



Challenges of Teaching and Learning of English in the 21st Century

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ABSTRACT The traditional chalk and talk method is of less interest in today's scenario for teaching English language. Instead of 'Edu+cation', 'Owl+cation' systems are hampering the language learning process in India. Students of the present time need up to date method which takes care of their interest too without generating any type of ennui. Now, it is a challenge for a genuine teacher that he or she has to do something surprising and interesting for the students to make them learn English language without any fuss. The language learning process is such where the teacher plays an irreplaceable role with the selection of the tool and the right effective approach ensuring results. This is possible if the teacher is able to realize and identify the basics which are generally missed under pressure of syllabus completion or lack of knowledge. The latter is the major reason which is directly connected to delivery of topics in the classrooms.

INTRODUCTION

The National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) is a statutory body of the Government of India and it has made specific recommendations to 'break out of intellectual isolation and share experiences and insights with others in the field of both teaching and academics. At the level of teachers, it is very important to share their teaching strategies with other companions or compatriot teacher as they can invent new strategy as per their need in the classrooms. Sometimes teachers try to hide their strategies from the other teachers and thus they are able to give benefit to only a few students. Learning of popular language plays an important part in teaching learning process. British Council's report considers this step taken at the primary education as the "the world's biggest policy development in education" Enever (2009). It is considered as the most influential activity if one starts learning languages at a very early stage of life. It is stated by McLoughlin (2006) that, "Showing the students some headlines, to write their vocabulary assisted stories or involving them in writing the script of an advertisement with the touch of humor or telling the students to do on-line collaborative task for learning language are some really revolutionary tasks while are working well on the trajectory of learning language."

Teaching and Learning International Survey TALIS (2009) identifies these three dimensions as triarchic model for improving the learning of the students. Snow and Lohman in 1984 revealed that the students with low capability are more benefited by teacher-centered classes and the students with high skills get profit from the less structured classes according to the Study Teaching Practices (2009).

TALIS identifies two types of coordination among the faculty members: one is exchanging instructional material and other things in informal manner and the other is working professionally in a team under any project as observing the classes of other faculty members and giving feedback.

The factors of cognitive, motivations capacities, socio- economic background, and cultural background are beyond the capacity of a teacher.

Objectives

The objective of this paper is to gauge into the present real scenario of English Language Learning in India or across the world with finding new ways of Teaching and Learning English Language; searching new technological tools for English Language Teaching (ELT) has also been targeted.

METHODOLOGY

It is to find the hidden facts related to English language teaching by finding the different database and collecting the reviews of research papers, and then comparing these collected facts theoretically to find the practicality factor in them for coining the new rule to improve the process of language learning.

There are different practices in the teaching language all around the world, as in Korea Task-Based Learning and Teaching (TBLT) is popular. In some countries like South Korea and Malaysia, some popular and well renowned text books are prescribed by the government and in other countries like China and Singapore, “teachers can make choice books out of the selected books by the government”.

The problem of rural background students in learning language is their total unawareness for learning English as a foreign language. The size of the class is recommended to be smaller than the usual size as per the expert opinions and the training of the teachers should be a regular exercise. More precisely, there are some popular challenges which are unanimously affecting the teaching-learning process like spoken English, pronunciation by teacher, indiscipline, behavioral pattern, management of the classroom, lack of motivation, mixed level of students and teachers, presence of extremely weak students, individual differences, spelling problems and the size of classroom (number of students). Out of these problems, spoken, classroom discipline, motivation, and writing problems are major areas of concern.

Examinations cannot show the exact competency of any student as the grades tell the competency in the factual details but language competency can be better judged by the composition, spoken, and comprehension. Here, a shift is observed in the English language teaching and learning (ELTL) where English is taken as a skill rather than merely a subject which is to be passed with 40 percent marks. The generic improvement in learning English depends on the local educational authorities as it is mentioned that if the local challenges are mediated by the local educational conditions, then things can be improved. It also depends on the local teachers’ “sense of plausibility” as quoted by Maley

(2018). According to Kumaravadivel (2001), a teacher should be given authority to develop his own constructed curriculum to generate context-sensitive pedagogic knowledge but must be having a universal aim of education.

If the classroom atmosphere is light and healthy, it becomes easy for the students to speak up their thoughts; humor or fun also helps in reducing the classroom pressure. Generally, it is noticed that in the classroom, students prefer new techniques for learning which can make teaching and learning process easier. It is not that English should be only taught in English but the intervention of local language and details of other subjects meanwhile can also work as catalyst in ELTL. According to the research data, students report that most of their teachers have settled in the teaching profession not as their first choice but as an option. Sometimes these teachers are only subject and syllabus oriented; they only feel satisfied when a student behaves like a pedantic learner. In this scenario, there are some practices which are invented by the authorities, like the National Institute of Education in Singapore has invented the Teaching English (TE) model for the 21st century (TE²¹) which is focusing on the enablement of the teachers by providing compact training. There are other models also like Ofsted’s (Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills) in the UK, The Professional Standards for Teachers (2013) which identifies the five stages of development of a teacher.

Qualifying as a teacher is the focal point of the first stage and then the regular training of the teachers is emphasized. British Council (1979) also identified the stages in the form of Continuing Professional Development (CPD): Awareness, Understanding, Engagement and Integration are to be focused on.

For the schemes of curriculum designing, bottoms-up and top-down methods are really effective in bringing a big transformation in the syllabi part. Allowing the teachers to sit in the lectures of other colleagues gave positive results according to the research done by British Council. It says that with a non-judgmental attitude, a teacher can experience the teaching style of other colleagues. In Teacher Educator Conference (TEC12) by British Council’s Continuing Professional Development (CPD) book, an-

other experiment was done in which 10 teachers started diary writing and their writings showed very less element of descriptive reflection level as mentioned in the study by Mathew (2014). For the three month diary writing exercise, most of them just reached at the dialogical level but a few teachers were at the critical reflection level.

Conducting the examinations also matters a lot in the English Lesson through Literature (ELTL); it is the third pole of teaching learning process. Now these days the concept of CCE (Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation) is popular but it has made a teacher an over-occupied employee like an assembly-line worker.

It is also a matter of concern if the non-performing staff is inevitable than in which proportion the organization can afford it. There should be a working model which will support the teaching staff to grow with certain convenient intervals.

Making the students adaptable to the new technology is a huge challenge in the present world as it is a revolutionary shift from the manual books to e-reading of text. Some experts say that it is important to advise students to become familiar with the technological tools which are helpful for them in achieving success. The tools for collaborative writing are always helpful for the modern students like word processing tools such as docs.google.com, plus.google.com/hangouts, or piratepad.net, can be utilized as elaborated in the study by Bikowski (2012). Some other tools are also popular like leapmoption.com or Microsoft Kinect for leaning through voice recognition, eye tracking and automated writing evaluation which is also iterated by another study by Bikowski (2014).

So, there are multiple digital competencies like print literacy, texting literacy, hypertext literacy, visual, media and multimedia literacy, gaming literacy, mobile literacy and code and technological literacy. Apart from these the most important and latest is Remix Literacy in which the same thing is reproduced with some new and surprising angles like the literal video of Harry Potter.

To make the teachers and students understand that learning is a social act in which the construction of knowledge is only possible by the contribution of everyone for one another according to some scholars like Srinivas (2014).

There are certain steps to gain knowledge as per some other opinions. It is a synthesis which can be followed in the following assertions predicted on the following premises: (a) learning is a social act (b) learning is an active process (c) learners benefit from others' knowledge and viewpoints (d) dialogue and active involvement promote learning, and e-learning takes place when learners critically reflect on their knowledge and this process is given in the study of Smith and MacGregor (1992).

It is true that one cannot perfect knowledge alone as the different perspectives given by different people are needed to have or develop a holistic view. In this direction the challenges are several like being self-motivated, reflection over details, understanding the importance of advice, respecting all sort of views, openness and frankness in discussing matters, willingness to share responsibilities, group supervision or monitoring, reflecting positivity, preparing consensus, clarity in task instructions, and controlling skills of an instructor.

The concern of improving the performance of a teacher is really high as most of the teachers inspite of teaching for a long time, have never observed how they look while explaining or speaking in the classroom. Making the videos of self can also be a solution for some visible deficiencies in the body language while delivering lectures. Listening to self-spoken lectures at length brings a great realization for improvement; the areas of strength and weaknesses are easily traceable over this self-audio-video clip.

Different opinions given by the teachers are observed after their experience of observing their own lecture videos. Some said that he was not good at spoken sentences though he was able to engage the class properly; another teacher confessed after watching his own lecture video that her handwriting was very bad and she made several mistakes while writing on board, for instance she wrote 'irritation' instead of 'irrigation' or 'Massage' instead of 'Message', though the students did not notice that but a mistake is a mistake; others observed that they need serious improvement in their body language and pronunciation. Focusing on only few students in the classroom, reading or speaking in an endless single breath or standing at only one place are other observations in such practice. Viewing

the video alone gives such feedbacks and watching it with friends or family members works as a source of hidden blind spots in learning and improving. One of the teachers shared her recorded video in which she was teaching English written on the product wrappers like toffees, coffee jars with other friends, colleagues and children. This video was appreciated by the colleagues saying that what she did was something unique. This video was later used for the trainees so they could perform better.

The habit of reading the books manually is a tough task and it consumes time also, so it is a challenge for the teaching fraternity to convert the books into Mp3 format so a student can easily listen to it. Thus it increases the level of accessibility. A computer file is easy to access with minor technical training and it has more mobility than a physical book. English language learning has some landmark books and the Mp3 files of these books can create wonders. The following three books are generally recommended for reading on kindle device under a funded project which is mentioned further. These three books were: *My Struggle for an Education: Booker T. Washington*, *With the Photographer: Stephen Leacock*, and *The Seventh Mandarin: Anonymous*.

This was under a major project funded by the Regional English Language Office (RELO), American Centre, New Delhi and it was executed by the staff of Aligarh Muslim University as a part and parcel of Kindle Mobile learning initiative in India. It was experimented on 337 young learners in the work of Nehal (2014) who were studying under the English Access Microscholarship programmes at Aligarh, Bhubaneswar, Kochi (Aluva) and Kolkata. Learning of English language affects the understanding of the other subjects also according to Varela et al. (2017) because it is the common medium of all the subjects. It is also called Content-Based Teaching/Instruction or Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). For instance, for recruitment Google keeps a logical puzzle round and if someone has any sort of doubt as per the description given then there is a serious problem in the comprehension part of the problem given in the 10 to 15 lines.

CBI (Content-based instruction) is another approach in which the problems related to the

content of the learning is solved. It provides age specific content for rendering desired result in the teaching learning process. It facilitates language acquisition through meaningful, communicative and experiential instruction, thereby heightening learner motivation as stated by Begelow (2010), it grounds instruction with interesting texts and tasks.

This is very perspicuous that a learner and a teacher get the positive feeling if the process of teaching and learning is going in the right direction. In the student oriented system, such feeling is vital because such feeling only comes after doing substantial activity. Students' performances of a certain type of task and their feelings of the learning are considered especially imperative according to Lin and Chain (2010).

The promotion of the computer aided system is now very much in demand because it is expected by the parents also that their kid will get an up to the mark education, especially in the matter of language learning. This popular system is called Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). As per the demand, a lot many products are available but selecting the right option is a challenge for the authorities.

There are some authentic soft-wares for translation also like Oxford Dictionary, Dr. Eye and for online study like Live ABC as given in Lin and Chain (2010) and these tools are widely used by the students as well as teachers but the effect of this is difficult to measure but important one. A researcher is advised to go in this direction where the impact of the majorly used tools must be assessed because the wrong impact can ruin the life as well as career of a learner.

There are a lot of programmes which are run by the most popular universities all around the world but in India there is as such no homemade programme which has world-wide recognition. The awareness of these programmes is also meager in comparison to the importance and essentiality.

Trinity College's Integrated Skills in English (ISE), arrangement of 4 tests includes Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening acknowledged by scholastic organizations in the United Kingdom. They in the meantime offer a test titled Graded Examinations in Spoken English (GESE), arrangement of 12 times assessments containing Speaking and Listening and ESOL Skills for Life and ESOL for Work tests in the UK. Cam-

bridge English is also known as ESOL and it gives a suite of five examinations, incorporating First Certificate in English (FCE), Certificate in Advanced English (CAE) and Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE). In addition, IELTS (International English Language Testing System) acknowledged by scholarly organizations in the UK, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, and by numerous individuals in the USA, additionally have a place with a standout amongst the most huge English capability tests on the planet these days. Importantly, Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), an Educational Testing Service item, created and connected principally for colleges and schools in America, and is currently broadly acknowledged in tertiary foundations in Canada, New Zealand, Australia, the UK, and Ireland. The present trial of TOEFL is Internet based, and is known as the TOEFL iBT (Internet Based Test) utilized as an intermediary for English fulfilling the Academic Purposes.

Companion framework recommended by Lee (2008) and Sotillo (2005), would do the students' prevalent introductions in composing articles. Maybe the most yearning venture to date is "*Follow Me!*" which was co-created by Bayrischer Rundfunk and Norddeutscher Undfunk in relationship with other German, Austrian and Swiss systems. Television and Radio segments are additionally being provided by BBC English by Radio and Television. The course depends on the Waystage and Threshold Level determinations of the Council of Europe as per the report of Council of Europe (1900), orchestrated for their motivation with the Grundbanstein of the Deutscher Volkshochschul Verband, which will give the ground association to instruct.

The belief of a teacher also works is a big factor because it is based on the surrounding and their own learning when they were in the company of their own teachers. It is according to a research done at Chilean EFL survey and the data interpretation using Atlas-ti qualitative software. Belief of a teacher is between knowledge and action or individuals and their performances. According to a common belief of a teacher can be categorized into two parts core and peripheral. The core is seen in the instruction of a teacher and the peripheral is oscillating between the instruction and the actual action in the class room.

Only the few good teachers are able to deliver what they feel and believe and that is the true flavor of teaching.

Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) is followed by some of countries to ensure the learning of the language. A teacher is a role model for students while learning English and it is ascertained by research also where 100 percent voters says that it is true. In another angle, students prove to be equally important in comparison to teachers and motivation which is must in learning language as expressed by Díaz Larenas et al. (2015).

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

There are several aspects regarding teaching and learning of English language and they range from selection of good teaching material to the new tech-savvy techniques of facilitation of students, and from teachers training to the class room statistics. Out of the read reviews there are many data which tells about the areas where we need to work on for improving the language learning process at different levels of education. A teacher must know the real factual data regarding the teaching learning process and the training of a teacher generally focuses on the subject knowledge which is undoubtedly important but knowing the whole perspective of teaching is also very important. Such type of training which focuses more on the awareness of the teachers about the language teaching field, which tells them that apart from teachers and students, teaching aids are more important and the selection of these aspects and material are the most important.

Ultimately some prominent challenges which are faced by language teaching fraternity are over dependency of students on teachers, adaptation of second language alienating the first, rowdy or defiant behavioral pattern, personality clash, students' de motivation, Boredom, unpreparedness, tardiness and less time in learning English prescribed in syllabus.

CONCLUSION

Facing these problems and finding the solution in line with the technological growth in the gadget world prompts the teachers and learners

to create, develop, and adopt new models of language teaching and learning with the use of tools like Macmillan's *Employability Skills Resource Bank*. Adaptation to online teaching is also a challenge where the awareness of using Zoom or Skype for it is needed. There are some other tools for online teaching like *Blog de Cristina*, *Ricardo Barros' blog*, *Film English*, *Viral ELT*. Students can record themselves on some other available tools like <http://vocaroo.com> or www.soundcloud.com.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The teachers know Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing LSRW activities but they do not know the term 'Dictogloss' which is also the same but makes LSRW to be utilized at the same time which is more important than one exercise covers all the four aspects of LSRW. In this technique, a teacher gives dictation to all the students and they take notes to recreate the matter and present it before the other students. This activity brings a visible change in the language learning process of a student. It has been recommended that the use of authentic concepts to imbibe the language sense in the students is extremely important because knowing all the tools is ok but knowing the use of those tools effectively is more important.

LIMITATIONS

This research is based on the reviews of the research papers and no actual survey is done to collect the data; so, this is just to have a view about the thoughts of a lot of educationist about English Language Teaching and Learning.

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