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Dismal Picture of English Language in India: An Analysis

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Abstract:

In the light of globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation, the author has analysed the problem related to English language in Indian context. The author points out the present state of affairs as regards English language and also tried to elaborate the causes of drear position and ways out to rectify the alarming situation. Majority of the problems are associated with educators and learners' psyche and attitudes. Finally, some suggestions are being put forward by an author to improve deteriorating situation. Paper ends on concluding note that we must immune to English language in order to live in globalised world and to compete and excel in all spheres of life.

Key words: English proficiency, foreign language, challenges, multi-lingual, prospects, skills of language.

Present state of affairs:

India is a multilingual country with numerous languages and dialects. English as a language has been in India for more than a century. But even now, very few can speak English. But in spite of English not being spoken by many people in India, it has become a major link language at national and international levels and is commonly used language in offices, business, industry, preparations of professionals like Doctors and Engineers and in research particularly in the fields of science and technology; and so teaching of English in schools has acquired importance in the education system of the country.

But present state of teaching and learning English in India is really pathetic, English is being taught and learned in faulty way which put the future of the students and Nation at stake. At present, competitive and globalised economies put forth challenges for non English speaking countries. Imagine life in a nation where you, a member of the society, are unable to read the label of the medicine you must give your child, the menu at a local restaurant, read the warning signs of the road, a place where you are unable to comprehend the government document officiating your driver's license, tax filing and so on.

What is important is to motivate the students, by helping the student to attain his goal of being proficient in English language. The basic objective should thus be, to make student independent. It is up to teacher to make the student realize that the gaining competence in English he or she shall hold the master-key to success in the contemporary world.

Challenges of teaching English language:

Incompetent educators:

The inability of teachers to teach English language leads to air of dissatisfaction among masses and in educational arenas. Most of the teachers of English are not in a position to use four skills of the foreign language in efficient manner and to deliver same to students. They were also not taught well by their teachers.

Psyche of learners:

There is misconception prevalent among the pupils that English is the toughest and complex of all subjects which lead to alarming results in English language. Most of students suffer from the phobia

of English language. This psychological pressure of English language put brakes on the performance of the students and results in under performance of pupils in English language.

Defective Learning methods:

Faulty and defective methods of teaching lead to deteriorating the standard of teaching learning process in foreign language. Teaching of English language becomes mere a formality in most of the schools which witnessed a steep downfall in the abilities of students to comprehend four skills of English language. It also leads to downfall in academic scores especially in English language.

Hindrance by Mother tongue:

Preference of mother tongue by both teachers and students put the English language at back foot. While communicating with each other they use words, vocabulary and sentences from their first language which derails the process of communication in English language. This all happens due to exorbitant use of mother tongue.

Deficiency of involvement:

Lack of interest and involvement among students to be proficient in four skills of English language i.e. listening, reading, speaking and writing becomes a big hurdle in teaching and learning foreign language. They just run away from English language and prefer mother tongue as medium for sharing or exchange of ideas and experience with others.

Lack of drill sessions:

Language could be mastered by practising four skills by putting ample efforts. In case of English language one must be vigilant and active enough to master the four skills. "Practice makes man perfect" But in our society there is scarcity of candid efforts towards learning of English language. In addition to this no practice and drills are carried out in adequate number or amount in institutions.

Absence of encouraging words:

Lack of motivation from teachers and parents as regards to learning of English language put students in dilemma whether to learn foreign language or not. The school and home should create congenial atmosphere for the learning of foreign language but this is not happening so far practically. Teachers and parents too want to dismantle themselves from English language.

No correction work in English:

Teachers hardly bother to rectify the mistakes committed by the students in English language due to attitude of learners towards foreign language. In this way they are not justifying their duties towards learners. There is absence of correction work by educators which worsening the condition of English language in institutions.

Colossal size of classes:

Due to overcrowded classrooms, each student doesn't get opportunity to improve their skills of English language. Moreover the ratio of students in relation to educators is not proportional. There is always possibility of student getting ignored or neglected by teachers. This kind of neglect is not acceptable in case of foreign language lead to gloomy picture.

Ways out:

Recruit proficient teachers:

Only well taught and proficient educators can make a difference as regards to pathetic condition of English in our system. Inefficient teachers are just playing with the lives of students and spoiling their careers. The need of the hour is to hand over the task of improving status of English language to proficient and committed educators.

Employ blended methods of teaching English:

Extensive use of language laboratory apart from numerous methods and approaches to teach English language will help to improve ground realities related to foreign language. Some of the methods and approaches are enumerated below:

Grammar –translation method, direct method, Bilingual method, the structural approach, Situational approach, the communicative method.

Show faith in pupils:

An educator must show confidence in their students so that their minds can be ignited to use English language extensively. The teachers should start from known to unknown, particular to general, whole to parts and simple to complex in order to vanish complexities from the minds of learners pertaining to English language.

Extensive use of English laboratory:

Adequate use of English laboratory definitely will improve the four skills of English language among students. Students should given ample opportunities to overcome their fear of English language by practising four skills i.e. listening, reading, speaking and writing through practice and drill.

Concentrate on correction work:

Correction work is instrumental to learning English language. If there is no correction work students tend to commit blunder mistakes and these will got fixed in their minds. Teachers must take up the responsibility to rectifying the continual occurrence of mistakes and errors.

Emphasis on vocabulary:

Vocabulary should be given due emphasis in order to improve four skills of English language. Students should be made to read newspaper daily and maintain record of tough words. It will infuse sense of confidence in pupils and thereby helps in attaining four skills of English language.

Act as icebreaker:

Teacher should come forward to ease the tense atmosphere where there is pressure to perform. Teach students to take initiative, participate and excel especially in English speaking situations. It will work as catalyst to grasp skills and overcome the fear of English language.

These are only some observations and suggestions made by the author on the basis of his experiences and what could be gathered from available literature. But there can be many more innovative solutions for the problem suitable to the context. The million dollar question is do we have will to change? It matters the most, remaining are just designing of procedures and implementation which we are capable of doing.

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