

DOI: [10.5948/2454-2326/nairjc/00009.01](https://doi.org/10.5948/2454-2326/nairjc/00009.01)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING DURING COVID 19: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

SUBHASH*Assistant Professor of English Aggarwal College Ballabgarh (Faridabad)*Email: subhashmdurohtak@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

In current educational system, technology is indispensable. Despite growing social awareness of the need for intervention and programmes to improve learners' literacy abilities, India's education officials and reformers have disregarded the needs of the country's large and growing English Language Learner population. To address this shortcoming, technology and education must be integrated, which is commonly referred to as "technology mediated learning" in digital world. Participating and operating in a globalised world is no longer an option, but rather a need for our students and learners. The goal of this research is to look at the current condition of English Language Teaching (ELT) as well as the history and current trends in teaching a second or foreign language (L2/FL). It emphasises the need of understanding English as both a lingua franca and an official language. Consequently, unlike other vernacular languages, English Language Teaching necessitates a more practical approach than previous approaches to deal with existing problems and identify solutions through research, discussion, and proposals.

KEYWORDS: Covid 19, Challenges, Issues, Teaching, English Language, Colleges, Universitys

INTRODUCTION

Language has the ability to be a means of communicating ideas, concepts, moods, feelings, and attitudes. It is nothing but habit-formation which may be acquired fluently via its employment in everyday use and through continual practise. "Although English is not the language with the greatest number of native or 'first' language

speakers," McArthur says, "it has become a lingua franca." A lingua franca is a language that is regularly used for communication between two speakers whose native languages are different and who are studying it as a second language. English has provided easy access and privilege to master English in India due to historical circumstances (i.e., the British Period), which has opened the door to success in all fields of work such as social, economic, political, literary, science and technology, and so on. It is a language that introduces the world to Indian intelligence and talent. Many Indians have achieved great success in various fields and have received numerous awards, allowing us to be proud of our homeland. For literature written by Indian authors and films made by Indian filmmakers, the English language has risen to the top of the global rankings over the years. As a result, denying its supremacy in Indian life, literature, and culture is a futile exercise. Our Indian languages are unaffected by English. Indian languages are alive and well, but English, in addition to our other languages, is a historical legacy that we can draw on. We must make the most of the English language to advance culturally, economically, and materially so that we can compete and Compete against the best in the worlds of mind and matter. Our doorway to the world's knowledge is the English language. Depending on our particular preference, need, and desire, we can reject the untenable and choose the tenable. It is a vehicle for disseminating our ideas, intelligence, and spirituality to a global audience and readership. In 1893, in Chicago, at the World Conference of Religions, Swami Vivekananda disseminated our spiritual legacy and the majesty of our religious ideas. Thousands of English folks have become spiritual followers of ours by many other well-known scholarly spiritual Gurus who have expressed the divine truth in fluent English. As a result, English has proven to be an effective vehicle for spreading the Indian way of life, karma theory, and our cultural identity throughout the world. It also helps with international business operations as well as intra-state trade and communication. In order to keep up with the times, India's Parliament designated English, in addition to Hindi, to be an official language.

Standard English nowadays is based on shared educational experiences rather than merely on accent. It is a dynamic process that absorbs materials from a variety of sources in response to changing time requirements. Language evolves in response to changing opportunities, situations, needs, and speakers, as evidenced by cultural transformations. The twenty-first century is an era of ICT boom, with 'information, media, and technology' abilities, together referred to as 'digital literacies,' leading to 'digital competency,' being the primary goal of our educational system. As a result, incorporating ICT into English language teacher education programmes opens up a world of possibilities and opportunities for future students, while also increasing autonomy and creativity in the classroom. A teacher who is unaware of or under-equipped with information and communication technology (ICT) finds it difficult to take advantage of the opportunities for successful instruction.

English, a global language, has evolved in India to become a language of opportunity, success, and progress in life, as well as a language of diplomacy, high administration, higher education, and the judiciary. According to a recent survey, 74% of Indians are literate, yet only 13% can read and write English. This data is depressing and demonstrates the Indian educational system's dismal performance. This involves a critical assessment of ELT in India, focusing on both old and new patterns, as well as their relevance. Effective learning occurs only when the learner is able to communicate effectively in both writing and speech. As a result, there is a strong demand for ELT in India, which necessitates a significant shift away from traditional language teaching approaches and methodology.

ISSUES WITH TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN INDIA:

English has been currently taught as a mandatory subject in India up to the graduation level. Despite having spent a decade learning the language, the majority of our college graduates, particularly those from rural, tribal, and semi-urban areas, are hesitant to speak it. Apart from that, English is now required to meet the needs of a globalised society, and it has become a new tool for written and oral communication. The culture of MNCs and call centres demands fluency and command of language, but the English syllabus, curriculum, teaching methods, teaching programmes, examinations, and evaluation system The undergraduate English courses that are required in our universities are insufficient to meet the demand for English as a skilled subject. The abundance of IELTS and TOEFL exam preparation centres dotting the cityscape point to the overabundance of English in universities, schools, and institutions, as well as a deficient English curriculum. As Corder points out, the two terms "language acquisition" and "language learning" are not interchangeable. "Language acquisition occurs in the infant and young child while he is learning other abilities and gaining knowledge about the environment. Language learning, or acquiring a second language, typically begins later in life, after language performance has been established and many other physical and mental maturation processes have been completed or are nearing completion." [Corder, 107]

As there are several groups of learners, different language teachers believe in using various teaching methods and approaches. For systematic, organised, and effective instruction, a method is always required. A technique controls 'what and how much is taught' (Selection), 'the order in which it is taught' (Gradation), 'how the meaning and forms are conveyed' (Presentation), and 'what is done to make the use of the language unconscious' (Unconscious Language Use). As a result, in the teaching-learning process, method entails selection, grading, presentation, and repetition. Teaching language is a skilled subject that necessitates the use of a variety of teaching techniques so that students may effectively use what they have learned in their daily lives. The use of ICT in ELT is unavoidable because it allows "our teacher's education should emphasize the

development of more autonomous, critical, and transformative intellectuals who can respond to local problems with local solutions while maintaining the "globality" of the English language." There are numerous issues with teaching English as a foreign language in India:

- Problems related to persistent use of first language, fear of grammatical incorrectness, improper pronunciation, lack of interest and attention among learners.
- Problems concerned with teaching programs, methods, curriculum and examination and evaluation system in present education-system.
- Many other problems arise learners from a variety of social, economic, and cultural backgrounds. As we can examine, it is easy and convenient to teach English to the learners belonging to big cities or towns but students from the rural, semi-urban and tribal areas is still a real challenge.
- Lack of systematic teaching programmers according to the need of the learners.
- Teaching English to non-native is a herculean task on account of complexity, oddities, spelling, pronunciation, syntax, and usages, to name a few.
- Lack of supporting or supplementary learning tools such as a dictionary, thesaurus, or grammar book, for example. These aids aren't always available, or the students don't have the financial means to purchase them.
- Bookshops' apathy toward the sale of English Language Book Society's low-cost books, as it never yield profit to them.
- The main culprit is shortage of time that discards scope for encouraging learners for poetic-recitation, writing, declamation, debate, discussion and quiz-competitions. All these activities are beneficial for enhancing communicative skills.
- Big classroom without technological aids mar the attention of teachers for individual concern.
- The internal factors of learner's personality like a anxiety, inhibition and lack of motivation effect language learning process. Anxiety pervasively obstructs the learning process as a it ceases to be a stimulant, specially, in tribal area learners and impair their ability to concentrate and organize their thoughts in second language (L2).
- 'Subtle Irrelevance' of the prescribed course context adversely affects our ELT. Our pattern of English syllabus at U.G and P.G levels that consist of prose, poetry, essays of some old great masters of literature like William Shakespeare, John Keats and William Wordsworth etc. In the Indian context, the use of English in text is now outmoded and impractical. Indian students are unable to co-relate themselves to the western literature of different culture.

- Teaching of English grammar plays an effective role in making the learner to master the language successfully. But teaching it in rural areas is still a great challenge.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS AND APPROACHES:

To address the aforementioned issues, a variety of approaches are used to make ELT effective in the Indian context. These methods allow students to become more at ease when navigating language use as a speaker, listener, reader, and writer. The focus has shifted from the teacher and teaching content to the learners as language learning and teaching methodologies have evolved. Learner-centred language teaching refers to a process in which the nature and form of teaching methods and materials are determined by the needs, abilities, and interests of individual learner.

- Grammar-Translation Method
- Direct-Method
- Audio- Lingual Method
- Natural Method
- Phonetic Method

In the digital age, the promotion of English language education in India is in high demand, and it has undergone a significant shift from odd ways to multifunctional teaching approaches, particularly

- English for Academic Purpose (EAP) works at primary, secondary and graduation level education. It aims to make students aware about the basic of English, grammar, pronunciation and the use of L2 (Second Language) for common purposes.
- English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) operates at a professional level, requiring a basic understanding of the profession and its significance, as well as specialized knowledge of occupational jargons.
- English for Specific Purpose (ESP) is designed to meet a specific demand in which the focus is narrowed to a single application. It necessitates the creation of specialized courses rather than a single multi-purpose course to meet the needs of various student courses. Ex-English in engineering studies at the university level differs from English in other university courses in three major ways: relevancy, register, and style. It's also known as an adult learner-centred approach.
- Communicative approach is one of the exciting developments in ELT in recent years. It includes knowledge, skills and abilities in the concept of communication in theoretical and practical terms. It

encourages students to devise techniques for linking these structures to their communicative functions in the real world.

- Teachers who use an eclectic approach must choose from a variety of teaching tactics and adapt them to their material, students, and situations. This approach is gaining the most popularity these days, as teachers are free to adopt the one which is best suited and fruitful.

According to the learner, learning, and scenario categories, each of the above ways and methods has advantages and disadvantages. We need to devise a methodology that allows learners to utilise the language actively as a product of their own needs, rather than passively in relation to situations imposed by ideologies other than their own. We need to move away from our current focus on procedures and materials and toward a more comprehensive focus on methodology, in which language and personality interact on both a social and individual level. ELT must be viewed as an educational endeavour rather than a purely technical one.

To put it another way, effective communication requires the learner's complete participation in the language for goals other than simply transmitting messages in pseudo-language about pseudo-situations in pseudo-rooms. As a result, even the most cutting-edge methodology and technique may not always be effective in the language acquisition process. There are two approaches to second language learning that have been found to be effective: care for the learner as an individual and concern for the learner as a participant in a sociocultural environment. Inhibition and ego barriers to learning should be reduced for better results. Teachers and scholars agree that one of the most important factors influencing the rate and success of second language acquisition is motivation in the learning process. It has an impact on both intrinsic and extrinsic language learning. Extrinsic motivation means a desire to get a reward or avoid punishment whereas intrinsic motivation is the learner's natural curiosity, instinct and interest to master the language.

REMEDIAL MEASURES FOR EFFECTIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING:

There are a lot of factors at play in closing the gap between India's current and expected ELT levels. The process of teaching and learning is multi-directional and thus requires some measures to cope with existing problems:

- Need to establish more English language Society or institutes for training language teachers to be more competent to handle various situations in urban as well as in rural areas.
- Employment of technology through language labs for promoting learning skill effectively.
- Promotion of teacher-training programs to bring them tune with changing times.
- Emphasis on reading, writing and speaking skills among the learners.
- Maintaining a reasonable teacher-to-student ratio will help you achieve better results.

- Ensure that students have plenty of opportunity to practice their English both within and outside of the classroom.
- The syllabus should be structured in such a way that learning English becomes a pleasurable rather than a frustrating experience.
- Emphasis on fluency and ability to communicate as much as with formal accuracy.
- Teaching grammar through situational context is more effective in introducing various techniques of language teaching. This helps the learners to use appropriate language according to situation.
- Use of newspapers, magazines and advertisements to introduce and familiarize the learner for learning how to use language in effective and efficient way.
- Use of visual and audio aids to make English language learning entertaining.

CONCLUSION:

In the digital age, English language teaching and learning necessitates a dual function for the teacher, namely, transmitting knowledge in L2 while simultaneously teaching students how to apply it in their daily lives or for utilitarian purposes. Teachers and students of English are urged to use their prerogatives and functions to behave as democratic moderators rather than totalitarian arbiters in order to achieve the pinnacle of achievement, growth, and wealth in life. With the introduction of the internet and digital media, the learning process has undergone a transformation from a traditional mode to a new one in which audio and visual media are rapidly replacing printed words. Language instruction via radio, television, CD, DVD, and the Internet has transformed the entire educational process, in the digital era, educators and instructors must re-examine and re-formulate the goal. Is it OK for English to devolve into a collection of regional dialects? Or should all skilled English speakers adhere to a single international standard? When "English meets the communicative and communal needs of various populations, it follows obviously that it must be diverse," according to Widdowson. A language that is used internationally must be self-contained. However, it does not follow logically that the language will split up into mutually incomprehensible variations." "For it will naturally solidify into standard form to the extent required to fulfil the demands of the communities concerned," he goes on to say. As a result, it is manifestly critical to the international community's interests..... (to) maintain a consistent standard of English in order to maintain communicative effectiveness requirements" (p.385). To meet the global need and prevent further deterioration of the queen English, both ELT and ELL should be more practical, realistic, and competent. Let us all work together to establish a welcoming environment in which education can achieve the pinnacles of perfection and excellence while also contributing to the preservation of the language's beauty and grandeur.

WORKS CITED:

- [1]. Brumfit, J. Christopher (1980). Problems and Principles in English Teaching. Pergamon Press, New York.
- [2]. Gautam, G. S (2012). Communicative English for Globalization, Classical Publishing Company, New Delhi.
- [3]. Hockly, Nicky (2012). "Digital Literacies", ELT Journal 66/1 Oxford University Press.
- [4]. Lalitha Raja, R and N. Rajasekharan Nair (2007). Development of Plural Concord in English among School Children, Indian Linguistics, Vol-68.
- [5]. McArthur, T (2002). Oxford Guide to World English. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- [6]. Pei, Mario (1967). The Story of the English Language. George Allen & Unwin Ltd. London.