

# Issues and Challenges of English Teachers

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## ABSTRACT

There have been many instances in which English has been referred to as the "global language" because it is used in many countries worldwide. As a major resource for the modern world, English is not only the universal language of the current era but it is the dominant language in every country in the world [1]. Considering the great ethnic and linguistic diversity of the nation, English is used not only for communication purposes but also for coordination purposes between states and within states as the country is characterized by a large ethnic and linguistic diversity. Although modern technology has played an important role in teaching and learning the language in schools and colleges in particular in small towns, it is inadequate and unproductive in the case of small towns and rural areas [2].

During the course of becoming an effective teacher, teachers are encouraged to practice a "reflective mind" so that they can gain insight into what is happening in the classroom and learn what works and doesn't work [1][3]. The global economy and the competitive market of English education will present many challenges for teachers, especially English language teachers, primarily because of the competitive nature of English education as a profession, but also because of the demanding nature of a teaching career [2]. The purpose of this study was to identify the issues and challenges encountered by fifteen teacher-trainees during their teaching practicum, as well as to examine the factors that assisted in the identification of those issues and challenges. It was identified that narrative inquiry was the best method to identify challenges and issues experienced in their teaching practice.

It was found that students struggle with listening to and understanding English. The reason for this is unclear. How can these problems be alleviated? We are discussing the influence of rural pockets of India on second language acquisition, as well as the factors that slow its acquisition. These problems can be rectified successfully through appropriate and adequate remedial measures.

**Keywords--** Applied Narrative Approach, Reflective Teaching, English Teacher Trainees, Challenges, Issues

## I. INTRODUCTION

It is evident that for nearly 30 years or so, Indians in general, and students in particular, have been fascinated by the language and have been obsessed with learning it. It is still a wonder that the level of craziness remains high in

this era of scientific and technological innovations with the development of the corporate world and business. It is true that many English Language Training Institutes (ESTIs) have been established that claim to be Spoken English Institutes, most of which are privately owned and operated [1]. This is no doubt that these companies are set up to take advantage of unsuspecting members of the public and to charge them fees in order to take advantage of the money they have accumulated by paying their fees[1][3]. There has been a proliferation of seminars and conferences being held in colleges and universities in this regard at frequent intervals, but there has been little of value, encouragement or substance that has been gained out of the endeavors. In addition to that, the motives behind the programs offered at these institutes often are purely related to the study of spoken English, with little emphasis placed on the study of written English. By studying these books, all readers will have a great understanding of how to pronounce English as well as attaining correct accents, rhythms, and intonation that is made possible by R.K. Bansal and J.B Harrison [1].

TP (teaching practicum) is a key phase of teacher education. To succeed in this profession, English language teachers should also receive the same training. To provide students with lifelong learning opportunities, English language teachers must continuously improve their knowledge [2][4]. It is therefore crucial that teachers reevaluate their foundational principles, methods, and trainings in order to become effective teachers. In an understanding of teaching and learning, teaching principles, learning, and knowledge will be interrelated to create a complex process of reflection. In considering one's teaching performance and how it might relate to professional credibility, such as to evaluating a teacher trainee on the basis of their potential as English language teachers, it is necessary to consider the characteristics of one's teaching performance.

Teacher-trainees are not only learning as students, but they are actually gaining experience as they are learning the strengths and weaknesses of being a teacher in a classroom environment [5]. This practice enhances the professional development of teachers, as well as improving the learning process for students. It was the objective of this study to identify the issues and challenges associated with the practice of English language teachers' trainees in Bangkok bilingual schools and how those issues were addressed by actual practitioners. After completing the

course, we believe it is only natural that teacher-trainees are often overflowing with ideas that will benefit their ability to teach English effectively [4][6]. The experience of attending an ELT classroom as a student was different from what they encounter as teachers, when they have to demonstrate their ability to put theory into practice.

In order to gain full mastery of their teaching ability, teacher trainees must reflect on and describe their own individual teaching abilities as well as their professionalism in English language teaching. Moreover, they should also construct new knowledge to design effective lessons [7].

## II. ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN INDIA: ISSUES AND PROSPECTS

A small town or village in India is characterized by classes of mixed abilities. It is a widely held belief that in rural India the majority of the teaching and learning are done in the local language, the vernacular. Furthermore, English is the language that is tends to be required as the language of instruction for many competitive examinations (employment and higher education) [8]. Furthermore, there are far too many students in the class, resulting in a lack of effectiveness. Additionally, students may not be able to speak and learn English because of the rural environment. It has been noted that there is a considerable number of students in the classes everywhere [10].

The reason for this is that it is not possible to give students one-on-one attention because of this [8]. The teaching of English in schools and colleges has to undergo a drastic change if the students are to benefit from this [7][9]. Due to the fact that English is not their mother tongue, students in the rural and semi-urban areas of India face a lot of difficulties [10]. The primary language spoken by most rural and semi-urban students is Hindi [10]. The English language is the third language, meaning that there is a local language, followed by Hindi and then the English language [11].

There are some differences between learners from rural areas and those from urban areas in relation to the difficulty faced during the process of learning a foreign language [12]. Those who live in urban areas have more access to education. Thus, students from urban areas have a greater chance of acquiring the language quickly because of the domestic environment [13]. A substantial number of students in rural parts of the country do not have the opportunity to read or speak in English. Most students come from rural communities, which make up villages and small towns in the country. Language classes are conducted in a bilingual manner [12].

Although this method does help slow learners to some degree, it is not ideal. Moreover, by getting rid of this act, you will reduce the actual learning process as a whole. When a student does not understand something in English, he or she will ask for an explanation in his or her mother tongue i.e., his or her first language [15].

As a result, he or she is in a situation where he or she can use a bilingual method. It has become a reality that there are few trained teachers available in rural areas [15]. The process of teaching is continuous in rural India, and teachers are often prohibited from attending workshops and seminars to gain knowledge about new methods [17]. The overwhelming majority of rural Indians live on farms and have limited incomes, so they send their children to government schools where English isn't taught as a skill but as a subject. "English has a transformative power that is believed to be true for almost all castes and classes throughout India, whether in rural or urban areas."

In rural and urban India, English is more than merely valuable. It is seen as a sign of a better life, a path that leads out of poverty and oppression". [16] describes a method by which the teacher uses grammar translation to educate young children, explaining each word to them in their native tongue so that they can learn and understand the English language. This method has several disadvantages, though. For one, both teacher and student will focus primarily on learning L1 rather than L2. There is no evidence that English is a L2 class in this method [17]. The students benefit from this method only to a limited extent. In rural schools across India, this method is still widely used. Practicing all four of these skills is the key to learning a language. You must speak, read, and write [16][17]. There is no opportunity to practice these skills in the rural setting. Teaching English effectively is difficult for many teachers because they lack teaching aids, lack the necessary technical support, and lack the appropriate atmosphere [18].

Courses for teacher preparation lack the skills and knowledge necessary to prepare teachers to teach effectively, regardless of the subject matter [18][19]. It is a worse situation because English is not the language of transaction in rural India, resulting in very few opportunities for teachers to practice what they have learned. Continuing education for teachers must include periodic workshops, video/audio recordings of subject material to be taught, and project and assignment work. Majority of Indian students from rural areas, especially from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Maharashtra, consider English to be a very difficult subject [11][12].

Parents and teachers are often needed for first-generation learners. There is never a time when a student manages to write the whole sentence without making a grammatical error in English [12][13]. Exam preparation is the basis for their study of subjects. As part of our

examination system, we tend to test students on their memorization rather than on their analytical and creative skills. They memorize lessons, repeat them in class, and then forget them the next day [14].

It is impossible to expect an uniform standard of pronunciation of a second language in such a vast country because even the native language is spoken at different rates by different groups of people within the same language community [12][14]. Mother tongues generally interfere with the pronunciation of English when learning it. English is usually spoken in regional dialects by both students and teachers. Since many teachers do not possess the tools necessary to provide adequate practice for speaking, students are deprived of proper speaking practice while they learn English [15].

Different languages have different pronunciations, intonations, and accents [16]. Due to this, even after studying and learning English in school and college, most people cannot speak it accurately. In Indian classrooms, listening is the most neglected skill that is essential for learning a language [17]. India's teachers ignore this skill, assuming students are automatically able to acquire it without training. Indian classrooms rarely include peer education activities, such as role-playing and group projects [18]. Indian teachers tend to talk a lot in the classrooms. More than half of class time is taken up by teacher talk. Student attention is passive. No questions are allowed during class [19].

The teachers must engage the students in the process of preparing term papers, projects, and other assignments in pairs, groups, and teams in their classrooms [19]. It is therefore not surprising that even after many years of being taught English in school and college, learners still fail to learn what the language entails [20][21]. Their English is not acceptable for writing and they cannot speak and use English fluently and appropriately. They usually have difficulty understanding conversations conducted in English. Would it be fair to assume that most of the English teachers in India are simply unable to teach the language? [21] There has been a text-oriented method for teaching English in India since the beginning (colonial times). In fact, the British Government continued to deliberately foster a class of Indians that would serve as a buffer between the British and India. Therefore, elementary knowledge of English was needed for a class of Indians [22].

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching practicums have been developed to help teacher-trainees develop their knowledge and expertise in order to better prepare them to work in an environment of 21st century teaching and learning, as well as to prove to them that they can teach English to students who speak

other languages. Teacher training practicas are regarded as being an important component of teacher preparation for trainers in order to gain the needed qualifications and experience. In order to prepare future teachers for the art of teaching in the real world, educators need to gain knowledge on a wide range of classroom practices, as well as to acquire skills and attitudes in understanding and contributing to classroom practices, techniques, and skills [21][22]. This experience will give future teachers a solid foundation in which to practice teaching in the real school setting [23].

As a result of this experience, students and teachers are able to form a critical understanding of English language teaching and learning that is based on conceptual learning (Brookfield, 2017; Warren, 2018). In the area of determining the learning achievement of a student, a trained teacher is considered to be more effective than others. In order for training to be effective, it is important to make sure that teachers have the necessary knowledge and skills, as, no matter what type of training a teacher has received, training might not be effective if neither knowledge nor skills are combined. Knowing what to teach, how to teach, and what methods to use for a particular topic gives a teacher the power to personalize their teaching and gives that teacher the power to create a learning environment for their students. Specifically, this means adjusting your lesson plans to your students' needs and abilities [25]. It is important to note that the knowledge and abilities (K&S) of a teacher [27] will vary according to the type of student, in accordance with their particular learning environment [21].

Both students still at the beginner level as well as aspiring teachers should gain experience in being professional in the real English language classroom, even though it is necessary to provide lessons that are motivational as well as teambuilding can benefit students in the long run, it is also necessary to ensure that students are proficient in the use of English [21]. For this reason, developing a diverse and sophisticated pedagogical repertoire, incorporating different kinds of knowledge and adapting to learner's diversity are imperative to the preparation of teachers that may be challenging for trainee teachers. It is important to note however that there are still concerns raised in some studies about the relatively limited transmission of knowledge [22].

Therefore, it would be beneficial if the teacher-trainees were provided with opportunities to participate in reflective practices in their teaching practicum so that they could develop an adequate awareness of what is happening in the classroom, a knowledge that could be used to help them develop their methods for teaching and learning language [21].

There is a growing movement in teacher education towards the provision of reflective teaching,

featuring a concept of reflection that is viewed to be advantageous for both pre-service teachers and experienced teachers [23]. Teacher-trainees will likely be able to think responsibly, act with foresight when planning instructional strategies, and have a broader understanding of the learning process as they observe, examine, and evaluate what happens in the classroom [26].

Even teachers learn in their own way, because learning is a dynamic process. In this sense, promoting reflection as a method of developing teachers' competencies is an effective method to improve the quality of their teaching [27]. The reasoning for Rodgers's summary of Dewey's (1933) four criteria of reflective practice [28], is summarized in Rodgers [30].

1. The act of reflecting allows learners to understand the relationships and connections between one experience and another with a greater depth of understanding. Continuity of learning is the thread that binds individuals and, subsequently, society together.
2. A method of thinking with scientific roots is known as reflection, which can be characterized as systematic, disciplined and thorough.
3. Community reflection happens as a result of interaction with others.
4. To reflect, you must value one's own and others' personal and intellectual growth. A teaching reflection refers to the way that teachers think back on their actual teaching experiences as a means of self-evaluation while recollecting, recognizing, and analyzing what happened during the lesson.

The historical and sociocultural contexts of teachers' prior knowledge of and experiences in teaching influence what they know about teaching and how they teach. A phenomenon known as the apprenticeship of observation occurs when teachers teach as they were [32].

This concept means the way teacher-trainees learn can be influenced by their own student experiences. We hope that reflective practices will assist in identifying the issues and challenges in order to improve the performance of teacher-trainees in the future [33]

#### IV. REMEDIAL MEASURES

Teachers of English are faced with enormous challenges in India. In rural areas, this challenge becomes even greater since in these areas, it is the teacher who is the model for students, to whom they look for answers to all of their educational questions [32].

In order for them to be able to meet the practical needs of learners, they have to be able to teach them how to integrate the ideas of other people and how to retrieve information all over the world [33]. Creating a rapport

with your class - Giving a warm smile and greeting from a teacher to his or her students can instantly connect a student to the teacher [34].

There will be a better chance of getting to know the language when the students are able to bond with their teacher. It's important to define the place of English--in all its facets, English presents many possibilities for all. I believe that our educational system should clearly define the role of English in our educational system [31][32]. This should be determined based on the value of their use and huge opportunities in a wide range of fields ranging from science, technology, philosophy, journalism, trade, and diplomacy to the fields of social sciences, cultural studies, and business. In order to achieve the purpose of teaching English, teachers must facilitate the ability of students to understand the language when spoken [33]

To facilitate the skill of speaking, reading, and writing in English Grammar translation methods should be avoided [34]. Teachers should find ways to facilitate the fun activities that help students to enjoy learning the language and to build their confidence [35]. Students will be motivated to think in English and will feel confident about speaking in English. English teachers must devise innovative ways to help students navigate the staircase when neither resources nor tools are available. In other words, you must create meaningful, realistic and relevant situations that allow students to use English [35].

As Patel puts it, "I have to create opportunities for students to use English effectively." [34]. In rural areas, teachers have a greater role than ever as students have only one person to learn from and emulate. It is their responsibility to teach students who are below average and slow learners as well as those who are average or above average. Good teachers must be able to teach a whole class of students [35].

When a student gets individual attention, many problems will disappear. It is important for English teachers to promote the use of English only in their classrooms. They will feel more confident when they do so [34]. Students should be encouraged to participate in class. By doing so, stumbling blocks within students will be removed. Learning cannot be done in a one-way manner. It involves both direct and indirect methods [35].

#### V. CONCLUSION

By cultivating abilities based on level-based skills such as proper language training at home within a conducive atmosphere with active and willing parental participation, the case and cause of the teaching and learning of English can be advanced. As much time as possible should be spent practicing English. Learning a language can be a delicate process, and thus language learners need to develop their skills in speaking, reading,

and writing on their own as well, independently, with any assistance provided. Language practice and self-education must be undertaken independently, without any assistance. Furthermore, it is equally crucial to always remember not to be fussy or overly fussy when it comes to the language. When it comes to communication, pronunciation is something that is rooted in metabolism, so much of it does not need to be given as it is given by native speakers. All in all, it ought to be the human factor of the individual initiative and trial that receives the greatest priority; then, the innovative technology can creep in.

As 75% of Indians live in villages, most of India's workers come from rural areas. Urban-rural inequality in English teaching has to be bridged by policy makers. Innovative classroom strategies are essential for English teachers in rural schools. At the primary level, qualified and committed teachers are needed. They should be updated and trained to deal with the unique challenges that students face.

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