

Role of English Language Teaching and Learning Issues in Higher Education

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Abstract

The practical aspects in the Indian society make people acquire English as a second language. This acquisition happens mainly in the classrooms, and serious attention is needed to identify the manner in which language learning takes place in the classroom environment. In a country with a linguistic tapestry as diverse as India, English Language Teaching (ELT) holds a significant position. This research article offers a comprehensive overview of the evolution, current practices, and challenges of ELT in India. With the onset of British colonialism, English was introduced as a tool for administrative convenience and later became a language of empowerment. Post-independence, English has transformed into a global lingua franca, and its proficiency is now viewed as a catalyst for socio-economic mobility. The historical context and examination of the changing roles and perceptions of English from the colonial era to the present day have been dealt in the first section of the article. It also emphasises the communicative and learner-centric approaches. The vast diversity of the Indian populace, coupled with regional languages and varying levels of exposure to English, create a complex landscape for ELT. Disparities in the quality of education between urban and rural areas, resource constraints, and the sometimes-conflicting role of English with regards to cultural identity are discussed. The paper posits that a multifaceted approach, integrating culturally relevant pedagogies, leveraging technology, and fostering collaboration among stakeholders, is imperative for the holistic development of ELT in India. The research article tries to identify the different ways in which English language teaching progresses in India. It also aims to contribute to the body of knowledge and provide insights for policymakers, educators, and learners.

Keywords: English Language Teaching (ELT), evolution, learner-centric approaches, body of knowledge.

English is a powerful language. It involves industry, business, and wealth. It's something that promotes our growth, boosts respect, and connects us. It's beginning to take on the role of our common future language for all business and communication purposes. We have amazing opportunities to learn and develop when we study English. It is the language spoken in every institution and university in the nation. These days, understanding your topics is not enough. As globalization increases, having a strong vocabulary and the skill to communicate in English are essential if you want to work and travel across the nation.

English plays a unique role in our Indian educational system. In fact, it is a strange language, but it has a lot of authority! English continues to be an important language in our society even after independence. Everyone understands that learning English opens doors to a better economic and social future, from

wealthy families sending their children to attend English-medium schools to the lowest of the poor hoping for the same chance. Everyone knows that speaking English isn't easy these days. Not only must non-native speakers like people need to understand what others are saying, but we also have to consider all the potential final results and meanings. Unexpectedly, listening skills are broader than speaking skills, given what the general public thinks. It has taken some time for educators to see how important it is to give listening the attention it requires when teaching students to acquire second and foreign languages. For this reason, listening skills in English have been attracting attention recently.

English is the national language, which makes it easier for educated people all around the nation to communicate with each other. Not only is it necessary to speak and listen in English for responsibilities, but it's also important to feel connected to English-speaking groups in India and around the world. This particular part sheds light on the purpose of the English Language and the constantly evolving necessities of English language learning in India. Speaking and listening in English are given a lot of importance in our educational system.

The adoption of English as the official language by organizations and businesses worldwide has increased, making it necessary for Indian citizens to learn the language in order to participate in the labor market. Speaking the language gives Indians more options while working with global corporations or seeking a career overseas. Furthermore, children who do not have a proper education in English at a young age would lose out on opportunities to conduct business both domestically in India and abroad.

English is also referred to as the storehouse of scientific knowledge. India's citizens must have access to current knowledge in all fields of science if the country is to fulfill its destiny as a global superpower. Therefore, the population's proficiency in the language has a direct impact on innovation advancements. The widespread use of the internet and the ease with which academic and scientific resources can now be accessed online make knowing English even more advantageous. Despite the fact that the Internet is reducing the cost of education globally, people cannot fully utilize its potential unless they know English. The Internet also increases the potential for connectivity between Indians, allowing for a medium of communication to share ideas and debate social, economic and political issues that are prevalent in the country. Since every state has a language of its own, English find its way as a common language to discuss and find solutions to national problems and to find a common ground within the differences. The language further contributes towards introducing students to an international perspective further enhancing their understanding of world problems allowing them to apply this learning's to the national landscape. In this way, English serves as an important means of national integration.

The Indian education system is undergoing a transformation in how skills are taught. Currently, the emphasis has moved from a competitive approach to recognizing the employability skills necessary for nurturing capable entrepreneurs of the future. The English language serves as a means to connect industry with academia, as it plays a crucial role in adapting to various work environments. Globalization further enhances this connection and points toward discovering improved job prospects and employment. The English language contributes in multiple ways, thus aiding the comprehensive development of educational solutions, boosting self-esteem, enhancing job opportunities, and fostering community bonds.

English thus became the language of content learning, enabling learners to achieve the subject and language through an 'immersion' process. This anticipates a situation in which the learners of different subjects and courses become accustomed to the rapid developments in their field and the technical terms and language which turn out best through English. The technical education stream in India offers several

graduate, diploma and certificate programmes on various trades, and English is the medium of instruction.

The positive environment for enhancing communication skills in English, and for using the language for academic purposes is thus evident, but this seems to have fallen much short of the target, as evidenced by the large number of technical students who are unemployed or employed in areas where their subject and technical skills are vastly under-exploited. The phenomenon in question can frequently be attributed to the in-congruence between the intended pedagogical framework and the actual mode of content delivery for core subjects. Although curricular materials are ostensibly structured for instruction through an English medium, adhering to a Content-Based Instruction (CBI) paradigm with immersion characteristics, the prevailing practice often deviates significantly. The instructional pattern gravitates toward utilizing the native language as the medium, with the educator assuming a predominantly translational role. This discordance culminates in a dual deficit, detrimentally impacting both the acquisition of subject matter expertise and the development of proficiency in the secondary linguistic medium. This bifurcated inadequacy manifests as diminished competencies in the content domain and attenuated linguistic dexterity in the target language, thus thwarting the cardinal objectives of the instructional design.

English language teaching in India is considered as being far from satisfactory in the country, not helpful to learning the language. It is an obvious fact that students should be prepared with the sound knowledge of English in order to put up to the core courses which use English as the medium of instruction. Researchers have commonly found that student teaching inclines to change teachers toward out dated styles of teaching, missing from inventive methods and approaches in teacher education. In recent years increasing number of teachers, teaching English, have been looking for ways to change the out dated forms of instructions in which knowledge is communicated, in a one-way process, from teacher to student. English had come to stay and was allowed the status of an additional language by the Official Language Amendment Act of 1967. From then on English has continued to be a governing language while Hindi and other regional languages have taken the back seat. English is a compulsory subject for undergraduates and is taught at some stage to all school goers regardless of their social background. The emergence of English as an international language makes it the clear choice of all those wanting of contacts with the outer world. English is seen as the language of the administrators and the upwardly mobile and is, therefore, the desire of those who hope to move a step upper in the social stage.

In modern days a teacher's role is that of a facilitator. Socialization is synonymous with English education. It includes any social behaviour that assists in the training of the students of higher education into association in the society, or any activities by which the society extends itself through the next generation. Today English education is a powerful agent of social change. It is the only key which can unlock the door to modernization. English language paves a sure road to India's modernization and progress. Teaching practice has come to be accepted as one of the most important qualities of the teacher education program. An English teacher plays various roles in a higher education's classroom, but surely one of the most important is that of classroom manager. Effective teaching and learning can take place only in a well-managed classroom. A teacher has a big responsibility to take into consideration the possible employability of the degree student is a matter of great concern. The competence of the student, other than skills in answering the examinations, to deal with material as well as human resource in future life, usually becomes an issue for the English teacher.

The challenges faced by the English language teachers in imparting language skills to the degree students are extensive as the learners give priority to their mother tongue by side lining English. About ninety five per cent of the students who get admitted to Degree courses are first generation learners who come from economically poor background. The entrants to these Degree Colleges have little or no English. English language teaching is regarded as being far from satisfactory in the country, not conducive to learning the language, it is an obvious fact that learners should be equipped with the sound knowledge of English in order to put up to the core courses which use English as the medium of instruction. Several studies point out that besides students' previous knowledge and teachers' show, the quality of difficulties has the most major impact on student learning. While exposure to the mother tongue is natural, the exposure to English is very less. The students in Degree Colleges are introduced to English as late as in the eighth year of school. Therefore naturally English is thrust upon these strata of society making the English language teachers victims of the educational system. Often times, as native English speakers, we forget and take for granted the countless hours of English language exposure we are afforded to be able to fluently communicate in English.

The English language teachers face Technical difficulties. It is expected that the teacher has to create a highly organized and well planned knowledgeable atmosphere in the classroom, setting goals, designing and forming tasks, creating the physical preparation of the classroom, giving students to form groups and roles, and selecting materials and time. The University, college and students insist that the English teachers should be technically sound, talented and tactful; they should have an eagerness and enthusiasm to teach the students of higher education, be accountable for student learning and take sole responsibility for student development. To do so, clearly involve the development of university and school relationships through the process of recognizing problems and building solutions through interaction. Students find reasons to bunk English classes because of boredom.

Situational difficulties of the English language Teacher are ignorance of the students of higher education. This is a serious constraint. Students lack grammar skills, speaking skills and even writing skills in English. When they reach the degree level students feel that the subject English is not important like their core subject say commerce or physics etc. They need just a pass mark in the English subject and no further interest is seen in them. Besides they find the prescribed text difficult. The student's vocabulary is very poor. They are unable to differentiate between a noun, pronoun, adjective or adverb for example in the sentence 'Bring the chair' the students fail to identify the noun. They are under the assumption that the first word in any given sentence is a noun. Similarly they are unable to differentiate between "There" and Their", "Rice" and "Rise" etc. Beliefs and over confidence are strong blocks or difficulties in classroom teaching.

Thus it paves way for Operational difficulties for Female English teachers in Degree colleges. Teaching is the activity in which the material like knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, etc. is passed over to the learner. In the teacher-centred approach, teachers act as the centre of knowledge selection and presentation, exercising the power to decide and control the students' learning and usually treating everyone alike. Any message passed by the English language teacher has to go against students' beliefs and shape the required information in such a manner that it will not hurt the students' sentiments and beliefs. We observe many times that student don't follow what the teacher is trying to explain. This may be because of many reasons and one problem is that they don't understand English. When they fail to understand the text as such they lose patience and start yawning, scribbling on texts or on notes, or they

enter into areverie. Some of the students even tend to talk with others thereby disturbing the whole class as such. The paper highlights some of the major difficulties of the English language teacher like Technical difficulties, Perception of student's difficulties, Social difficulties, Psychological difficulties, Information transfer difficulties, Situational difficulties and Operational difficulties to search problem of English communication English Teacher and student and understanding other subjects because of English.

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