
**LOCATING THE PROBLEMATICS: A PERSPECTIVE OF THE CHALLENGES OF TEACHING
ENGLISH TO THE DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS**

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INTRODUCTION:-

English has emerged as a phenomenon in today's global world. Over seventy five crore people speak English across the world and over sixty countries have English as the dominant or official language. The use of English in India which started as a historic-political 'accident' seems to have now become an economic-academic reality. Learning of English is directly related to education and without being educated, it is very difficult to be at home with English. All the factors and circumstances which create hurdles in the way of education of disadvantaged are also the hurdles in the way of learning English for them.

In a country like India, where English has a special role and status, this world language assumes added significance for the masses as well, especially the disadvantaged sections of society, for whom it can be an effective instrument of economic and social development.

In my research I have tried to locate the problems that come in the way of the disadvantaged learners in their quest for the mastery of English. On the basis of my deep scrutiny and findings, I would like to suggest certain remedial measures.

Locating the Socio Economic and cultural issues:

This part clearly spells out the social, economic and cultural reasons which hamper the process of learning English for the disadvantaged sections of our society. This unfortunate section belongs to the villages, small towns and slums in the cities neither have English friendly home environment, not a congenial social and economic climate. These poverty stricken, illiterate families- having no means to make their both ends meet , find it difficult to make quality language learning accessible to their wards. Even at homes the proper motivation to learn English is absolutely missing. English is not spoken by anybody around; English is not the language of their rituals and festivals. So disadvantage children of these family find it very difficult to relate to this language.

Finding the administrative and academic causes:

The academic and administrative reasons highlights the failings arising out of the lack of vision and the mismanagement of our policy maker in the field of education. Almost all the decisions about the education, from primary to the higher level, are taken by the bureaucrats. These people are absolutely unaware of the ground realities and the problems that come in the way of the learning process. Almost all their decisions, taken in the absence of any logical consideration, ultimately end in making a mess of it. The teachers, the students and the society at large is never taken into any kind of consultation. Even the academic decisions relating to syllabi, numbers of students in the class, workload of the teachers, the system of examination, the training of teachers are also taken by the bureaucrats.

As we all known that English is the most important tool of career advancement and upward movement, it must be made an inseparable part of the education curriculum from primary to the higher level. The government must allocate funds for the creation of infrastructure and the appointment of regular faculty at every level. But the academic affairs must be left to the deliberated upon and decided by the academicians and teachers.

English, having been made the essential component of our education, should be taught in a holistic manner keeping in mind the social, cultural, linguistic and ethnic consideration. In my view if education in the rural areas is to be made purposeful, it is essential that educational facilities should be provided and education be made compulsory for all the rural people or disadvantaged learners. Proper arrangement should be made for the boys and girls. It should be designed in such a way that it is close to rural life.

In every village at least one reading room should be opened where provisions may be made for seating the disadvantaged learners and providing them necessary reading materials, newspapers, books etc. The photographs relating to the village problems with their solutions may also be exhibited. the person incharge of the reading room should be an experienced and well informed person, who can guide the learners. They should be regularly informed about the policies and progrmmes of the government about rural uplift and education.

In the rural families most of the adults or the elders are illiterate and they hardly motivate their young ones to be educated. The need of the hour is that there should be provisions for adult education in rural areas. Once the adults are educated they will take care of the education of the young ones. The books and reading material used by the adults can then be used by their children.

Only by poverty alleviation and the providing good educational infrastructure at the grass root level, we can think of solving the problem of learning English by disadvantaged learners. To support disadvantaged students government should supports such students by providing education loans. Government, community and schools should coordinate their efforts to help such type of students who are economically backward. Haryana Government has already started a scheme 'Earn while you learn' and it has proved quite successful'.

Improper nutrition causes improper functioning of cognitive abilities of the disadvantaged learners due to which they always lack behind the advantaged. To overcome this problem, the government should provide proper mid-day meals in every school in villages and in slums.

As India enters the 21st Century. but girl child in India is the most oppressed, abused, exploited and under privileged human being on earth. In the field of education she is the most deprived learner of the society. Where income is low, parents consider that their sons education is more beneficial and important than the education of their daughter. But a girl is tomorrow's mother, A mother moulds the character of their children during the most impressionable years of infancy, so the education of girl child is of greater importance than that of boys.

The parents of the rural or disadvantaged girls, who consider the birth of a girl a curse, should be enlightened in making them aware, by giving live examples of the working of the prestigious women for the development of a family, society and a nation, we should make the parents of a girl child realize the value of their daughters' education. The government or the established institutions should pay for the poor rural or slum girls who attend the school. This payment can be in the form of clothes, text books, mid-day meal, medical care and a scholarship etc.

The study has shown that English in Indian today has to be taught for social and economic uplift of the people in general and rural sections of society in particular. But the disadvantaged learners face a great problem in learning English due to inappropriate text books, untrained teachers, inadequate teaching methods and learning materials, unsatisfactory evaluation system, the malfunctioning of administrative branch, non-cooperation of government in raising the level of education etc. Syllabus is not designed according to the need, mental level, interest and capability of disadvantaged learners. Political interferences are there is the selection of teachers. No efforts are done for the globalization of education by high authorities of institutions and government.

For the solution of above mentioned problems, first of all I would put emphasis on the universalization of primary education with English as a compulsory subject. It means starts teaching English from Primary level. For effective and meaningful learning or teaching English we must starts teaching English with the mother tongue in primary classes.l.

The content of the text books should be framed according to the learners need, interest, capability, their language background, cultural belief and practices etc. The exercise of learning material in the text book should be incorporated in order to help the disadvantage learners to develop their communication skill. The prescribed text books should be Indian in taste so that the learners can be in touch with their culture and society.

Between the teacher and text book, it is the teacher who must be carefully trained. To teach English in class room, it is the duty of the teacher that he should be dynamic and attentive throughout the period and organize the class room as the setting for communication and communicative activities. He should make the learner an active learner. He can take the help of audio-visual aids like pictures, audiotape , video films, projector to initiate the learning material and conversation. Oral practices, proper motivation and encouragement should be given to the disadvantaged learners to learn more and more by the teacher.

The Evaluation System of Education is not serving its meaningful purpose. Emphasis is given to test the writing skill of the students. No provision to test speaking skill of the learner. Therefore, the evaluation system should be modified and revised. More Emphasis should be given not only to test the writing skill but also to test the speaking, Reading & Understanding Skills of English Language. There should be provision of internal Assessment to test the communication skills of the student's in the form of speech, Quiz, Interview Group Discussion etc. In the end evaluation should be conducted periodically instead of annually. For the immediate feedback from the student's Internal Assessment should be given due weightage

To attract the best available talent into the field of teaching, the government must provide adequate inducement in the form of better grades, incentives for higher academic growth, service, medical security and pensionary, benefit etc. to the teachers. Only a teacher free from any case can devote his time and energy fully into this full time, ever evolving and creating profession.

If, we plan our education in general and the teaching of English in particular, keeping all these factors, mentioned in my study we should increase the English language learning level of disadvantaged students.

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