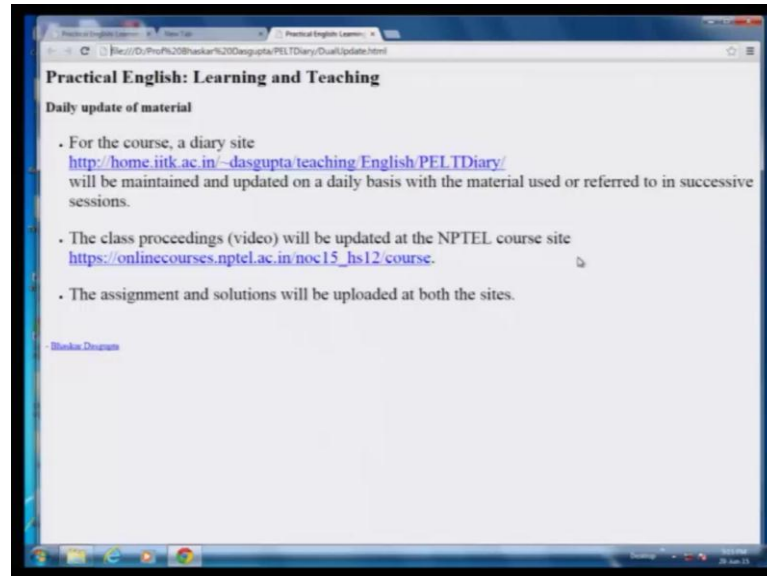


Practical English: Learning and Teaching
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Lecture – 01

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Welcome to this NPTEL course on Practical English Learning and Teaching. We start at the first session and...

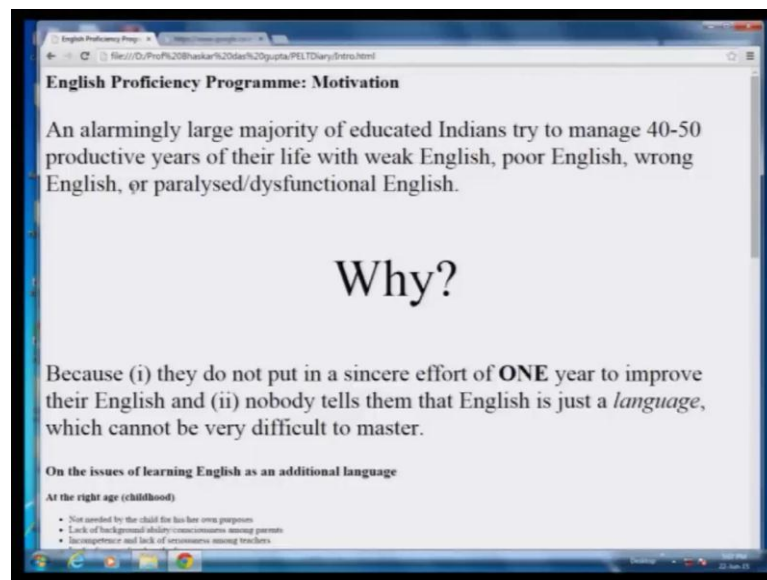
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Practical English: Learning and Teaching
Course Outline (July-August 2015)

Session	Instruction	Questions	Assignment	Tutorial/Practice	Teaching
1	Introduction	Discussions	Write a summary, a report, or a critique on the opening introductory lecture	Course plan	Notes
2					
3					
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	Quarter 1 ends here				
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13					

First let me spell out a little in detail, what is this course about and then, we will see how we are learning to execute the course. This course practical English learning and teaching is actually based on a program on English proficiency, which we have been learning in IIT Kanpur for slightly more than two years.

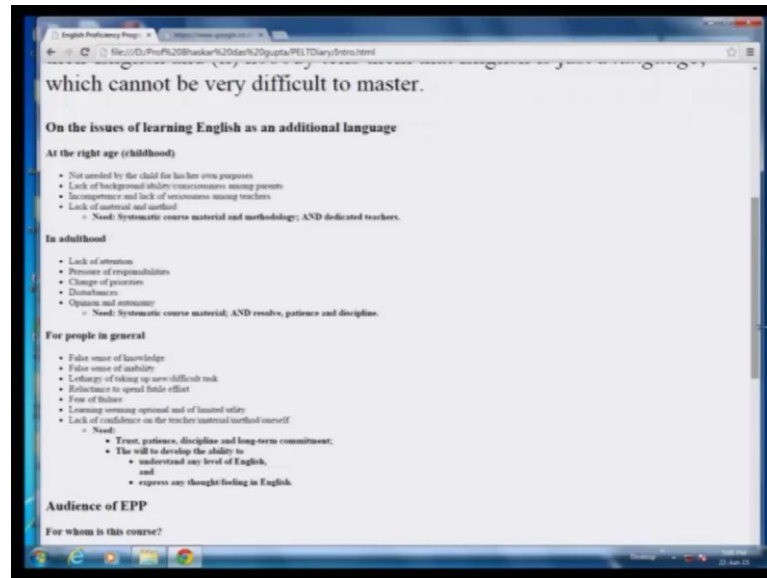
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And, first let me tell you what is the motivation of this English proficiency program. Many of you know that an alarmingly large majority of educated Indians try to manage their entire life with a very poor command over English and therefore, their professional life gets seriously disturbed. The question is, why this is such a situation. The reason is that they just avoid putting one year of serious study and serious effort to get their English in order and some how many of them keep on thinking that learning English and achieving master over this language is extremely difficult and that, they will not able to do and nobody has categorically told them, that English is just a language.

The way you can learn any other language, you can learn English and you can master it. It should not be very difficult and many of the people have done that before you and at the same time, as you there are another million or another large number of people who are doing it every day, you can do it and it requires roughly one year of serious effort, serious study to improve the language proficiency. After which, you can read the benefit of that labor for next 50 to 60 years. Now, why this is a situation?

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I am talking here about educated Indians at the right age of learning with it is child hood. In India, it is difficult for majority of children to learn the English language, the way they learn their mother tongue, because for the purpose of a child, English proficiency is not needed. Because, at home, at play ground, at school, with friends he does not need English, besides in order to know the external world he does not have to relive on English. He does that with his own language in his locality.

So, for his own purposes he does not need it. It is a different matter, that in his later life he will need it, at that time it will be wider. But, at the current time since the child does not need it, he has no urge to learn it. Apart from that, the background of a majority of children is not conducive to a continuous thorough learning of English. Apart from that parents of majority of children are not conscious regarding the necessity of teaching English to their children and the way to do it.

Besides, many of the teachers interested to teach English to children have inadequate competence, either their English is weak or they do not know, how to take the knowledge to the children and apart from that, it is difficult for them, because there is no coherent material and method by the help of which such a teaching is possible. So, for that what is needed in our country is a systematic course material and methodology and of course, dedicated teachers.

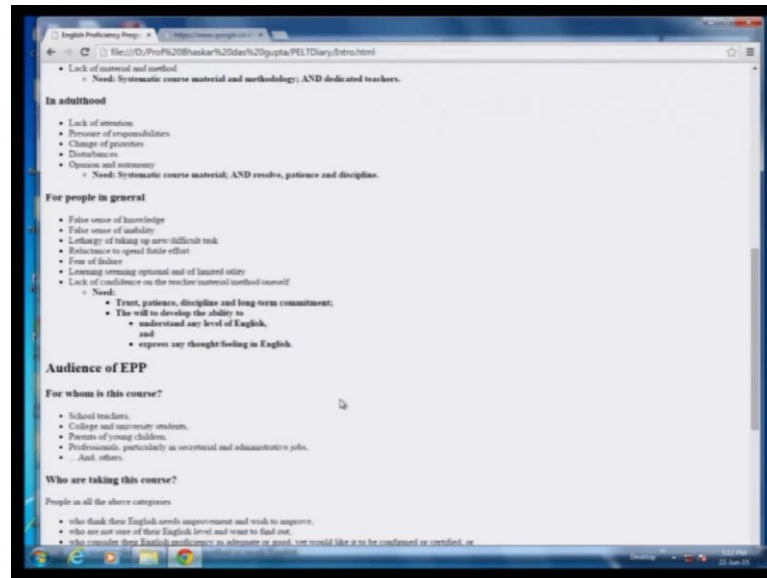
Even after the childhood is over, when the command of the life passes on to the hand of that person himself, at the time also he finds a lot of difficulty in acquiring the language, which he actually has to use in his English profession, in his work, in his life throughout. There are several results in adulthood, which are different from the results of childhood. During adulthood, attention diverts to other practical things of life and learning cannot be the focus of a person.

He is mild with a lot of responsibilities, a lot of pressures, work pressure and of course, his priorities change. His family becomes first priority, not his learning. Apart from that there are other social disturbances, so he cannot concentrate on his studies. Besides, even after all these, in adulthood there is another problem which is the opinion and autonomy. In adulthood, a person can decide whether he will take up studies or not.

In childhood, if the parents say that you have to study, then children study, they have no other way, but in adulthood they have the autonomy, they can decide that I will study later, right now I do some other important work and therefore, a very important work which was study actually gets into the lower priority. Besides, in adulthood people have a lot of opinion, so they are not so malleable, that they can be molded by even a good teacher.

And in adulthood, if somebody wants to learn something new with a real dedication, then apart from systematic course material, he needs to have a lot of resolve, patience and discipline. For people in general, whether children and adulthood, children also sometimes false pray to these weaknesses.

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Some people have false sense of knowledge, I know a lot and that stops the flow of knowledge to a great extent and sometimes people, who actually do not have adequate background share from going to a learning program, basically because they think they already know enough and then, diametrically opposite there is a false sense of inability. Some people think that English belongs to others, who are more fortunate and I perhaps do not deserve it, who says so.

If you want to acquire a particular knowledge of course, you deserve it. Your wish to acquire it is your license to acquire it. So, there should be no feeling that somebody is so low that he does not deserve to learn a language. Because, as I told you earlier that it is just a language, which millions of people know, millions of people are learning every day, it cannot be very difficult. Apart from that, typically it is human nature that there is a lethargy of taking up something new and sometimes, people think that may be the effort that I spend in this will go waste, I will not succeed, I will not learn enough, so why spend the effort.

This is a very negative way of thinking and it should be against and people do not want to fail. They do not want to try and fail and that way they were trying. Besides in adulthood, people find that learning even if they wish to learn it that becomes optional, there is no compulsion to do it and they feel that it is of limited utility. How much I will learn now, in adulthood people think in that term. So, and of course, they also have lack

of confidence on the teacher or the method or the subject method, material they use to teach. Though the bottom line is that you will learn a subject if you have the will poor.

Even if the material is not the top class, even if the teacher is not top class, if your will is top class, then you will succeed. This is something which people must bear in mind and the need is of course, trust that one can do it, patience to continue doing it, discipline to follow the paths once taken thoroughly till the end and of course, long term commitment. This course that we are starting today is of only duration of 20 hours, yet I am talking about long term commitment, because within a span of 20 hours a language is not learnt.

I am telling you that the English, English is just a language, it cannot be very difficult, but then it is not that easy, no language is that easy that you can learn in 20 hours and that is why I am talking about a long term commitment. This 20 hours duration is just going to show you the way, along with you will make some improvement during these two months and after that the journey continues. So, you have to keep that in mind, that starting from a very rudimentary level you do not expect that at the end of two months, you will know English a lot.

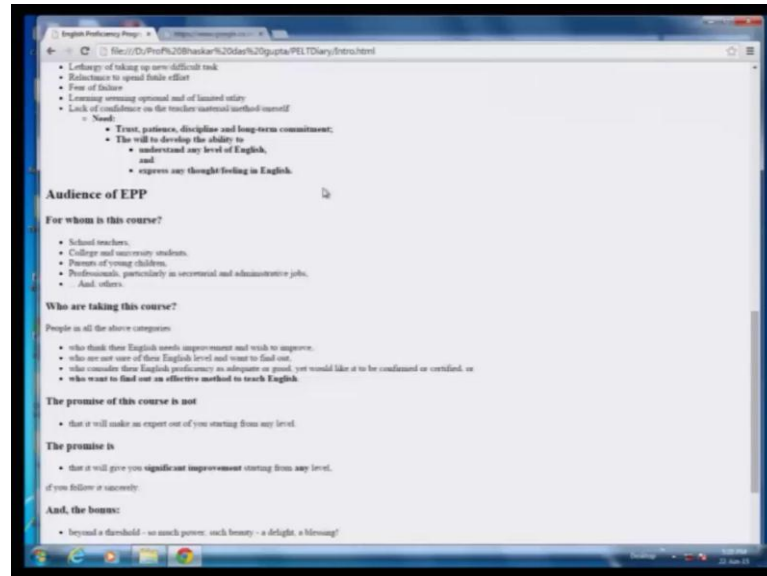
From whatever level you start you will make an improvement, but the most important thing is that we are trying to show you the way along which you can proceed even after the completion of the course and continue learning more and improving your command more and more every day. And in order to go on learning and making improvement in your learning, you need to have the will to understand any level of English and express almost anything, any feeling, any thought in English. This kind of a feeling should not stop you, that this is ((Refer Time: 10:45)) of course, that I cannot read.

Why? If you cannot really today, do not say that I cannot, this of course, I cannot read. You say that this I postpone, right now I read something, I study something, which is of my level, but never say that these things are anyway not for me. So, have the will to eventually be capable of reading and understanding anything that is written in the language. On the other side, if you have a complicated thought, if you have complicated feeling which you want to express, do not say that this kind of thing of course, I cannot express in English.

You can, perhaps not today, perhaps not immediately, perhaps not within 30 seconds, but if you putting enough effort you can express very complex feeling, any complex thought

in the language once you master it. And you need to set the agenda for yourself to learn the language up to that level.

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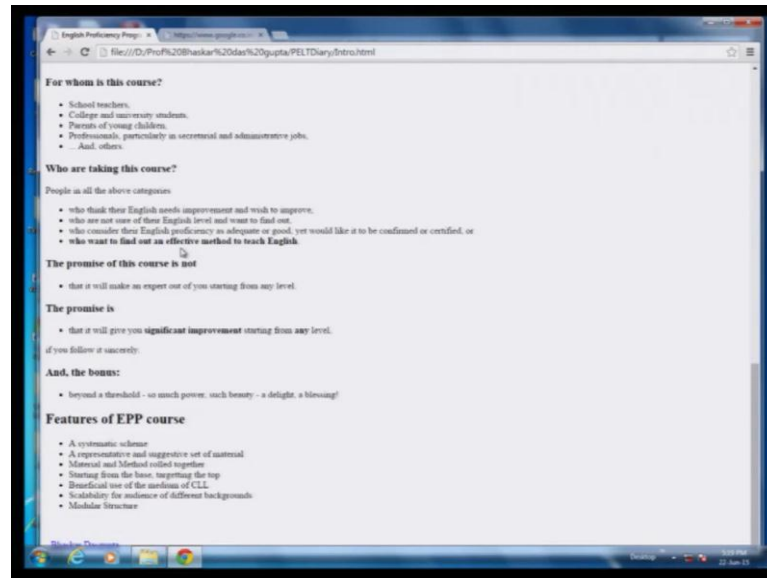


At this stage, I would like to enumerate the different segments of people whom we are expecting in the audience of this course, which we will be interchangeably calling PLT and EPP. Because, PLT is a current forum in which we are offering the course practical English learning and teaching and EPP is the current program from which we are having the ongoing activities.

So, this course is to a great extent for school teachers, because they build the future of the country and of course, college and university students, who are the present of the country, present of the society and parents of young children, who want to ensure good English education for their children and do not want to rely completely on the societal arrangements for doing the same.

Besides professionals, particularly in secretarial and administrative job who need English for their day to day professional work and there are many other groups, who gain benefit themselves from this course and who are taking this course right now in this more NPTEL program.

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People in all the above categories, who think that their English needs improvement and then, there are people who are not sure, whether their English is alright and they want to find out. Then, there are people who think that they know good English and would like to have it confirmed or certified and apart from that there are teachers, there are people, who want to find out an effective way to teach English and make note, that the promise of this course is not that, it will make an expert out of you, starting from any level, that is not the promise.

It will depend the proficiency acquired through this course will certainly depend on the starting proficiency of the participant. What the course promises is that starting from any level it will make a significant improvement in your English proficiency of course, if you follow it since early. And apart from that it gives you a bonus advantage, which you do not try for and which you do not try to give you, but and that bonus is that beyond a threshold, when your English proficiency goes beyond a point, then you will notice so much power, so much beauty in the language, that you will feel that it is a delight, it is a blessing.

Still I am not focusing on this issue, because this perhaps can be told not only about English, but about many other languages, almost every human tongue is blessed with so much sweetness, so much power and so much beauty, that acquiring any new language is an advantage in itself. But, right now we are focusing on English and we are trying to

promote English language, because in today's world that is necessary for survival and prosperity and I am advocating you that, advocating to you that you put a lot of effort in the education of your children and yourself in this language, so that new prosper and you contribute in the prosperity of the society.

Why? Based on what feature we think that EPP or this PLT course or this way of teaching has this premise that it will give significant improvement starting from any level? The reason is that, EPP course has a number of important features. The study material and the scheme of teaching has been designed in order to cater to the teaching of a language, which is not the first language, not the other tongue of the student.

It is a systematic scheme and it has a representative and suggestive set of material with the help of which you can make appropriate step by step progress and in this, the material and the course material and the teaching method are both role together, in the sense that the program to begin with is actually a program, not only to acquire proficiency in the subject, but also to acquire proficiency in teaching the subject and it starts from the base and targets till the top.

And of course, in doing this since we have already assumed that our target audience, our target student does not learn English as his first language, then the question raises, what is his first language. And whatever is his first language, we call that first language as CLL Common Local Language in which the class room is generally proficient and since the audience already has enough proficiency in a common language. So, we take the help of that common language proficiency in order to communicate our ideas in many instances.

And in this particular case, we are taking Hindi as the common local language and that is why a basic attitude in Hindi will be expected from the participant to follow through the course properly. One great feature of this EPP course is scalability for audience of different backgrounds that is the same material with the same scheme through minor adjustments of coverage and details can be given to school children as well as to school teachers and other adult participants.

And right now, in this education in PLT in the Mooc course we will be taking an approach which will be appropriate for adults, but at a reasonable level of background. At this stage, I would like to answer any questions that any of you ask. Any question?

Student: Sir, I have a question. Why Indians do not want to learn English, knowing that English is an international language.

There are several dimensions in it. It is not that playing that English do not want to learn English. Some, they do not want to learn English, some do not care, some do not know the importance and there are many more like to learn the language, but are not ready to put in proper effort from that and that is a major concept.

Student: Sir, I have a question. There are other English courses and there are ways of teaching in English, I mean. Is the practically English does not have any other significance?

Well, by calling our course practical English, we want to emphasis that this is and for those people who want to use English for their work. Not necessarily for acquiring a great scholastic level, not necessarily for pursuing literary interest, but just for the day to day purposes which is needed in their work, which is practical. So, that is the idea.

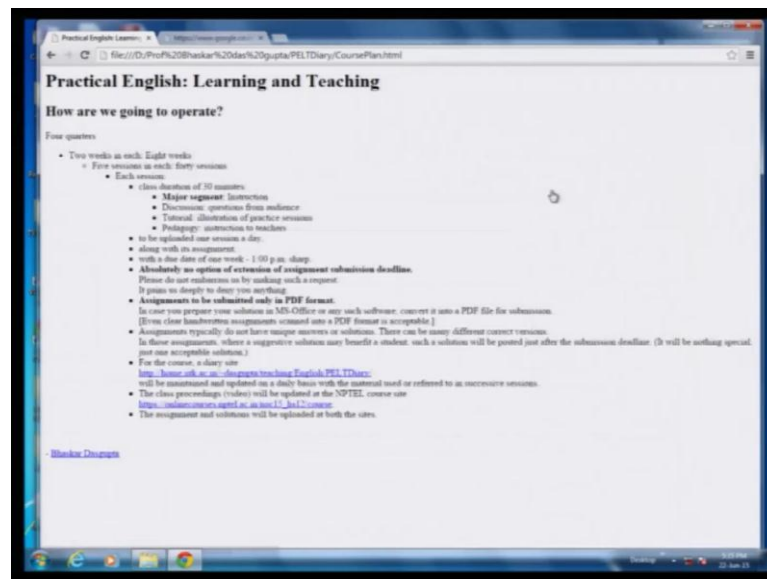
Student: Sir, I have a question. Thing is that, in a week go through my literary works of many people, but it is not quite possible for us to understand each and every meaning of the words. So, I mean how does it affect the comprehension of the passage that we go through?

Well, quite often you can follow the meaning of the passage even without knowing the meanings of many words and typically, a strategy to consult the dictionary for every word that you find a new in a book is very counterproductive. Because, that way you will never make any progress in a good book and what happens is from the context, many times you understand the meaning of the passage and at the same time you get a rough idea about the meaning of that word also, which you did not know.

And all the time you are not conscious, that you have suddenly you have recently developed a sense for the meaning of the particular word, but that sense stays in your mind and when you encounter same words in frequent places in different context, then you develop a more and more coherent picture of the meaning of that word and then, perhaps one day you decide that let me see what is the real dictionary meaning of the word and then you feel it. So, that is the word is. Anything else?

((Refer Time: 21:29)) Today's assignment will be to write a summary, a report or a critic on the opening introductory lecture. Whatever I just now talked about, the first assignment will be to write a summary or a report or a critic on that very topic and we leave it at this step at this point and quickly try to summarize how we intent to execute this course.

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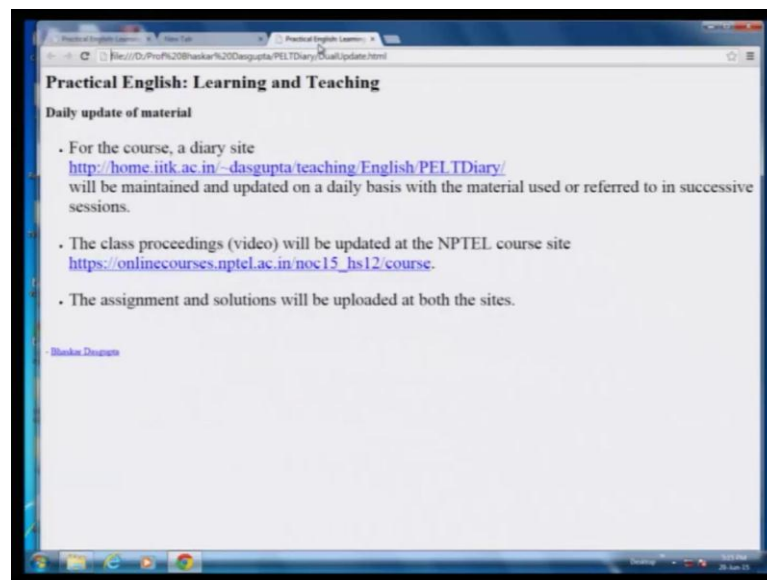
As you already know, we will have 8 weeks of lessons in this course, which can be subject wise divided in 4 quarters. Each quarter is going to be covered over 2 weeks, which means a total of 8 weeks, 5 sessions in each week; that means 40 sessions. Each session will be of 30 minute duration, in which we will have one major segment of instruction and then, some questions and answers with the audience and then little session of tutorial in which I will try to illustrate the practice sessions, which you need to go through in on your own in order to learn the subject matter.

And then, we will spend a little time on teaching, how to teach this subject and every, the details of every session will be uploaded, one session a day along with the assignment. And the due date for the submission of that assignment will be one week and after one week on that day, whatever day it is, 1 pm will be taken as the deadline of the assignment of submission and please do not ask for extension of the assignment submission deadline, because that will be complicated for us and assignments are to be submitted in only pdf format.

You can prepare your solution in MS office or any other software, but finally, you must convert it into pdf format, so that what we receive is only a pdf file. And as the assignments are subjective, they will not have unique answers or solutions as such. In those assignments for which some suggestive solution can be prepared, we will upload the solution at the course website and of course, there is no assumption that is the solution or that is the best solution or ideal solution, nothing of that set that is one possible solution. And for the course a diary side will be maintained at this url and it will be updated with the recent day's proceedings every day.

Except that, the video of the lecture will be updated at the NPTEL course site and the assignment and solutions will be uploaded at those sites. And as I told you that the class duration will be of instruction, discussion, tutorial and instruction to teachers, discussion on teaching this material. These letters in the html file narrate too small on your computer screen, some of that maybe guilt, but that is not a matter to worry, because as I was telling all these material will be linked to this site. On the other hand, the video lectures will be linked to this site.

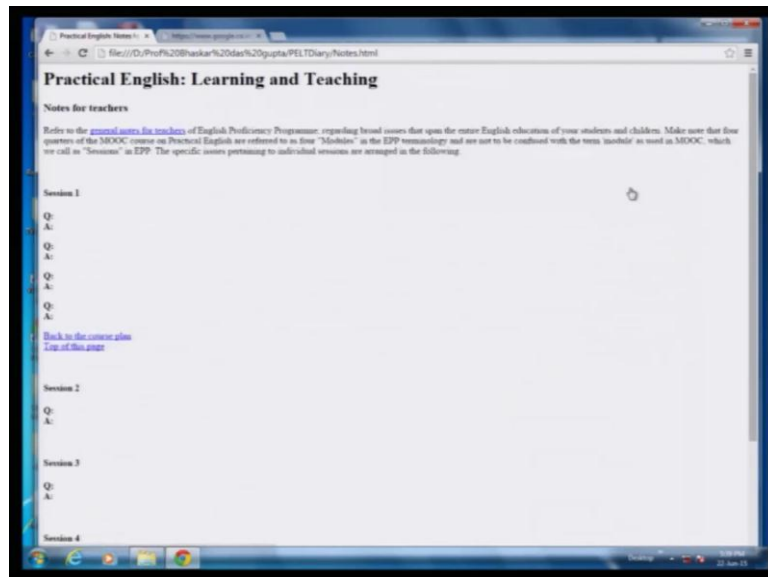
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And, so whatever material I am using in these lectures, all of that will be linked to this site, which you can see unperturbed on your screen. This is the right file ((Refer Time: 25:44)). So, whatever material we use for the instruction, we will link it here and whatever questions and answers come up in the discussion session here, they will be

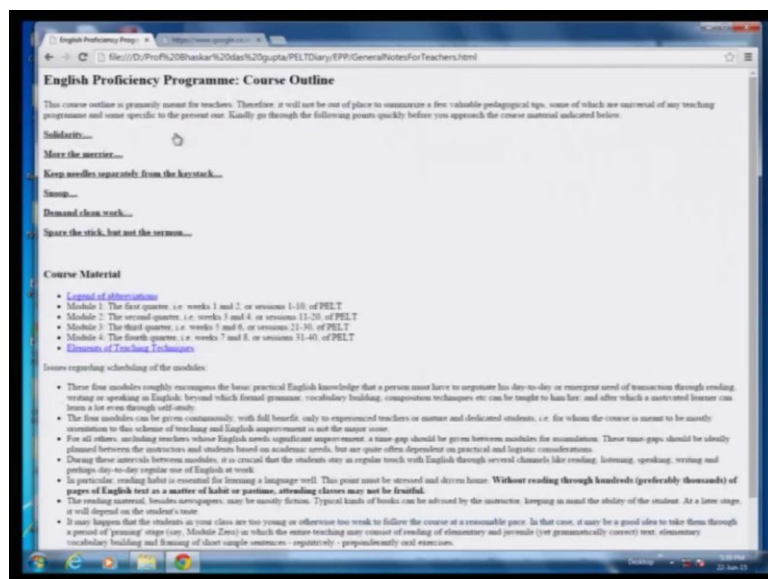
compiled and linked at this point and assignment will be here and whatever takes place in tutorial, the material that is used during the tutorials session will be uploaded here and the details of the material that we end up referring to during the discussion on teaching, those teaching notes will be here.

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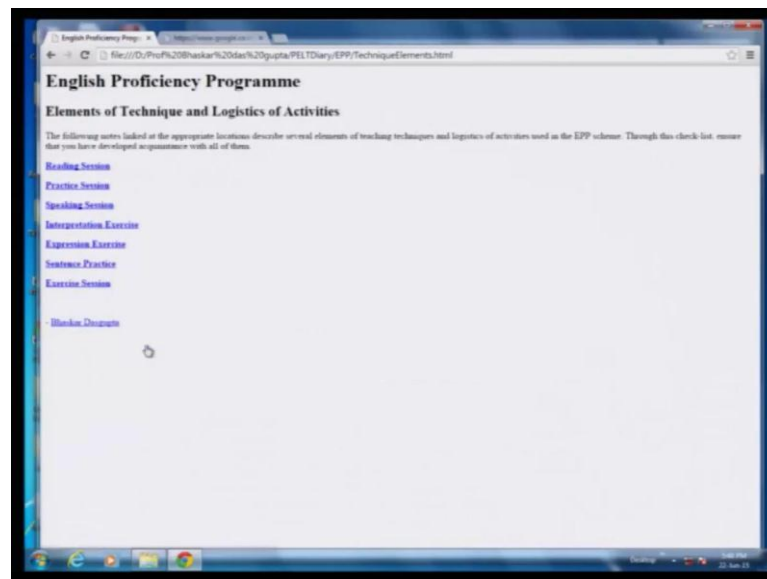
And make note that to begin with, there is a general body of nodes for teachers already existing here and that is the EPP instruction for teachers.

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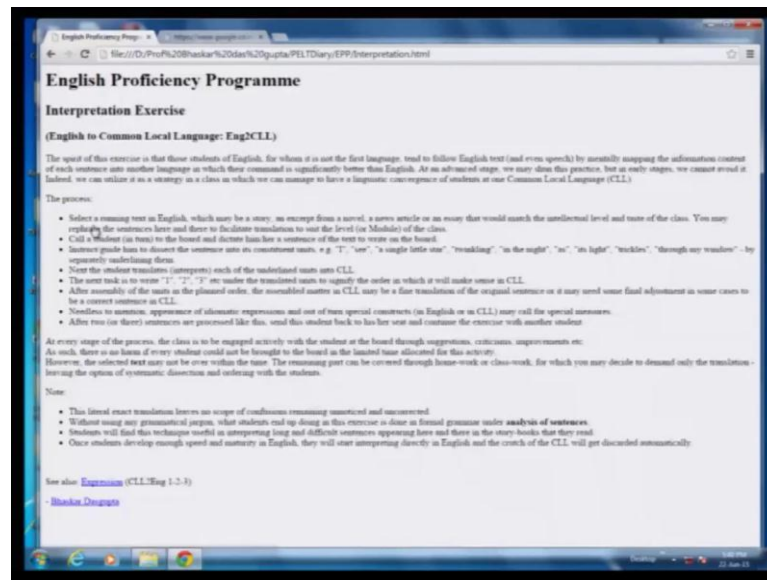
And here as you listen at this site, I am talking now to teachers who will use this course for developing techniques for teaching. So, as you listen, you can go through this site and lot of details you can find here and you see that this course in EPP has been sub divided into four modules, which is roughly equivalent to the four quarters of the course that we are going through right now. So, the module one in EPP is of 10 sessions in PLT and so on.

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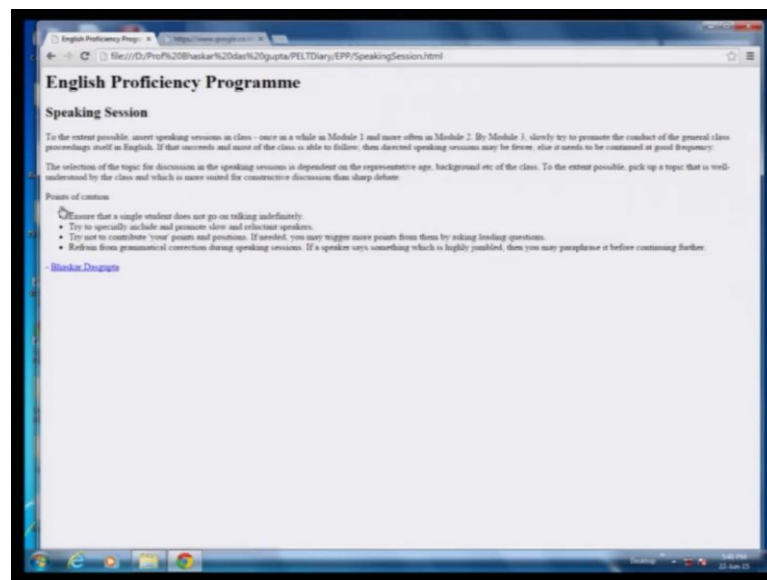
And along with this, there are a number of files linked here, which tells you in detail the way to conduct several sessions, which you as a teacher will be conducting in your class room.

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For example, when you want to conduct a speaking session, what is our view, what is our position, on how a speaking session we conducted in school in an English class room? So, those notes are here.

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So, as you listen you can go through these things and I am sure you will find many of these techniques, many of these ideas, you use in your class and at times, you may also feel that you might contribute to these ideas a little from your site and whatever ideas of yours, come to us which we find beneficial, we might even incorporate in our program.