



## A BRIEF ANALYSIS-TEACHING OF ENGLISH TO RURAL STUDENTS PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTIONS

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### Abstract

Language is a medium of communication. Without knowing the structure and the proper usage of a language one cannot effectively communicate. Both the student and the teacher face challenges in their own way. In reference to literature the challenges are comparatively less because literature reflects reality and it is the art of living. Majority of India still lives in villages and so the topic of rural education in India is of utmost importance. Shows that even though the number of rural students attending schools is rising, but more than half of the students in fifth grade are unable to read a second grade text book and are not able to solve simple mathematical problems. Most textbooks are in English and since people in rural areas either speak their native language or Hindi, but not English that defeats the purpose. With the English language having such an extensive vocabulary and complicated grammar, there is enough to teach students wanting to learn English, rarely are students exposed to the slang words used by English speakers in every day conversation.

**Keywords-** Language, communication, grammar, pronunciation, sentences, mobile, internet computer.

### Introduction

Language is a medium of communication. Without knowing the structure and the proper usage of a language one cannot effectively communicate. So language plays a significant role in day to day life. Acquiring one's mother tongue does not involve much labour but learning a second language gives the learner a hard and a challenging try.

Learning or acquiring a language is the ability to read it, speak it, write it and understand it when it is spoken. In the present era learning a language is facilitated by variety of tangible factors like media, e- learning, and with the aid of advanced technology. Recently there mushroomed few language classes which assure the audience of acquiring a language within thirty days. With all these progressive methods taking their plight, classroom teaching had taken its stance from the very beginning of our educational and learning methods.

The teachers and the students support and enable each other. To quote Bacon, " **Language most shows a man: speak, that i may see.**" This quote of Bacon expounds the essential role played by language. To teach a learner who has been newly introduced to the source language allows high end risks and challenges to the

facilitator and the learner. The challenges faced in ELT classrooms pave way for creative and innovative methods to make the learners understand and comprehend what they learn but all the while these methods had not effectively been an ultimate solution to the challenges but had been used as replacing tools which would establish a better way of learning. Challenges have been a part and parcel of the teaching and learning process.

Both the student and the teacher face challenges in their own way. In reference to literature the challenges are comparatively less because literature reflects reality and it is the art of living. On the other hand in the context of teaching a language the teacher has to be objective and has to start from the very basics and a student while learning a language creates a second identity. Language is the launch pad for literature. One has to gain proficiency in language to plunge into literature. There has been a pre-constructed notion that literature classes are lively and make the learner easily relate to the concepts and ideas discussed by drawing examples from real life incidents but language classes are way too boring because it mainly focuses on grammar, structure and the four skills. Being put into this confined notion, language teaching take tough grounds to explicitly express itself to the learner. Therefore English language teaching involves much challenge for both the teachers and the students.

Majority of India still lives in villages and so the topic of rural education in India is of utmost importance. shows that even though the number of rural students attending schools is rising, but more than half of the students in fifth grade are unable to read a second grade text book and are not able to solve simple mathematical problems. Not only this, the level of maths and reading is further declining. Though efforts are being made, they are not in the right direction. The reason cited for this problem in surveys is the increasing number of single classroom to educate students from more than one grade. In some states attendance of teachers and students is also declining. These are a few reasons why schools have failed to educate rural India.

Quality and access to education is the major concern in rural schools as there are fewer committed teachers, lack of proper text books and learning material in the schools. Though Government schools exist, but when compared to private schools then quality is a major issue.

Majority of people living in villages have understood the importance of education and know that it is the only way to get rid of poverty. But due to lack of money they are not able to send their children to private schools and hence depend upon government schools for education. Above that, in some of the government schools there is only one teacher for the entire school and if they don't show up at work, then it is a holiday. If the quality along with number of teachers and, those too committed teachers can be improved in these schools, then aspiring rural children and India can fulfill their dreams of doing something great.

Some government schools in rural India are overly packed with students, leading to a distorted teacher-student ratio. In one such remote village in Arunachal Pradesh there are more than 300 students in class which makes nearly 100 students in each classroom. In such a situation it is impossible for teachers to pay full attention towards each and every student, even if they are willing to help.

Every village is not provided with school which means that students have to go to another village to get education. Owing to this parents usually do not send their daughters to school, leading to a failure in achieving rural education in India.

Poverty is another setback. Government schools are not as good and private schools are expensive. This results in a very low number of students actually clearing their secondary education and taking admission in

colleges for further studies. So the drop-out-rate at the secondary level is extremely high in villages. Only parents who can afford college education send their kids to secondary schools. If parents are not able to send their wards for higher education then all their previous efforts get wasted as completing just secondary education means a low paying job and the person is again struck in the same never ending cycle of money, life and poverty.

Most textbooks are in English and since people in rural areas either speak their native language or Hindi, but not English that defeats the purpose. This results in lack of their interest in studies. Though some of the students from villages are really brilliant, as they have a wealth of practical knowledge and know how to survive even in very harsh conditions of life, difficulty in understanding their textbooks, lack of facilities and their poverty are a hurdle in their education.

Quality related issues are far powerful than poverty. Students are not at all encouraged to think but they are asked to memorize pre-defined questions for exams. So for many students clearing examination at the end of the session, passing their exam becomes more important than gaining knowledge. Also as per the new CBSE rule, every student is supposed to be promoted to the next class irrespective of marks in their examination. Hence majority of students do not bother to study, which means a decline in their education level. Neither students nor teachers take any interest in studies which is why the level of education is declining in India despite many efforts.

The foundation to turn India into a strong nation has to be laid down at primary and rural levels and so the quality of education right from the beginning should be excellent. Education and text books should be made interesting. For rural students textbooks related to their culture, their traditions and values should also be there so as to create their interest in studies. The reasons behind so many drop-outs in spite of free education should be found out as this is a hurdle on the road to progress. Improvement in the condition of government schools, education quality, committed teachers and more salaries to these teachers should be part of development.

There is a difference between city and village student not in terms of brain or development but their initial environment, skills, learning ability, availability of infrastructure, and access to different facilities. All of these must be considered while making the curricula which should not be different but how it is going to be taught would make the difference. Encourage the genuine rural students who are interested in education and make them competent. There are many examples of success in rural education in India like the Barefoot college, 8 Day

Academy and Gurukul School in Bihar. These are innovative and successful examples of schools running in rural India. It is the time to replicate such efforts as our country and its rural population is very vast which means one of two stories of these kinds won't make any difference. Instead of this large number of such schools are required in rural India. It is also absolutely mandatory to evaluate the success of the schools and students at each and every level. Timely assessment will throw light on present problems and achievements. Let us try to build a solution around these problems which will resolve the overall issues of rural education in India.

## 1. Grammar

English Grammar is complex, making it difficult to remember, master and use logically. Ensuring you use the correct grammar can be tricky, especially when you are in conversation with someone and they are speaking at an alarmingly fast pace. Learning grammar is like learning to drive, you can learn all of the theory, rules and regulations, but you won't be good at it unless you practice it and it starts to become second nature to you. Grammar is extremely important, incorrect use of grammar can confuse the person you are speaking to and even change the meaning of what you are communicating, what's more is native English speakers are hyper

aware of grammar and will notice almost immediately if a grammatical error is made, even if this is the smallest of errors, English speakers are incredibly proud of the language and look negatively on it being used incorrectly.

## 2. Vocabulary

It is often a challenge, particularly when it comes to verb variations and understanding which tense should be used in various situations. English has one of the biggest vocabularies of all languages, and it can be very confusing for non-English speakers to master. Using vocabulary inaccurately is incredibly noticeable to anyone whose first language is English, though it doesn't often change the meaning of your text, it does weaken it.

## 3. Slang and colloquialism

With the English language having such an extensive vocabulary and complicated grammar, there is enough to teach students wanting to learn English, rarely are students exposed to the slang words used by English speakers in every day conversation. Sentences can be predominantly filled with slang words, so maintaining a conversation can be difficult for anyone who doesn't understand what they mean.

## 4. Pronunciation

Knowing how to pronounce words in English can be very difficult as it isn't always obvious. English speakers have been taught these from an early age, which is how they know not to pronounce the 'k' on 'knight', they are taught the subtleties in how to pronounce something to communicate the right message. Furthermore, depending on the first language of the English student, it can often be difficult to pronounce certain words properly, having not ever had to create that phonetic sound before.

## 5. Variations in English

The variations in the different forms of English can often be difficult to understand. For example, the difference between using formal and informal language or the differences between spoken and written language. This leads to students writing words phonetically, i.e. how they would say it rather than how it's actually spelt, and using informal language, maybe even slang that they have picked up, in formal situations which may perhaps be viewed negatively.

The teachers are not the only people who face challenges in an ELT [English Language Teaching] classroom. The students do find it difficult. In an ELT classroom the student faces the challenge of learning something alien to him. The student is at ease while speaking his mother tongue because he hears it often, listens to it and is used to it but learning a language which is totally new to him subjects him to fear and quite a few times makes the student feel inferior. With all these things weighing him down, a student cannot proceed learning a language which will be an ultimate failure. The learners are afraid to commit mistakes because they are shy. This is universal but a learner should be ready to refine himself in the process of learning thereby by to confront all the challenges without any fear. The learner is much used to his mother tongue, the structures of it and how they work it gives them a hard time to imbibe the new structures of a language which often leaves them confused. The students use translation to understand English but this will not help them in a long run because if they are asked to speak in English it takes a whole lot of time for them to think in their mother tongue and translate it and then to speak. So the students must not encourage themselves to think in their mother tongue but to think in English which will improve their learning skills. To think in English by students can be rightly defined by John Keats's quote, "**To think is full of sorrow**" but a student should practice it. The slow learners



in the class should not be discouraged or feel bad for making mistakes in learning process because “Learning is not being successful but becoming successful”. A student should always focus on the goal rather than washed out by the temporary failures. A student should try to understand his errors and should not feel hesitant to clear his doubts. Many students concern of learning English is to crack their final exam but they have to downplay the final exams and should focus on the rewards of learning English can fetch them.

**Mobile phones**, internet, tablets, iPads, their applications, social media even traveling, cooking, communication etc are part of our lives from the start till the end of the day. Technology is touching every aspect of society and changing it dramatically. But there is one very important and indispensable part of the society that has also been tapped by new innovations and discoveries and that is education. Like all other areas, in this case also urban areas are influenced to a greater extent than rural one. So much more could have been done to bring the revolution in learning process in rural areas of India. In India illiteracy is one of the biggest problems. Lack of easy access, lack of teachers, lack of interest, poverty, gender differentiation, lack of infrastructure, common curricula are few of the reasons which are holding back the progress in rural education. But with the use of technology mass education can be given and situation can be changed. To reach rural areas, first of all study material can be distributed to the student’s then online interaction and online videos can be made with teachers.

**Online teaching** creates extended classroom communities for discussions, virtual classrooms and for interaction. There is another option in which classroom courses can be recorded in a real time and used for teaching the students who cannot attend these classes. This creates an expanded access to education. Rural education needs e-learning technologies.

Apart from this audio conferencing and video conferencing should be made part of the education system in rural India. Teachers at the schools are not well equipped with the gadgets. So teachers should be given printers, laptops, for giving notes and notices to the students. By using technology the problem of unqualified teachers can also be solved.

**Initiatives** Public private partnerships are playing wonderful role in making rural India tech savvy and in providing education. Successful initiatives have been taken and some are even in pipeline. NGOs are playing an important role in technology assisted rural education. A not-for-profit organization,

**Azim Premji Foundation**, run by Wipro group has been working towards this issue since 2001. It is helping 2 million children in 16,000 schools from 14 state governments. This foundation works by assisting computer-aided learning. Computers are considered as an asset. These are major draw to bring students to the school. For children computer is a very exciting machine. Schools in the states like Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Tamil Nadu, Tripura and West Bengal have received computer-assisted education through collective efforts by NIIT and government. This has given positive results. Dropout rates have reduced to a great extent through computer-aided education.

**Edusat** – Provided video education in rural India. Edusat was launched by ISRO.

**VidyaGyan** – Works with an aim to uplift the exceptional rural students from economically disadvantage background. They are given world-class education free of cost at VidyaGyan which is a residential institute. It is an initiative of the Shiv Nadar Foundation founded by Shiv Nadar. He is the founder of HCL. VidyaGyan has taken 200 students who scored the highest in the UP state board examinations. From sixth grade onwards these students will be taught at VidyaGyan.

**Samudaya:** Under this programme 2000 children were taught English, social science, science and mathematics through technology. Using same method 250 teachers were also trained and the outcome was really positive. It tremendously reduced the school dropout rates and absenteeism and at the same time improved the level of confidence. Government has to create more e learning centers to educate students living in rural areas. Required e-learning courses can then be defined. Such e-learning systems will surely improve the society both economically as well as socially. They will develop and come at par with urban students.

**Hurdles** Rural India is deficit in technology. Along with this rural India severely suffers from the shortage of water, infrastructure, power, health facilities etc. But for the success of every technology based education, infrastructure has to be strong. Discontinuation of electricity is the major problem out of all. There is an option for the same. Solar energy is available in abundance that can be used in many cases. Access to education is second major issue. Students have to cover miles for education. For this more schools are required to be built. Schools should open on the basis of population, and distance.

**Advantage** Technology attracts the rural children. Their wish to attend school increases with the word computer. Even parents show more willingness in this case. Computer education builds up the required confidence and narrows down the gap between urban and rural education. So rural India needs great investment in this section.

## CONCLUSION

### 1. To Cultivate Students'

Interest in Study Nowadays, the stereotyped traditional teaching methods and environment are unpopular while multimedia technology featuring audio, visual animation effects naturally and humanely makes us more access to information besides, with such characteristics as abundant-information and crossing time and space, multimedia technology offers a sense of reality and functions very well, which greatly cultivates students' interest and motivation in study and their involvement in class activities.

**2. To Promote Students' Communication Capacity** Traditional teaching has hampered students' capacity to comprehend certain language and also understanding to structure, meaning and function of the language, and makes the students passive recipients of knowledge, So it is hard to achieve the target of communication. With teachers' instructions leading students' thought patterns and motivating students' emotions, the multimedia technology seeks integration of teaching and learning and provides the students greater incentives, The PPT courseware activate students' thinking; the visual and vivid courseware rand help them to transforms English learning into capacity cultivation. And such in-class activities as group discussion, subject discussion, and debates can also offer more opportunities for communication among students and between teachers and students. So multimedia technology teaching has uniquely inspired students' positive thinking and communication skills in social practice.

**3. To Widen Students' Knowledge to Gain an Insightful Understanding to Western Culture.** The multimedia courseware can offer the students abundant information; more plentiful than textbooks, and help them to get of displays vivid cultural background, rich content and true-to-life language materials, which are much natural and closer to life. Not only could learners improve their listening ability, but also learn the western culture. Grasping information through various channels can equip; the students with knowledge and bring about information-sharing among students and make them actively participate in class discussion and communication.

**4. To Improve Teaching Effect Multimedia teachings** enrich teaching content and make the best of class time and break the “teacher centered” teaching pattern and fundamentally improve class efficiency. Due to large classes it is difficult for the students to have speaking communication. The utilization of multi-media sound lab materializes the individualized and co-operative teaching. The traditional teaching model mainly emphasized on teachers’ instruction, and the information provided is limited due to traditional classes. On the contrary, multimedia technology goes beyond time and space, creates more vivid, visual, authentic environment for English learning, stimulates students’ initiatives and economizes class time meanwhile increases class information.

**5. To Improve Interaction Between Teacher and Student Multimedia teaching stresses the role of students,** and enhances the importance of “interaction” between teachers and students. A major feature of multimedia teaching is to train and improve students’ ability to listen and speak, and to develop their communicative competence, During this process, the teacher’s role as a facilitator is particularly prominent. Using multimedia in context creation creates a good platform for the exchange between teachers and students, while at the same time providing a language environment that improves on the traditional classroom teaching model. In this way, teachers in the classroom no longer blindly input information and force students to receive it in a passive way.

**6. Creates a Context for Language teaching Multimedia teaching creates a context for language teaching.** This method makes the class lively and interesting, as well as optimizing the organization of the class. Multimedia has its own features such as visibility and liveliness. During the process of multimedia English teaching, sounds and pictures can be set together, which enhances the initiative of both teachers and students, When using multimedia software, teachers can use pictures and images to enrich the content of classes, and also imagine different contexts in the process of producing teaching courseware, Students in the class can use multimedia to understand the class in a clear way. Through the whole interactive process, it is apparent that using multimedia in ELT is effective in nurturing students’ interest in learning English, as well as enhancing teachers’ interest in English teaching. As Zhang (2006:11.1)points out through Multimedia and network technology we can offer students not only rich, sources of authentic learning materials, but also an attractive and a friendly interface, vivid pictures and pleasant sounds, which to a large extent overcomes the lack of authentic language environment and arouses students’ interest in learning English.

**7. To Provide Flexibility to Course Content:** In addition, multimedia teaching is also flexible. It is obvious that the context can be created not only in the classroom, but also after class. Multimedia language teaching can also create a multimedia language environment for the purpose of conducting language teaching. English teaching itself must focus on the guidance of teachers and be student-centered(see, for example, Holec, 1981), which we believe is one of the principles for language teaching. Students are bound to have some problems in classroom teaching, which can be addressed under the guidance of teachers. In such circumstances, students can use the new technology to their advantage, such as manipulating the network to contact teachers, and receiving answers by email.

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