

Key Essentials of Effective English Language Teaching

Krishna Kumar Khatri 

Assistant Professor

Mahendra Ratna Campus, Tahachal

kkhatriilam@gmail.com

Article History

Keywords: English language teaching, effective teaching and learning, essentials for effective pedagogy, context sensitive pedagogy

Received: 11 June 2025

Reviewed: 15 November 2025

Accepted: 22 November 2025

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.3126/snprcj.v6i1.91806>

Copyright 2025 © Author(s)

Abstract

Effective teaching and learning remain a central concern in education and constitute a significant focus in English language education. Drawing on extensive review of the relevant literature and the author's own teaching experiences, this paper identifies and discusses six key essentials that contribute to effective English language teaching: dynamic and agentive role of teachers, active and autonomous learners who take responsibilities for their own learning, context sensitive methods and strategies that critique one-size-fits-all methodological orientation, strategic use of no-cost and low-cost instructional resources which address learner's specific needs, integration of information and communication technology and valid and reliable assessments to ensure fair evaluation of student's learning outcomes. The paper implies that effective English language teaching requires the efficacy of all components so as to foster holistic approach and contribute to offer enhanced pedagogical practices.

Introduction

English language has become the most widely used means of communication and world's lingua franca. It has gained its status as global language (albeit with some fallacies) and lingua franca. The global spread and importance of English language is significantly associated with the expansion of English language teaching (ELT) around the world. Consequently, ELT has also become an important field of activity in the present-day academia. It has been accepted as an established profession with its own history, principles and procedures. It has been spreading its scope and influence around the globe with various pedagogical frameworks including teaching English as second language (TESL) teaching English as foreign language (TEFL) teaching English to the speakers of other languages (TESOL), and teaching English as lingua franca (TELF).

Regarding its commencement, the scientific basis of English language teaching within and beyond Europe began since 1920, after the dominant practices of teaching of classical languages in Europe dated 1750 (Howatt, 1984). Then after, English language teaching has undergone tremendous changes over the years, in terms of principles and practices. Many applied linguists, ELT experts and pedagogues involved and contributed to bring the changes and innovations for effective practices English language teaching. Specifically, the era of twentieth century gave birth to a variety of methods and techniques of language teaching. Moreover, the field of language teaching between the 1880s-1980s was predominantly characterized as the search for a single universal method that could be applied across all educational contexts regardless of contextual milieus (Brown, 2002). It implies that the move of language teaching profession during twentieth century was towards seeking single, even newer and better methods and procedures of language teaching in comparison to the past ones. In the same line, Richards and Rodgers (2001) state that the history of language teaching in the last one hundred years has been characterized by a search for more effective ways of teaching second or foreign languages when the commonest solution to the language teaching problem was seen with the adoption of new teaching approach or method. So, the attempts and practices made during that period called as 'Method era' of English language teaching.

After the 1980s, the trend of ELT shifted from methods to post-method conditions (Kumaravadivelu, 1994). The post-method era brought changes and modifications in the patterns and practices of ELT. The post-method condition put emphasis on context sensitive pedagogy instead of focusing on the effectiveness of single method in English language teaching. This trend is known as paradigm shift in English language teaching which also brought changes in the locus of the effectiveness of ELT pedagogy. These sustained efforts made over time have indicated the prominence of the effective language teaching practice in general and foreign language teaching across the globe (Ghimire, 2019). In what follows, I present a brief overview of the phenomenon of effective teaching and learning with a specific focus on effective English language teaching.

Effective English Language Teaching: An Overview

The notion of effective teaching has been delineated differently in terms of the purpose it serves and contexts in which it takes place. It is challenging to describe effective ELT as it is a complex, multifaceted process with varying meanings for various people (Bell, 2005). Conceptualizing effective teachers, effective teaching, and teaching effectiveness presents inherent complexity and remains a subject of

ongoing debate (Ko et al., 2016) Moreover, effective instruction supports the students to gain the expected outcomes as intended by the curriculum and creates comfortable spaces for operating collaborative and cooperative learning activities in the classroom (Acheson & Gall, 2003). Likewise, an effective teaching requires a variety of essential components, including good content knowledge, well-planned lessons for presentation, skilful use of well-chosen questions to engage and challenge students and to consolidate understanding and effective evaluation for learning (Ko et al., 2016). Moreover, Walls (1999) presents four principles for effective teaching. First, effective teaching involves employing outcomes-focused instructional approach where students receive clear information regarding their learning objectives and the rationale behind their educational direction. The second principle involves instructional clarity, whereby teachers deliver explicit directions and comprehensive explanations regarding course structure and content delivery. The third principle encompasses engagement, which requires students to learn through active participation. This necessitates that teachers establish a dynamic educational environment that reduces passive lecture time and provides students with opportunities to practice each concept being taught. The fourth principle encompasses enthusiasm, which posits that effective teachers demonstrate high levels of enthusiasm as a reflection of their professional competence and confidence. Teachers can establish a positive learning environment by exhibiting passion for their subject matter, using student names, encouraging classroom participation, and maintaining active movement throughout the learning space. In the same way, Kidwell (2015) mentions five characteristics of highly effective teaching and learning: learning climate; classroom assessment and reflection; instructional rigor and student engagement; instructional relevance; and knowledge of content. He reiterates that effective teaching encompasses the efforts for creating supportive learning environment to the students with clear expectations and positive relationships, encouraging active learning. Teachers and students work together to collect and reflect on learning data to guide instruction. Effective teaching also involves a collaborative process where teachers and students gather and reflect on learning to guide instruction. Teachers also support students in engaging with complex, inquiry-based tasks that foster creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving. Similarly, teachers in the effective pedagogy should possess the capacity to facilitate meaningful learning experiences that prepare students for future endeavours. Besides, teachers' knowledge and insights on current theories, principles, concepts, and disciplinary skills are crucial for effectively presenting and articulating contents to students. The views of various experts and educationists seem to be identical that the essential

principles and parameters for effective teaching and learning share a common ground. They accentuate on the teacher's adequate competence on contents, appropriate teaching context and enthusiastic learning environment for the active and purposeful engagement of students.

Building on insights from the above literature, it is crystal clear that the principles and components of effective teaching process are closely related to conceptualize and explicate about effective English language teaching and learning endeavours in particular that take place in any part of the world. Effective English language teaching also requires the efficacy in its essential building blocks and concerned stakeholders like teachers, students, contents, materials, contexts and the like. It means that there are certain factors that play tremendous role in effective English language teaching. In what follows, the essential components and contributing factors as well as strategies for effective English language teaching are mentioned and discussed with necessary substantiation.

Methods and Materials

Since this paper is based on the analysis of the secondary data, qualitative document analysis has been adopted as the principal method of inquiry. The method was employed to systematically review and interpret a wide range of theoretical and empirical literatures on effective English language teaching. As the key readings, included books, journal articles, theses, conference papers and research reports were purposively selected, thoroughly reviewed and analysed to identify, define and enumerate the key essentials for operating effective English language teaching. Then, the six key essentials for effective English language teaching further interpreted and discussed in relation to the author's own teaching context and experiences.

Results and Discussion

Effective English language teaching is a multifaceted endeavour and shaped by the dynamic interplay of various essential components. Drawing on content analysis and interpretation from the relevant literature, six key essential components have been identified and discussed in the ensuing sections.

Agentive Role of Teachers

Teacher factor is very significant to consider for the effective language teaching. Teachers are vital agents of teaching and learning activities whose role counts a lot in making the whole programme effective. The effectiveness of English language teaching is imagined only with the management of competent and well

skilled English language teachers. Effective teaching requires dynamic role of teachers in the classroom. Dincera et al. (2013) contend that effective and dynamic English language teachers must possess diverse competencies, including socio-affective skills, pedagogical knowledge, subject matter expertise, and personal qualities. Furthermore, effective teachers should demonstrate awareness of learners' needs that classroom instruction is designed to address.

An effective teacher should be aware of learners' needs that they are intended to fulfil from the classroom instruction. Zamani and Ahangari (2016) assert that if teacher is not aware of the learner's expectation and needs related to the course, it will have negative outcomes regarding the students' performance. Thus, the teacher should make the students satisfied addressing their current learning needs and goals. Moreover, effective teachers should create learning environments where students play the role as active participants both individually and as members of collaborative groups, while fostering cross-cultural understanding and value of classroom diversity. Teachers should also promote student responsibility for their own learning while addressing diverse learning needs. Additionally, they should implement effective classroom management through consistent routines that foster a sense of comfort, order, and positive student behaviour. More importantly teacher's technological knowledge is also crucial in effective teaching of English language. For this, he should be able to provide students equitable access to technology, space, tools and time that effectively allocates time for students to engage in hands-on experiences, discuss and process content and make meaningful connections with the students (Kidwell, 2015).

Active and Autonomous Learners

Learner factor is another important concern for effective English language teaching endeavour. Active and creative engagement of the learners has tremendous impact for effective English language teaching. Learners should articulate and understand learning goals/targets and criteria for achieving success. Moreover, they should read a variety of texts with understanding and refine inquiry skills too. Students who actively engage in out-of-class study and practice are likely to achieve greater long-term progress than those who treat such activities as tasks to be completed hastily. Students who take responsibility for their own learning will not only improve their language skills more effectively throughout the course but have the agency and skills they need to continue studying after the course ends (TESOL International Association, 2017). Therefore, students in the effective English language teaching and learning should pose and respond to meaningful questions among the peers and teacher. They should

possess the capacity to use the appropriate learning materials and strategies while analysing and interpreting the contents of the text which they have gone through in the class. Moreover, the effective students should develop descriptions, explanation, predictions, and models using evidence. More importantly, they should work collaboratively to address complex problems which appear in course of dealing with the classroom tasks as assigned by the teacher. Moreover, English language teaching can be made effective if the students are exposed to outdoor activities such as sports, music, and cultural programmes. Anderson (2018) opines that students who more actively engage outside the classroom in extracurricular or community activities cultivate friendships and interests which help with broadening language acquisition. In the same way, students should possess the digital literacy in the 21st century age which enable them to access a huge amount of learning materials. Consequently, they become able to take part in virtual learning forum that unquestionably fosters their autonomous learning strategies which also enhances effective English language teaching.

Context-sensitive Methodology

Methodology factor is another vital component for effective English language teaching. The approaches, methods techniques and strategies to be employed in ELT determine the effectiveness of the whole programme. English language teaching has witnessed the rise and fall of a number of approaches and methods over a period of time. Similarly, many pedagogical experts of ELT endeavoured in searching for much better methods than the previously practised methods which spanned for about a century known as method era. Since after 1980s, the method era was under questions by the postmethod era in which the attempts were made to situate and practice the method as per the contexts and it paved the way to innovate and practise the context sensitive pedagogy in ELT. This is simply taken as the paradigm shift in ELT which is also conceived as an important endeavour made for effective English language teaching. This paradigm shift in ELT suggests that effective English language teaching is to be based on bottom-up approach. It should not be limited to the previously selected spoon-fed method; but it should be context sensitive and technology embedded. Technology embedded and blended teaching strategies are the latest innovative practices for effective English language teaching.

Low-cost and no-cost Teaching Materials

The material factor is another significant ingredient for effective English language teaching. It is supportive for both the teacher and learners in the classroom instruction. Both learning outcomes and teacher motivation can be significantly increased by using instructional materials that are of high quality and calibrated.

The quality of the teaching resources is just as important as their quantity. Instructional resources must be tailored to the unique needs and situations of their users, including teachers and students, in order to establish productive teaching environments and promote learning outcomes.

Glewwe et al. (2009) found that providing textbooks to Kenyan students only raised the test scores of higher-achieving children, partly because the textbooks were too difficult for most children's skill levels, and partly because they were in English, which was most children's third language. Thus, effective materials must therefore cover all of the fundamental knowledge that students will encounter, acquire, and use throughout a course of learning. They also need to be meticulously prepared, chosen, arranged, and improved.

Moreover, effective materials make learners feel comfortable and confident because both the content and type of activities are perceived by them as significant and practical to their lives (Pardo & Tellez, 2009). Tomlinson (1998) suggests that effective materials facilitate the learners to learn language increasing their knowledge repertoire, experience and level of understanding; and simultaneously make them aware of what they want and need to learn.

Integration of ICT in ELT

The technological factor has also embraced its effect to the act of English language teaching. More specifically, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has greatly facilitated the ways of English language teaching and learning. ICT has emerged as an effective and accessible tool that offers learners abundant resources, an engaging visual setting, and a dynamic platform for instruction. The use of e-learning, internet mediated electronic devices like computers, multimedia projectors and smart boards has brought massive changes in the process of ELT. ICT has supported to both the teachers and learners in accessing a huge amount of learning resources and disseminating the learned knowledge among world's audiences. ICT enhances the learning process and flexibility of areas by encouraging learner motivation through collaborative activities and boosting learning efficiency by complementing classroom instruction (Panthee, 2022). It

creates opportunities for interactive engagement, offers instant feedback, promotes learner independence, and replicates real-life contexts and experiences through the use of videos, audio, and visual graphics (Ghimire, 2019). The effective use of ICT in the classroom has altered the roles of both students and teachers (Panthee, 2025). Thus, integration of ICT is an important factor for effective English language teaching in the present-day world. For this, both the teachers and learners should possess digital competence (Walker & White, 2013) that provides a mechanism for diagnosing, understanding and repairing their digital needs.

Valid and Reliable Assessment

Effective teaching is customarily tied up with fair and valid assessment system. Since teaching and testing are two distinct processes, they are interrelated sub-systems of the whole education system. Effectiveness of teaching is scrutinized by the systematic operation and administration of testing system. Subsequently, the extent of what is to be tested is determined by what has been taught before through teaching process. So, the successful and effective teaching requires a reliable and valid testing system without which the whole endeavours of teaching remain incomplete.

Conclusion

Since English language teaching has become global phenomenon, its scope has continued to expand and evolve over time to enhance its greater effectiveness. The paper was attempted to identify and discuss the key essentials of effective English language teaching considering its evolving scope and dynamics. Building on qualitative document analysis, various books, journal articles, empirical research reports were systematically reviewed and identified six key essentials to be operated for effective English language teaching. Several factors including dynamic and competent teachers, active and autonomous learners, context sensitive methods and classroom strategies, carefully planned and designed localized and digitally embedded materials, and integration of ICT play significant role for effective English language teaching in the present-day world. Therefore, for effective English language teaching, we need to consider about the efficacy of all components. To reflect my own experiences as an ELT practitioner, I have also attempted to be a pedagogically innovative and professionally enthusiastic teacher of English language over the career trajectories. I am keen on making my teaching my learners active, creative and well acquainted with the instructional goals. Moreover, I am also attempting to bring some innovations and enhancement with the integration of ICT devices and programmes as per the needs of the present-day world. Currently, I have been continuing my professional learning and pedagogical

endeavours through the excessive exploitation of ICT to update and upgrade my knowledge and qualification which has also substantiated me for handling effective English language teaching in the real field. Thus, this paper implies that the effectiveness of English language teaching cannot be ensured by focusing on any single component in isolation, rather it emphasizes the coherent and integrated interaction of all components.

References

- Acheson, K. A., & Gall, M. D. (2003). *Clinical supervision and teacher development: Preservice and in-service applications*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Anderson, M. (2018 Aug 3). *Six qualities of successful ESL teachers*. <https://www.teachthought.com/pedagogy/6-qualities-of-successful-esl-teachers>.
- Bell, T. R. (2005). Behaviors and attitudes of effective foreign language teachers: Results of a questionnaire study. *Foreign Language Annals*, 38 (2), 259-270.
- Brown, H. D. (2002). English language teaching in the “post-method” era: Toward better diagnosis, treatment, and assessment. In J. C., Richards, & W. A., Renandya, (Eds.). (2002). *Methodology in language teaching: An anthology of current practice*, (pp. 9-18). Cambridge University Press.
- Dincera, A., Goksub, A., Takkacc, A., & Yazicid, M. (2013). Common characteristics of an effective English language teacher. *The International Journal of Educational Researchers*, 4 (3), 1-8.
- Ghimire, N. B. (2019). Five facets for effective English language teaching. *Journal of NELTA Gandaki*, 2, 65-73. <https://doi.org/10.3126/jong.v2i0.26604>.
- Glewwe, P., Kremer, M., & Moulin, S. (2009). Many children left behind? Textbooks and test scores in Kenya. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 1(1), 112-35.
- Howatt, A. P. R. (1984). *A History of English language teaching*. Oxford University Press
- Johnson, R. K. (1989). *The second language curriculum. In appropriate design: The internal organisation of course units*. Cambridge University Press.
- Kidwell, K. (2015). Characteristics of highly effective teaching and learning (CHETL). [https://education.ky.gov/curriculum/standards/teachtools/Pages/Characteristics-of-Highly-Effective-Teaching-and-Learning-\(CHETL\).aspx](https://education.ky.gov/curriculum/standards/teachtools/Pages/Characteristics-of-Highly-Effective-Teaching-and-Learning-(CHETL).aspx)

- Ko, J., Sammons, P., & Bakkum, L. (2016). *Effective teaching*. Education Development Trust.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (1994). The post method condition: (E)merging strategies for second/foreign language teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 28(1), 27-48.
- Panthee, D. (2025). Exploring Attributes of Effective English Language Teachers, *NELTA ELT Forum* NELTA, <https://neltaeltforum.wordpress.com/2025/01/01/exploring-attributes-of-effective-english-language-teachers/>
- Panthee, D. (2022). Online learning at public campuses during COVID-19: Students' perceptions and practices. *Siddhajyoti Interdisciplinary Journal*, 3(1), 126–136. <https://doi.org/10.3126/sij.v3i1.46280>
- Pardo, A. N. & Tellez, M. F. T. (2009). ELT Materials: The key to fostering effective teaching and learning settings. *Profile: Issue in Teachers' Professional Development*, 171-186. <https://revistas.unal.edu.co/index.php/profile/article/view/11449/36802>
- Richards, J. C. & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- TESOL International Association. (2017). Principles of language learning and the role of the teacher. https://www.tesol.org/docs/default-source/books/14077_sam.pdf?sfvrsn=2&sfvrsn=2
- Tomlinson, B. (1998). *Materials development in language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Walker, A. & White, G (2013). *Technology-enhanced language learning: Connecting theory and practice*. Oxford University Press.
- Walls, R. T. (1999). *Psychological foundations of learning*. WVU International Centre for Disability Information.
- Zamani, R. & Ahangari, S. (2016). Characteristics of an effective English language teacher (EELT) as perceived by learners of English. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 4 (14), 69-88.