation and audio-lingualism has been attributed to the effect of teachers' limited language proficiency. Like most methods they offer teachers a package of routine and procedures that can be implemented without making demands on their language ability

### **During teaching**

Once the teacher enters the classroom and start a lesson, language knowledge and ability also plays a crucial role in managing and directing the progress of lesson As Mak BSY (2015: 159-173) suggested that in the classroom, language has two primary function: the regulative function – which refers to how language is used to manage the social space of the classroom – and the instructional function, which refers to how language is used to develop the knowledge and skills that are the focus of a lesson. Language also plays a central role in both scaffold learning and dialogic learning, where socio cultural theory views language learning as social process of guided participation, mediated through guidance of a more knowledgeable other. In classroom, scaffolding is the process of interaction between two or more people as they carry out a classroom activity, and where one person has more advanced knowledge than the other. During the process, discourse is jointly created through the process of assisted or mediated performance, and interaction proceeds as a kind of joint problem solving between teacher and student.

Throughout, the teacher provides opportunities for noticing how language is used, experimenting with language use, practicing new modes of discourse and restructuring existing language knowledge. Language proficiency can be presumed to play an important role in determining the effectiveness with which the teacher can provide support for scaffold learning of this kind (Alexander, 2008:51-53).

The following are examples of classroom acts and activities reflecting both regulative and instructional aspects of teaching as well as scaffold instruction and that require specialized discourse skills for their effective realization:

- Explaining the goals of lesson
- Explaining task requirements
- Using English for classroom management
- Making exciting warm up
- Using terminology related to language (Sesek, 2007: 411-425)

Richards (2017) conducted case studies of seven New Zealand foreign language teachers with different levels of proficiency in their teaching language using data from interviews and classroom observation; he investigated the following aspects of their teaching:

- Exploitation of target language resources
- Provision of appropriate language models
- Provision of corrective feedback
- Provision of accurate explanations
- Provision of rich language input

However, the teacher's use of language while teaching is not only influenced by his or her own language proficiency and discourse skills but also be impacted by the learners' proficiency level. Teachers generally adapt the complexity of their language to facilitate understanding and communication of their learners, hence when teaching low proficiency learners may be less opportunity to improvise or engage in dialogic talk than with higher proficiency learners

### **After Teaching**

Teachers may also make use of their knowledge of language in decision, they may make after teaching although these decision need not necessarily be made in their teaching language, for example:

- reflecting on the quality of language students produced during lesson
  - reflecting on adjustments the teacher may have made to the lesson based on language difficulties students encountered during the lesson
  - identifying a language focus for follow up lesson activities
  - planning follow up tests or other forms of assessment
- Professional development may also be dependent on the teachers' language proficiency and could effect the extent of teachers' participation in professional development activities of the following kind : (Coniam & Falvey, 2013:147-155)
- reading books and articles in professional journals and magazines, listening to radio programmers
  - watching movies or television
  - joining on line forums or communities for teachers
  - accessing English texts, videos on the internet
  - attending seminars, workshops, and conference in English

### **Discussion and Findings**

The research is based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data obtained by means of a questionnaire distributed to English teachers, supervisors of English in different schools, also to the professors of curricula and English instruction. This questionnaire was designed on the skills that required for teachers to teach English language. Then according to these determined skills. Researcher designed a programme for English teachers in primary schools in Egypt, which consist of two 90 minutes classes. One class focused on basic communication skills, while the other was on the pedagogical skills before and through teaching (Anderson, 2016)

### **Target professional teaching skills**

Choose (highlight or underline) the option that you think is the most important skill that required to teach English language

(1- I agree, 2, I rather agree, 3- I do not know, 4 I rather disagree, 5 I disagree)

	Required skills	1	2	3	4	5
Before classroom teaching	1-Setting goals for English lesson					
	2-Using written lesson plan contain (learning objectives, educational aids, teaching strategy, warming up, evaluation, procedure for teaching English lesson)					
	3-Selecting texts and other sources of English lessons that are appropriate to the learners` level and goals of English lesson					
	4-Choosing text or other form of input to planned activities based on linguistic features of text					
	5- Understanding the potential difficulty for learners of a linguistic features of a planned activity or text that will form basis for an activity					
	6- Modifying or adapting language content in textbook to make it more suitable for his or her learners					
	7- Simplifying authentic texts by reducing them in length, and simplifying vocabulary and rephrasing complex structure					
	8- Sequencing activities based on their linguistic or communicative difficulty					
	9- Designing and selecting activities that include a focus on specific Aspects of language production or communication, such as a role play task that is designed to practice turn talking English					
	10- Transcribing a text from a tape or video recording					
During or through classroom teaching	11- Explaining the goals of lesson					
	12-Using excited warming up by aids, problems, story, life problem					
	13- Using formulaic expressions and phrases for classroom routines and procedures					
	14-Explaing the procedure for an activity					
	15- modeling the pronunciation of words and sentences					
	16- Using a good probing question skill with learners					
	17- Using terminology related to language					
	18- Guiding and monitoring students work, and providing them with corrective feedback					
	19- Using transition words and phrases to mark the closure of one activity and start of another one					
	20- Paraphrasing and summarizing information in a text					
	21- Providing examples of how words and other items are used					
	22- Building and developing students` responses					
	23- Reviewing lesson					
	24- Providing spoken preparation for written and other tasks					

	25- Checking students` understanding					
	26- Giving feedback on the accuracy and appropriacy of students` language					
Classroom management	27- Putting classroom rules with students					
	28- Making time management for his / her lesson.					
	29-Reinforcing his/her student's answers					
	30-Organizing the learning environment according to situation					
	31-Creating an attractive and safety learning environment.					
After classroom teaching	32-Making closure in suitable time					
	33-Selecting a suitable method to make a closure.					
	34-Participating his/her students in closure					
	35-Illustrating the main points in lesson during a closure.					
	36-Summarizing the lesson in closure					
After classroom teaching	37- Making assessment for his/ her student about reading, listening, writing, speaking skills in lesson					
	38- Giving to student a feedback about students` performance					
	39- Giving to student summative and formative evaluation					
	40-Using different types of questions about English lesson to evaluate students					

As you can see above, the questionnaire comprised 40 teaching skills, 10 of them teacher made them before classroom teaching, 16 of them teacher made them through classroom teaching, 5 of them about classroom management, 9 of them teacher made them after classroom teaching. All of these skills represented the requirements of teaching English language.

The general overview of the findings with regard to the skills of teaching English. Although these skills pertain to rather aspects of professional teaching skills and abilities, most of the respondents chose the options to agree and rather agree, which may be considered very important skills needed to training English teachers on them. The combined number of these skills received most answers with very strong positive evaluation, between 71% and 84%. Where the skills before teaching took strong positive evaluation with ratio 80%, the skills through teaching took strong positive evaluation with ratio 84%, the skills about classroom management took strong positive evaluation with ratio 71%, the skills after teaching took strong positive evaluation with ratio 75%

These responses from English teachers, supervisors of English, and professors in curricula and English instruction, and the agreement between about the importance of these helped the researcher in building professional development programme based on these required skills to make English teachers more effectively in teaching their subject.



## Conclusion

There is a relationship between language proficiency of English teachers and their ability to teach English in the class, and often problematic both for teachers who recognize limitations in their language abilities as well as for providers of training and professional development programmes for teachers. This article has sought to describe the requirements for teaching English language according to opinion of teachers, and also this article describes how the issue of teacher language proficiency has often been understood and addressed in language teacher education as well as approaches that have been used in pre-service and in-service programmes of English language teachers. The purpose here has not been to downplay or trivialize the importance of mastery of their subject – including language knowledge and teaching skills – for English language teacher, since as we have seen, language knowledge and teaching skills is central to the professional identity of English language teacher as well as their sense of efficacy. However language proficiency and teaching ability are not the same thing. Traditionally the ability to teach English has been understood as to a large extent a language proficiency problem, once teachers improve the level of their English, they will be able to teach effectively in English. And on this assumption teachers who are native speaker of their teaching language are regarded as more legitimate and better qualified language teacher than those who do not have a native like command of their teaching language.

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