

TEACHING ENGLISH IN INDIA: A REVIEW OF OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Abstract

India 4.0 has begun in India and impact of it is visible among the Indian Industries and MNCs in India, where the demand for skilled Indian professional has increased, but it has been always challenging in India to get hired a skilled workforce suitable to specific job profile. Recently published India Skills Report (2022) states that almost 56% of Indian Graduate do not possess skills required in the Industry, especially the set of soft skills. English language has always been a challenge for Indian Graduates as most of them struggle to use it as an official business language for communication in the industry. English is steadily replacing other languages as the standard for international communication in the 21st century. As a growing number of individuals use English as their official or second language, the flow of the changing economy, new technology, and developments in the industrial sector have made English without a doubt one of the most influential languages in the world. Over the past few centuries, the number of English speakers has multiplied at a phenomenal pace. Whether English will continue to be a world language is still up for discussion. The paper discusses English as a Global Language and Contemporary Issues of Teaching-Learning of English in India.

Keywords: English Language, Teaching-Learning of English, Graduate Attributes

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I. THE 21ST CENTURY IN INDIA CALLS FOR A STRONG ENGLISH EDUCATION

The researcher is convinced that globalisation has had an impact on how English is taught and learned in our nation. A nation like India uses English as a second language, and for some individuals it serves as their first language, owing to the expansion and spread of the language throughout the world. It has a good reputation throughout the nation, as R V Bayaskar mentions in her paper on the Importance of Technology in English Language Teaching and Learning. English now plays a more important and respected role in India than ever before, as shown by the fact that it is a major component of the curriculum and the medium of teaching.

1. Challenges of Teaching English in India: The teaching of the English language in India is fraught with difficulties since it is impacted by a variety of variables from primary school to higher education. Here are a few of them:

- **Teaching English in Rural Communities:** Learners from rural communities confront a variety of challenges. Their second language is English. A system of rules must be learned in order to learn a second language, but just as less is known about these rules, so too is knowledge about how these structure systems are learned. Students struggle to communicate in English. They have no concept of how to properly construct sentences. They lack knowledge of correct spelling, pronunciation, and grammatical principles. The learner's and teacher's entire focus continues to be passing the tests. The significance of learning English as a language is seldom understood by the students. In past decades, fifth-grade kids in rural areas were first exposed to English. Although there are many of English-medium schools in this area right now, English proficiency skills are gradually deteriorating (Bhandari, 2009).
- **Inadequate Awareness of the Goals of Teaching English:** The purposes and goals of English instruction in India are not always clear. The people who created the policy have tried, but they haven't been able to clearly state the aims and objectives of teaching English in schools. Since the subject is on the syllabus, the teachers are aware that they must teach it. The pupils are aware that they need to study this material because it will be on their exams. English is taught from the very beginning in schools that are taught in that language. English is taught to students as an academic subject matter, not as a skill subject. This is the main cause of the confusion around English instruction and learning in Indian schools.
- **A Shortage of Skilled Teachers:** When it comes to English instruction in schools, incompetent teachers are the main cause of issues. They were taught using outdated approaches and have never bothered to seek out newer ones, or there are those who learn novel information but never put it to use in actual classroom instruction, content to stick with conventional methods. English is occasionally taught by individuals who did not study it firsthand.
- **Overcrowded Classrooms:** There has been an unprecedented rise in the number of learners as education has expanded. The same scenario continues into the school years and then into the secondary and university years. The average class size is 60 to 70

people, although there are certain instances where the class number is 100 to 120 students. With fewer opportunities for individualised attention and feedback in such a busy classroom, English teachers struggle greatly. It is challenging to give each student the attention they deserve, despite the fact that this is extremely important in an English classroom.

In order to improve the efficiency of the English teaching process as the number of English learners grows, many teaching methodologies have been adopted. From primary level education through higher education in India, the shift in the global economy and the emergence of English as a world language have had an impact on how English is taught and learned. See the following examples:

- The Government has made it a policy to hire the best English language teachers with a qualifying exam in order to meet the demands of the global world and develop the foundations of English as an international language. The effort has an encouraging impact and enhances English teaching and learning in India.
- The country's professional universities and institutes are now required to include English as a subject in the curriculum for a variety of professional degree courses due to the growing need for English in the corporate world.
- Everyone in the nation is interested in learning communicative English because they want to be proficient in the language.
- Task-based English language teaching is more popular among English teachers since it helps students improve their communication abilities in the language.
- ICT tools like learning programmes, software, e-materials, films, and many more are being used by teachers to teach English language and communication skills.

Therefore, it is accurate to say that widespread changes in the world have inspired educators to give up the conventional techniques of teaching the English language.

2. English Language Specific Graduate Attributes: The University Grant Commission (2019) has provided the Language and Communication discipline-specific characteristics expected of the fresh graduates in India. Following are the characteristics that should be present:

- Students will be able to have advanced and fundamental proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and understanding English.
- Use a variety of creative, critical, and linguistic levels to interact with and comprehend the texts.
- Read the work carefully, take note of the stylistic and linguistic novelty, and examine the novel themes, antecedents, and fundamental principles.
- Establish linguistic or pragmatic frameworks to evaluate the literary text's use of language.
- Establish connections with academic works to build a critical viewpoint and coherently articulate an opinion.
- Read diverse original as well as the original and comprehend the world; think clearly and critically about local as well as global trends; recognise and respect the differences.

- 3. Learners' Aspirations from the English Language:** Learners come to the classroom with certain expectations and goals in the twenty-first century. The students join the English classroom with great hopes and expectations because they believe that learning this language will alter their lives (Study Mode, 2011). Learners from regional language backgrounds often struggle to adapt to English-speaking environments because they feel uneasy utilising the language to express themselves. Students who are not native English speakers have a psychological aversion to the language. They believe they will not be able to perform effectively in the interactive activities when compared to the pupils from English-speaking backgrounds, which is sometimes referred to as an inferiority complex.

ESL learners desire to communicate in English, but logically they are unable to translate their messages, ideas, and thoughts from their native tongue to English. For them, this barrier creates obstacles in their path to English language proficiency. Their main area of concern is communicative English, and they want more exercises and practice to make up for this shortcoming. Students in higher education are constantly keen to improve their English proficiency in order to perform better throughout the hiring process. For this reason, they are enthusiastic about participating in group discussions and mock interviews because they want more opportunities to do so. They wish to get knowledge of proper logical argumentation. They frequently worry about how they show themselves and their body language.

The teachers have been motivated to develop novel English teaching strategies as a result of the desires and expectations of the students. The teacher needs to be informed about the state of English as a world language today. He must be very clear about what the pupils must learn and how to teach it effectively. This moves a classroom towards a student-centered approach (StudyMode, 2013).

II. CONCLUSION

English is emerging as the most important language in the business world, and nobody can deny the fact that one must have competency over the English Language if he or she desires to achieve professional heights. But After observing all the above issues and challenges, we have to arrive at the conclusion that 21st Century Teacher, Learner and Academic Policy Makers should address remedies to overcome these challenges. The rules defining the environment of English has to be explicit. The teacher should use a variety of teaching techniques in the classroom teaching-learning process and concentrate on student-focused teaching-learning with efficient monitoring while keeping the obvious objectives of teaching English in mind.

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