



ADDRESSING CHALLENGES AND INNOVATING ENGLISH EDUCATION IN INDIA'S PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT:

This research paper's major focus is the obvious and numerous issues that English teachers in India encounter. It is critical that students' actual needs are satisfied so that they can connect with one another and learn from anywhere in the world. Because it is helpful and appropriate, English is the most commonly used language for global communication. The primary purpose of education is to provide children with the skills they will need to succeed in life after high school. For a long time, children in India were educated utilizing the chalk-and-talk method. A thorough evaluation of numerous strategies for achieving the current goal of education in schools was conducted, and some of these concepts were implemented. The goal of this research is to look at the benefits and drawbacks of teaching English in schools. English teaching methods, teachers, programs, and strategies are all discussed in an organic and logical manner.

Keywords: *English, Challenges, Strategies, Prospects, Elementary level, Teaching.*

1.INTRODUCTION

In India, elementary English classrooms frequently feature a small number of students, kids who are uninterested, limited time, and a lengthy curriculum that does not focus on the critical goal of teaching students how to communicate well in English. It is critical to have a thorough awareness of the issues that English learners and teachers confront in order to solve them and advance the field as a whole. To meet the demand that students learn how to communicate effectively, the curriculum must be reevaluated and changed. When designing the curriculum, it is critical to consider how the children can improve their communication skills the most. People who were fluent in this language were able to apply for a wide range of employment and be recognized as leaders of numerous national and international organizations. People used to believe that English was exclusively acceptable for library settings, but that opinion

has shifted dramatically. English teachers in India are currently dealing with a slew of issues that necessitate their adaptability in order to satisfy pressing demands. If language teachers continue to do things the old way, they may be unable to achieve the most critical aims of English instruction in today's society.

When children start school, they are already quite skilled at utilizing words. They communicate and express themselves better than both humans and computers. Furthermore, this study demonstrates that all neonates, regardless of surroundings, have the intrinsic ability to learn language. These babies are said to be born with a particular verbal ability. Even yet, being able to converse easily is insufficient when you are alone. If a child grows up in a bilingual environment, he or she may acquire a second language in the same way that they learned their first. Someone who speaks two languages is

extremely fortunate. Unfortunately, the majority of people learn a second language considerably later in life. This is unfortunate since, despite years of effort, most people never achieve the same degree of proficiency in a second language as they do in their first. Nobody seems to be able to learn any other "knowledge" approach faster than someone between the ages of two and three. This perplexes me a little.

Many suggestions have been made to help pupils become as proficient in English as they are in their native language (L1). One of the most perplexing aspects of language acquisition is why some pupils perform better in English than others. Over the course of five to six years, the youngster becomes fluent in English by using translation tools and adhering to grammar norms. This is one of the reasons why English education in our schools is currently in disarray. The findings of this comprehensive study led us to believe that the ways we teach and learn English in our schools require significant improvement (Yule, 2009).

What is Language?

The symbol system of a language can be set up with either rigid restrictions or random rules that have been improved throughout time. Fully adaptable and extensible to match the changing needs and circumstances of speakers. Language is a set of customary spoken or written cues that individuals use to engage and follow the culture of a social group. Language is made up of made-up sets of signals that individuals use to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas deliberately. It makes no logic and comes as a surprise. The language system allows people to communicate and interact by making use of random sounds and words in the same way. Without a question, language facilitates communication between people. The great majority of the sound is made up of human speech. Syal and Jindal stated in 2008 that the concept in question is articulatory, systematic, symbolic, and random.

2.REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The investigator researched and studied similar literature to gain a better knowledge of

the study problem. The author conducted a study on English instruction in primary government schools in India (Goodwyn, 2012) with the following objectives in mind: [i] Investigating the current situation of English education at the basic level in India's states and union territories, examining how it functions as both a topic and a method of instruction. (ii) Examine English textbooks, teacher preparation schools, and course programs in a few states. To improve your own English teaching skills, observe how classes work in regions where English is being taught for the first time. (iv) Examine the English teacher preparation programs that primary school teachers are now taking to determine how effective they are at teaching English. Make recommendations for how to improve the level of English teaching based on the study's findings. To conduct this study, 154 schools were chosen at random from two to four areas in each state. Two English teacher training programs for persons who are not yet teachers and two English teacher training programs for people who are currently teachers were chosen from each state to conduct the observations. The study discovered that official discourse and assessment systems have a significant influence on how English teachers and students discuss and grade books. English professors are concerned about how to reverse this tendency.

The researchers looked at the state policy on teaching English in rural Indian schools as an important aspect of their research. This was accomplished by researching course designs and resources, as well as language regulations and quality issues in second and foreign language education in five states (provinces). Lesson plans and tactics utilized in the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur, and Nagaland do not take into account new facts on how individuals learn languages, the environments in which they learn, or the learners themselves. Despite knowing that teaching children how to communicate will help them perform better in school, most states continue to use the old structural system developed in the 1950s and 1960s. Indeed, this demonstrated the inherent

paradox in learning English; as a result, the country student received no further benefits.

In this study, the author (Hanumanthrao, 2011) looked at the consequences of teaching English in terms of difficulties and solutions. The perspectives of those who worked on developing and implementing a teaching technique to increase students' problem-solving abilities were factored into the study's findings. The study's purpose was to provide a comprehensive picture of the English-language situation in India and, if necessary, to suggest ways to improve matters.

3.Problems of Teaching English at Elementary School level:

Lack of Clear-cut Aims: There is a general lack of clarity in India about the goals and objectives of English education. Policymakers attempted but failed to define clear goals and objectives for English instruction in schools. The teachers are aware that they must teach the subject because it is part of the curriculum. The students are aware that they must study this subject because they will be tested on it. English is taught from the start in English medium schools. In any case, students learn English as a knowledge topic rather than a skill subject. It is for this reason that English teaching and learning in Indian schools is a mess.

Over-crowded classes: With the development of education, there is an enormous increase in the number of students in elementary school. This phenomena is carried over to the school stage, and then to the secondary and university levels. The average class size is sixty to seventy people, while in some situations the class size is 100 to 120 students. English teachers have numerous challenges when dealing with such a large class. It is difficult to provide adequate attention to individual students, which is highly desirable in an English classroom.

Unhygienic Physical: Conditions: English is taught in Indian classrooms under overcrowded, unsanitary, and unfavorable physical conditions. In most schools, children are forced to sit on old-fashioned benches and desks that restrict their movement. The

classrooms are not sufficiently aired, nor is much light allowed to enter.

Lack of Competent Teachers: In our schools, inept teachers are the biggest source of problems when it comes to teaching English. They are either taught in old ways and have never cared to seek something better in new techniques, or they gain fresh insight but never apply it to actual teaching work and are content with regular procedures. English is sometimes taught by persons who did not study the subject while in school.

Faulty Methods of Teaching: The teaching of English in India is plagued by ineffective instructional methods. The Translation Method is the teachers' preferred in the majority of schools. The teacher takes the reader, translates the paragraph, puts the definitions of difficult words on the blackboard, and assigns homework. Pronunciation, listening comprehension, and structural practice are never prioritized. As a result, when they pass out, they are just as ignorant as when they initially attended the English class.

Non-Availability of Good Text-books: The English textbooks utilized in our schools are of poor quality. The books are edited or written by people who are not currently teaching. There is no effort made to select pre-graded vocabulary for inclusion in textbooks.

Apathy to New Techniques and Procedures: The majority of middle and high school teachers are both ignorant and apathetic about new English teaching strategies and procedures. The next generation of teachers is being trained in innovative approaches, but when they are placed on the job, they fail spectacularly.

Inadequate Provision of Teaching Aids: A general assessment of teaching in schools would demonstrate that the majority of teaching is done without the assistance of any aid. The English instructor rarely takes the initiative to create even simple charts or flashcards that could substantially assist them in teaching their topic successfully.

Insufficient Provision for the subject in the Timetable: In the absence of a unified all-India policy, there is little time allocated to the issue. In most states, English is introduced in

the fifth or sixth grade and is taught for roughly six hours per week on average.

Neglect of Correction Work: Our professors do not pay adequate attention to correction of exercise books, which is critical. The students are not in the habit of having remedial practice of the mistakes pointed out by the teacher, which remains only on the pages of the students' exercise books, which is completely useless. In fact, the proper way is to correct in front of students, which is impossible in congested classes.

Dominance of a conservative Headmaster: A conservative Headmaster or principal's dominance might make life tough for a progressive instructor. The conservative head is more concerned with good exam scores than with students' command of the language. So he wants the teacher to use the same old, conventional, and exam-ridden techniques of teaching the topic. He would not tolerate any deviation from the teacher.

Parental Interference: Certain parents obstruct the work of good teachers. They assess their children's progress in the topic by the number of pages of the reader read, translation activities completed, and grammar lessons given during the designated English sessions. When they are dissatisfied with the coverage, they will come and criticize the teacher's work or tactics. They would make suggestions as if they were the subject's expert.

Exam oriented: The English language learning syllabus is designed entirely with the exam in mind; as a result, the content does not focus on developing students' communicative ability and is constrained to the tight boundaries of the exam paper.

Impractical: Today's world is based on effective communication and information exchange on a global scale. Keeping this in mind, the language education course as conducted must prepare pupils for life in the real world. However, it is very terrible that it fails badly in this context since the curriculum does not cover this specific facet of language learning, which is critical in today's environment. The training does not involve any form of practical knowledge impairment, particularly in language learning. "In Indian

classrooms, speakers speak, while the class quietly listens.....Projects, seminars, and conferences are frequently prohibited in Indian classrooms (up to the graduate level)" (Bhatia, 2008).

4. Remedies for the Problems of Teaching English Language at Elementary School level:

The Policy regarding the Place of English should be well-defined: Everyone benefits from speaking and writing in English. There should be clear guidelines governing the function of English in our educational system. Before making this decision, consider how this issue might be applied in a variety of fields, including science, technology, the social sciences, theory, area studies, the media, international trade, and diplomacy.

Building a rapport with your class: When you go into the classroom for the first time, smile and say, "Good morning, class!" from the bottom of your heart. "How are you feeling today?" or something along those lines. This is an essential initial step. Effectiveness is demonstrated in multiple ways. They are most likely terrified simply because your class is studying the world's most essential language. You instantly connect with someone when you greet them with a kind hello and a familiar smile. Learning the language will be easier once they feel at ease around you. Always remember that a smile encourages people to talk to you. Similarly, if you smile, pupils will feel more comfortable giving you the truth about how they feel.

Utilizing the different methods of Teaching in the classroom teaching-learning process:

A teacher of English could instruct their students in a variety of methods. The various ways will help her teach more effectively and help her students learn more. Language learning is typically done in a facility known as a language school. Languages can be taught in a variety of methods. Some sources aren't as popular as they once were, while others are. Others have a limited audience yet provide essential information. Teachers, in addition to pupils, can use the Language Lab. Here are some ideas for teaching English:

1. The method of translating grammar.
2. The straightforward method of doing

things.

3. How to perform the set.
4. Something that obstructs the direct route...
5. Instruction in the use of situational words and face-to-face communication.
6. The audiolingual approach
7. Learning a language via conversing with others.
8. Investing all of your time in learning the target language. It's simple and Methodist.
9. Get some practice in with a teacher.
10. Instruction as a method of learning

Building confidence for the language in the students: Inform your students that they must respond to some basic English questions at the start of class. "What is your name?" "Where are you from?" This category includes questions such as "Who is your best friend?" and others of a similar nature.

Many persons who teach English as a second language make the error of beginning with the letters. This is not acceptable. After you teach them this skill on the first day, your children will be quite proud of their ability to ask questions. They will also get more interested in the language. They would return the next day, more determined than ever to learn more. Your children will not believe that learning the alphabet is a fun approach to improve their English skills. Furthermore, when a student is in their first year of college, the teacher should prioritize building speaking skills over just completing each component.

The teacher should keep in mind the aims of teaching English: The teacher should emphasize the aims of English class at all times. The knowledge can be used to assist her children in their education. These are the objectives:

1. assist students in understanding spoken English;
2. assist students in speaking English;
3. assist students in reading English;
4. assist students in writing English.

Improvement in the teaching facilities: More effort should be made to ensure that teachers have enough access to classroom equipment, literature, and instructional tools. It is best for both school and college libraries to maintain subscriptions to recognized journals in order to stay up with the current

advancements in linguistics and English language education.

UGC should play active role: The University Grants Commission should make it a priority to encourage individuals all around the country to learn foreign languages. Scholarly research on methodologies, content creation, textbook writing, and novel research in English and other languages should be funded heavily.

Starting a thought process in the students' minds: Make it plain, and not so clear, that no language other than English is permitted at the school. This will be difficult at first, especially because the students are determined to incorporate every new English word they learn into their own tongue. This should not be promoted in any way. Keep in mind, however, that the children are doing their best. Allow them some time as they attempt to translate things from English to their native tongue. Tell them to consider it in English. The quantity of training required to complete this massive undertaking could take months or even weeks.

The teachers should be competent: It is also critical to ensure that English teachers are fluent in the language. This implies that the professors chosen should have extensive expertise and consistently update their knowledge.

Eradicating the Socio-Psychological problems: Teachers can assist pupils in dealing with social and psychological issues by keeping them engaged and giving them some responsibility. It is recommended that the teacher spend more time with each student in order to keep them engaged and meet their communication needs.

Building basic communication skills in the students: Do not tell your children what to do. Maintain constant contact with them. Talking about ordinary stuff with the kids. Continue to speak to them in everyday language. There will be a conversation following the first round of icebreakers. Talking will also help them learn new things. Make it simple for your children to express themselves.

Removing barriers to Language communication: The teacher should attempt to break down any language barriers that may

exist, such as behavioral, social, and linguistic differences. Slang and native languages are not appropriate for English teachers to utilize in their classes.

Handling Mistakes with care: Don't let your English lesson develop into a parody of Mind Your Language. Mistakes are unavoidable in the classroom, so you must learn how to handle them perfectly. If you make fun of them, they won't be able to try speaking the language again. If you don't laugh, your pupils may believe you're attempting to hide your laughing or are being overly polite to them, which may lead them to believe you were wrong when you said what you did. It is what it is, and I chuckle along with the learner. The truth is that this is feasible. I gently laugh and explain why the student's remark was amusing. This is also amusing to the student. Yes, without a doubt! Some of the pupils in your class will eventually call out other students' errors. When this happens, calmly point out their errors while laughing when appropriate.

Strict supervision: The college's administrators should ensure that the teacher knows how to educate effectively. The English exam should be revised. According to Hanumanthrao (2011), educational institutions should be required to provide appropriate audiovisual aids.

5. CONCLUSION

Teaching English as a second language with sports-related strategies can be a lot of fun. If the subject is also enjoyable, your students will be more driven to learn. Even though English is a vital language for the entire country, it is necessary to recognize that the quality of English instruction has deteriorated significantly. As a result, it is critical to comprehend the difficulties associated with teaching English in India's primary schools. Then we can handle these issues on our own and provide the youngsters better instruction to get greater achievements. The technique is neither strict or dogmatic; it is very adaptable and receptive to new ideas. These fundamental rules of efficient foreign language instruction can be applied in real-life classroom scenarios in Indian schools. This will improve teaching and learning environments. A number of

critical difficulties necessitate significant adjustments in our approach (Bhatia, 2008). Making the course outline, course materials, teaching methods, measuring students' progress in school, and other key topics are some of these.

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