

PROBLEMS FACED IN TEACHING ENGLISH IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS

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Annotation: This paper explores the multifaceted challenges faced by English language teachers in secondary education and offers practical strategies to overcome them. It starts by emphasizing the growing importance of English as a global lingua franca and highlights the early integration of foreign language instruction in developed countries. The paper then outlines three major categories of problems: inadequate teaching materials, ineffective curriculum design, and limited technological resources. Each issue is discussed in depth, supported by real-life examples and comparative insights, such as referencing the educational framework of the Netherlands. The second part presents innovative teaching methods and student-centered strategies, including techniques for tense instruction and vocabulary acquisition. These are designed to enhance both comprehension and retention. The work concludes by reiterating the vital role of educators and parents in fostering language learning and promoting educational advancement. Overall, the referat balances theoretical observations with actionable classroom solutions.

Key words: English teaching problems, solutions, methods

In today's interconnected world, the acquisition of foreign languages—particularly English—has become increasingly important. With around 360 million native speakers and usage in over 118 countries, English holds a dominant place in international communication, education, and professional sectors. As a result, many countries now incorporate foreign language instruction from the early stages of education. In highly developed nations, this has yielded substantial benefits in both cultural and economic spheres.

Despite these global trends, the process of learning a second language—especially for young learners—is far from straightforward. English teachers often face various hurdles that require not only linguistic knowledge but also a strong pedagogical foundation and adaptability. In the context of secondary education, several systemic and classroom-level problems persist that hinder the effectiveness of English instruction.

1. Inadequate Teaching Materials

One of the most common challenges involves the teaching materials provided to students. Although efforts have been made to modernize content—such as the recent revision of the "Student's Book" in cooperation with Cambridge University Press—the supporting "Workbook" remains outdated. Its lack of color is particularly problematic for visual exercises that rely on color-coding or identification. Students are often asked to complete tasks that involve choosing or naming colors, which becomes difficult and demotivating without visual aids. This leads to hesitancy and incomplete or incorrect responses, negatively impacting both comprehension and classroom engagement.

2. Unstructured and Developmentally Inappropriate Content

Another major concern lies in the organization of the curriculum. Some units include complex grammar or reading tasks that are not suitable for the students' developmental stage. For example, translating lengthy texts and answering advanced comprehension questions is often overwhelming for early learners, who are still adapting to the structure of school itself. Instead, lessons should focus on simple, everyday vocabulary related to topics familiar to students—such as their home life, family, or school. Overly complicated grammar and stories not only reduce motivation but also hinder long-term language acquisition. To overcome this, teachers must be equipped with both professional training and an understanding of age-appropriate instruction methods.

3. Limited Access to Technological Resources

Modern teaching is increasingly dependent on multimedia tools to facilitate dynamic learning. Tools such as projectors, audio equipment, laptops, and interactive whiteboards significantly enhance the language learning process by catering to different learning styles—especially auditory and visual. Unfortunately, many schools still lack access to such equipment. In these environments, instruction often reverts to rote memorization of grammar rules and vocabulary, which can be monotonous and ineffective. In contrast, incorporating videos, recordings, and digital presentations can significantly increase students' engagement and retention. For instance, watching a short dialogue in English provides not only vocabulary exposure but also cultural context and pronunciation models (Modern problems of science, society and education. 2022. 1:71).

Countries like the Netherlands provide a valuable benchmark in this regard. There, all levels of education are accessible without tuition fees, and schools are well-resourced. Teachers enjoy competitive salaries and ongoing professional development, which contribute to higher educational outcomes. While our country is still in a transitional phase, positive developments are underway. Many teachers have completed university degrees and training workshops, and are now applying innovative pedagogical strategies to overcome classroom difficulties.

Innovative Solutions and Teaching Strategies

Addressing these challenges requires not only structural changes but also creative and student-friendly classroom methods. Below are two practical techniques currently applied by educators to improve language acquisition:

1. Teaching Basic Tenses with Practical Examples

Understanding verb tenses—such as the Present Simple, Past Simple, and Future Simple—is often difficult for students. Many struggle with auxiliary verbs or confuse tenses entirely. Instead of starting with complex grammatical explanations, students should first become familiar with the core meaning and structure of each tense through relatable examples.

Past Simple: "I played football." → This can be varied: "She cooked a meal."

Present Simple: "I play football." → Students can adapt it: "He watches TV."

Future Simple: "I will play football." → Becomes: "We will do our homework."

By practicing these models and modifying subjects and objects, students can internalize grammatical structures more intuitively. Once these patterns are familiar, teachers can introduce additional concepts like time markers (e.g., yesterday, usually, tomorrow) and negative or interrogative forms.

2. Enhancing Vocabulary Through Cultural and Visual Associations

Vocabulary retention poses another significant challenge. However, connecting English words with culturally familiar terms or imagery can make learning more effective and enjoyable.

Man – erkak: Linked with the MAN truck brand, often driven by men.

Tomato – pomidor: "Tomat" is a commonly used term in Uzbek cooking.

Hot Dog – kuchuk (dog): The shape resembles the animal

Lunch – tushlik: "Hot lunch" reinforces both meaning and usage.

Further, students benefit from recognizing words that sound or appear similar in English and Uzbek:

Kangaroo – kengru

Pizza – pitsa

Actor – aktyor

Phone – telefon

These strategies not only enhance memory but also reduce the psychological distance between the native and target languages, fostering confidence and curiosity in learners.

Conclusion: Teaching English in secondary schools presents a range of

challenges, from outdated materials and insufficient technological resources to curriculum misalignment. However, with the right methods and resources, these obstacles can be successfully addressed. Teachers play an essential role in adapting instruction to meet students' needs, and ongoing support from both educational authorities and parents is vital.

As the proverb goes, “Where there’s a will, there’s a way.” By applying thoughtful strategies and prioritizing learner engagement, the quality of English education can continue to improve, ultimately empowering students to thrive in a globalized world.

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