



Problems of Teaching English at College level in Remote Areas of Gujarat

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Abstract

Teaching English as a second language in remote areas of Gujarat state faces numerous challenges and problems, including outdated teaching methods like rote memorization, teacher-centric lectures, and the predominant use of vernacular languages. These issues hinder student's mastery of grammar, pronunciation, and sentence structure. Multi-level classes with varying proficiency levels further complicate learning, resulting in uneven outcomes. Ineffective teaching practices, inadequate resources, and a lack of practice for speaking and listening skills contribute to poor performance. Solutions include adopting learner-centric syllabi, communicative teaching methods, and audio-visual aids to create interactive and engaging classrooms. Government initiatives like the Digital English Language Laboratory (DELL) and the Society for Creation of Opportunity through Proficiency in English (SCOPE) are positive steps. However, enhancing teacher quality and motivation is crucial for success. Effective teachers inspire and impart knowledge, making them key to overcoming the challenges of language instruction in these remote areas.

Keywords:

English language, remote areas, Gujarat, teaching challenges, learner-centred syllabi, communicative methods, educational innovation

Introduction:

Language is nature's Gift to man. It is that dynamism which allows the expression of mind, through words. A child naturally learns the nuances of language, but an adult struggle. This is the situation of students making valiant efforts to learn English. The Britishers have left India with a terrible hang over. the struggle to make sense of English language to students of vernacular medium in urban areas in general and rural or tribal areas in Gujarat in particular, is a Herculean task for teachers of English.

James Russell Lowell says "A weed is no more than a flower in disguise." In language learning, student effort is essential. Teacher has been a facilitator of learning. One can learn by doing something oneself. One can learn all the theories of Swimming, in fact, be able to swim himself/herself in the same way, one may know about how language is structured, but may not know how to speak it.



Problems:

Learning language in classrooms of Gujarat is a monotonous, boring and painful process. Typical Traditional lecture system method – teacher is always speaking a loud in his/her voice, reads a few lines from the text book and explains such lines in the student's vernacular language. Students hardly get a chance to speak one or two syllables in English. Students have been learning English as a second language since their first std. onwards. students find themselves unable to express themselves in English. They have no idea of correct sentence structure, proper pronunciation, spellings and above all the grammatical rules and regulations. He has to prune the weed and let the flowers bloom.

Bell coined the term multi-level classes such classes are found in Gujarat, are a real challenge for teachers because they are of different levels and abilities of students. Both strong and weak students share such multi-level classes at the same time. Instilling the four language skills –Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing-becomes difficult because of stipulated time and prescribed syllabus structure. This is how weak students or slow learners have to suffer a lot and they remain far behind from the rest.

Teachers come to know the level of students at the time of dictating or while assessing their answer books and worksheets. students commit mistakes in spelling., shud for should, sjeshn for suggestion, bat for but, cot for quote, nolej for knowledge and so on and so forth. Students may make mistake while using plural of names for e.g., medias for media, tooths for teeth, wives for wives,womans for women etc.

Broadly speaking, students are reluctant to attend the classes of English, they bunk classes as they believe English is not their cup of tea. Sometimes they get readymade answers and at the time of exam they simply cram the answers and manage to pass the examination not the language itself.

Students of Gujarat region are lagging behind in speaking and listening. They are too inattentive, so as a result of it they score a minimum number of at the time of interviews. The core reason for that is our examination system, no mark is assigned for these two skills, and we have made these skills passive instead of active. Students of Gujarat feel insulted if they are asked to read aloud in classes because of their miserable and ludicrous pronunciation. A second-language teacher's classroom activity can be optimized by considering its relationship to the development, in his students, of communication skills. The development of these skills presupposes the presence and insights of a live teacher, and cannot be accomplished by a machine. That the techniques advocated here are practical, is illustrated by a description of Communication Practice (CP), as well as the following considerations: the introduction of new material, some aspects of course organization, and finally, the students' proper mental attitude toward language learning (Palmer 19).

The problems of teaching English in Gujarat region can be highlighted as follows:



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- B. Cramming from guides
- C. No background In English
- D. Teachers adopt translation
- E. Students Escaping from English Classes
- F. Lack of innovation in classroom

Solutions:

In order to cope up with the problem learner centred syllabus should have been introduced. Communicative English should be given weightage. Audio –visual aids should be given preference. Teacher should create good rapport with students and make class room more exciting and interactive one. Teacher should bring Flashcards cards of words, Pictures of birds and animals etc., Students should be quite often motivated to bring dictionary in class room and ask to find 5 to 10 entries from them. We should make students watch English or Hindi movies with English Subtitles. They should be asked to speak for one minute on the topic of their interest, ignoring the mistake of students in the beginning of such a drive.

The Government of Gujarat's initiative of introducing Digital English Language Laboratory (DELL) and Society for Creation of Opportunity through Proficiency in English (SCOPE) in Colleges of Gujarat are apt and most appreciating steps towards imparting momentum; hence, they are seen as catalyst in imparting knowledge and efficiency of English. The onus is with each trainer or facilitator and we have to shoulder the responsibility of guiding the young community of students.

The importance of a good teacher cannot be overstated, good teachers not only educate, they also inspire. Good teachers make good students, and good teachers make good citizens. We must therefore find ways of improving the quality of our teachers-Manmohan Singh

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