

A Brief Report on the 'Introduction' Speech

Lesson one of 'Practical English: Learning and Teaching' by Professor Bhaskar Dasgupta was very informative. It discussed the motivation behind the course and also outlined the course module. The practical difficulties of Indians, for whom English is a second language, were explained. During childhood, the necessity of this language is not felt and in adulthood other priorities take over. Additional factors like the fear of the language and the assumption that learning English is a 'Himalayan task' also puts one at a disadvantage. The presentation stresses the need of systematic course material and dedicated teachers. The will of the student, however, is of utmost significance. Even if the course or the teacher is not efficient, a student can learn the language if he/she has the will power. Professor Bhaskar Dasgupta very beautifully made it clear that a long-term commitment is required and the 20-hour course is only a roadmap. The course, however, promises a significant improvement if followed seriously. The study material and the course are designed to cater to people for whom English is not the first language, so a Common Local Language (C.L.L.) will be used, which is Hindi for this course. As such, a minimum proficiency in Hindi will be a necessity for the course. One very important feature of the course is the scalability for audience of different backgrounds. The same material with the same structure through minor modifications of coverage and details can be given to school teachers as well as other adults and can also be used for school children. In a nutshell, the entire session was precise and cleared every doubt of students who are new to the course. The doubt clearing session, style, tone, clarity, facial expressions, as well as the personal touch of Dr. Dasgupta were really commendable.