

CHALLENGES IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN RURAL AREAS OF CHHATTISGARH

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English is beyond doubt an international language with a relatively wider scope. It is being taught in almost all schools and colleges of Chhattisgarh. Students of the rural colleges face a number of problems in learning English as their second language. Learning a second language means acquiring a system of rules, but just as a very little is known about these rules, even less is known about how such rule systems are acquired. Students find themselves unable to express in English. They have no idea of proper sentence structure. They do not know proper pronunciation, spellings and grammatical rules. The students never realize the importance of learning English as a language. In the past, in rural areas, English was introduced to students in the fifth class. But now there is no dearth of English medium schools in such area yet the standards of English are falling rapidly. If we compare a graduate of present time with a graduate of the past, the result is shockingly amazing. The changing times have witnessed the growing importance of English language in all walks of life. It does not seem that we are using English language as non-native speakers or as a second language.

This paper attempts to bring in the issues related to the problems and prospects of teaching English in rural areas of Chhattisgarh.

Key Words: - English, Language, Second Language Acquisition, Chhattisgarh.

The study of language is the foundation of all other learning. Language defines us as human. A language is not just a collection of words, such as we find in a dictionary. It is also the rules or patterns that relate our words to one another. To be human is to use language, and to talk is to be a person. A language is a system of conventional vocal signs by means of which human beings communicate.

We are going to have children in other parts of the world besides England, speaking English as their first language. But the gap still remains like those of the have and have-nots, developed and developing, urban and the rural. Much is required to be done by the linguists, the polyglots, the scholars and the teachers to bridge the gap between the English literate and the English illiterate population of the world. We have to go into the intricacies of the English language and simplify the methodology.

Whatever English now represents or has represented over centuries of colonization, it belongs to everyone. It is a global language, the first of its kind. The Australian poet Peter Porter emphasized the point in a World Conference Welcome Poem, published in the *Times Literary Supplement* (28th February 1992) to the effect that:

'Everything will be exposed in English
So delegates and lovers understand'

English symbolizes in Indian minds, better education, better culture and higher intellect. In present times, English is the most preferred language. The Indians and the Indian English

language press uses many words derived from Indian language. Indian accent is sometimes difficult for non-Indians to understand. Actually English has co-existed in the Indian sub-continent alongside thousands of local languages. It has remained at the heart of the Indian society. According to recent surveys, approximately 4% of the Indian population use English.

The language policy in school education emerged as a social problem and personal problem of a teacher. The quality of English language education in majority of Indian schools presents a very appalling picture. Teacher's language proficiency, exposure to language and materials are major concerns for quality English language learning. In reality rural students' situation is very difficult. They don't have opportunities as city students have (i.e.) language lab, audio visual aids and what not. Generally rural students consider English as a subject not as a language. It is the main obstacle of them. Majority of students read English only for the sake of examination. They are not known how to recite poems but they well known how to memory it. Actually rural students have fear on English. On the other hand many teachers don't have long vision about students' life they focus only on examination.

Students of the rural colleges face a number of problems as English is their second language. Learning a second language means acquiring a system of rules, but just as a very little is known about these rules, even less is known about how such rule systems are acquired. Students find themselves unable to express in English. They have no idea of proper sentence structure. They do not know proper pronunciation, spellings and grammatical rules. The sole objective of the teacher and the learner remain to clear the exams. The students never realize the importance of learning English as a language. In the past, in rural areas, English was introduced to students in the fifth class. But now there is no dearth of English medium schools in such area yet the standards of English are falling rapidly. If we compare a graduate of present time with a graduate of the past, the result is shockingly amazing. The emphasis on passing the exams lies so heavy on the students that they opt for the cramming method. Such an approach helps unscrupulous elements to flourish. They help the students in achieving their goals of passing the exams. The inter-disciplinary relation of teaching and learning process brings home the fact that the problems of the teachers can be solved if we concentrate on the causes of the problem of the students.

PROBLEMS OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN RURAL AREA:

- Ø Students of the rural areas face a number of problems in learning English is their second language.
- Ø Students find themselves unable to express in English.
- Ø Students do not know proper pronunciation, spellings and grammatical rules.
- Ø Students never realize the importance of learning English as a language.
- Ø Lack of confidence to speak in English
- Ø First reason is that they have been taught English through Grammar-Translation Method.
- Ø This method makes them dependent on their mother tongue.
- Ø Some teachers have good accent, but they do not possess a good command over the language.

Language learning is a natural process for the natives. The approach to this learning process is called the 'behavioristic approach'. But for the students of other languages, deliberate efforts are required to learn a foreign language which requires a 'mentalistic approach'. The students of rural and semi-urban areas in India face such problems because English is not their mother-tongue. It is neither instinctive nor intuitive. Language acquisition seems to be a process of both of analogy and application, nature and nurture. Teachers of language have adopted and invented a variety of methods to teach English. Edward M. Anthony says in 'Approach, method

and Technique-Teaching English as a Second language', "Method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material no part of which contradicts and all of which is based upon, the selected approach. Approach is axiomatic and a method is procedural. '(1).The orderly presentation of language to students is influenced by several factors. The teacher has to keep in mind the age of the student, his native language, his cultural background and his previous experience with English. The experience of the teacher and his level of English mastery are equally important. To achieve the desired effects, the goal of a course much be kept in mind-whether it is aimed at reading, fluency in speech, inculcating translation skill. All these objects shape methodology.

Because of the rapidly increasing web of Educational facilities, the rural areas have been enjoying the facilities of the convents. But it has neither helped in raising the level of the students, nor made them learn English as a language. The infrastructure of such schools is weak. Some teachers have good accent, but they do not possess a good command over the language. Now in the rural and semi-Urban areas, study of English language begins at an early age, at the KG level, it continues up to Senior Secondary or first Degree level. Even in the Professional Courses, the teaching of English as a communication skill is an integral part of the curriculum or the course obligations. It is quite unfortunate that whatever our English language teachers gain in the completion of their course or education as eligibility for seeking a job or an employment, it stays there and the teaching learning stagnates. There may be possible solutions can be applied like

- Ø Teachers should recite poems and not allowed to memorize it.
- Ø Try to create interest to taste poems.
- Ø Should avoid GT method.
- Ø Teachers should find some way of helping pupils to enjoy their language activities, and of building their confidence.
- Ø The English teacher should have the wide-ranging enthusiasm and Imagination.
- Ø Group discussions can be arranged.
- Ø Texts should be read loudly by the students.
- Ø English will be used by them as a medium of expression.
- Ø To motivate the students think through English.
- Ø They will be able to use English as a language of communication.
- Ø Create confidence of speaking English in the public.

English is used all over the world not out of any imposition but because of the realization that it has certain advantages. A very important reason for regarding English as a world language is that the world's knowledge is enshrined in English. It is a progressive language. It is dynamic and flexible. Over and above English is universally renowned for its power of expression and its rich literature.

The changing times have witnessed the growing importance of English language in all walks of life. It does not seem that non-native speakers or as a second language speakers. Conscious and unconscious use of the words in our everyday conversation from the English language bears evidence to this fact.

Education has been the primary factor in the more formal transmission of English around the world. English symbolizes in Indian minds, better education, better culture and higher intellect. In present times, English is the most preferred language. The Indians and the Indian English language press uses many words derived from Indian language. Indian accent is sometimes difficult for non-Indians to understand. Actually English has co-existed in the Indian

sub-continent alongside thousands of local languages. It has remained at the heart of the Indian society.

If we take into consideration the role of teacher and learner in acquiring the knowledge of a language; the problems can be solved effectively. Only then the students will realize the practical use of English language. English will be used by them as a medium of expression. They will be able to use English as a language of communication. Fluency in the speech, proper knowledge of sentence structure, confidence of speaking in the public will make them able to keep their pace with the developing world. It will also help in raising the standards of English as a language at the college level. On the basis of suggestions given above, the critical situations in the teaching of English can be checked from further deteriorations. Decidedly one or two persons can't do anything solid. Let everyone concerned with it take the responsibility. Only then we can create a congenial environmental & we can be able to achieve better results in the teaching and learning of English.

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