



ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AT UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL IN WESTERN RAJASTHAN : SOME CHALLENGES AND SUGGESTIONS

Dr.Gautam Sharma

Department of English
S. P.U.(P.G.) College, Falna , India

Abstract

English language teaching is vast phenomenon all over world and the position of India is unique because British have made their existence for the couple of years on Indian subcontinents .They left their footprints of culture, contrast and above all their language. In our country there is still colonial hangover, our mind is still under the education system adopted by them. We are following the track left by them to achieve excellence in all the four skills L S R W. Students who are studying in English medium schools of big cities have grasped so much but there are so many who are struggling to attain fluency in English language. Among these strugglers much percentage is of the students studying in the government and private institutions of Rajasthan .The struggle is, because of the standard of English teaching in such kind of institutions .The composition skill of the students is not up to the mark, they can not write and speak simple sentences. Their grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary are very amusing. Another misfortune is that most of the English teachers are not proficient in English .They can not communicate in English properly .The students want to learn but there is no proper learning environment in the government schools. In big cities the so called English medium schools are better alternative but in the rural areas and in tribal belts the schools are short staffed and there no competent tea

My paper is an attempt to highlight the challenges and suggestions regarding English language teaching at undergraduate level in western Rajasthan. The objective of this research paper is to probe into the articulation problem and other factors which hinder the students of the Godwar region of western Rajasthan in achieving proficiency in English. The paper also

presents the pedagogical situation of the Godwar region. An attempt has been made to focus on possible remedial strategies and suggestion.

Introduction:

In Chaucer's day English was East Midland dialect. In the 17th century Francis Bacon felt that what was written in English would not last long as it was the language of a small number of people living in small island. Today English is an international language it is used more extensively than any other language; a number of varieties of English are spoken all over the world. Literary writers in most part of the world use this language to embody their views. Globalization and the expansion of market economy has further facilitated the expansion of English in domain where earlier English had no reach. It has come to assume the status of the language of governance as well as the language of opportunities. Now, it is being taught and learnt as ESL and EFL in many countries of the world.

In India, English is only an official link language and it is used for administrative purpose. Still in many part of the country English is treated as a foreign language not as second language. Macaulay might have thought that the knowledge of English was essential for civilizing Indians; earlier generations might have believed that English was necessary for shaping of character or the development of the aesthetic sense, but the present generation is convinced that English is essential for mobility, social and economic development. Now English has become a global language and it is spoken all over the world by native and non-native speakers. In present scenario English has become the language of opportunities because it takes one outside from one's own community to the places where more job opportunities are available for professional growth and economic development. The new global order provides for free market in which capital can cross all national boundaries, which has affected not just the economy of the countries but their culture, art, society, language and literature as well.

Now, in the age of competition, everybody wants to be fluent in English. English has become an important factor to get success in corporate and IT sector. Today English is the language not of westernization but of modernization. People believe that English opens the door of success in every field.

English Language Teaching:

In government schools of Rajasthan, English was introduced to primary classes since 2001 and it is being taught as a second language in the schools and university curriculum. In the syllabus of schools of Rajasthan Hindi has been prescribed as first language and English as second language while real picture is different. Both are being taught as compulsory subjects. Most of the learners' first language is their mother tongue; which is spoken differently in every region of Rajasthan.

Godwar region is the part of western Rajasthan which covers the three Tehsil of Pali District (Desuri, Sumerpur and Bali), one Tehsil of Sirohi District (Sheoganj) and some villages of Jalore District. The Jain philanthropists of Godwar region had realized the importance of English and they made their considerable efforts to establish Hindi and English medium school in this area which have now grown into graduate and post graduate colleges. Mother tongue of the people of this area is Marwari or Godwari i.e. it is their first language and second language is Hindi. English, in real sense, is treated as a foreign language and it is taught as compulsory subject at school level while at college level, students have an option either to offer English or Hindi language in most of the universities of Rajasthan so most of the graduate do not attain proficiency in English. Godwari or Marwari hampers them in learning English language, and sometimes their improper pronunciation also becomes obstacle in their way.

Results & Findings:

The case study of first year, second year and third year classes was done in order to know state of pronunciation of students in educational institutions of Godwar region. The target group here includes the forty students of Gurukul Sanskar College, Sumerpur and forty students of L.D.P.S. girls College Vidhyawari, Rani and S.P.U. College, Falna. The students who are studying in the colleges at Falna, Sumerpur and Rani mostly come from small villages to study there. Falna, Sumerpur and Rani are small towns which population is hardly about 20 thousand. The fact of this study reflects that 98% students of this area use Godwari as mother tongue. It has been observed that only 2% of students use Hindi as their mother tongue. 55% students speak Hindi at college campus when they talk to their classmates and friends, 42% students use

Godwari while only about 3% students of professional courses BBA, BCA, BSC(IT) and some students of Arts and Commerce converse in English but when they talk to their teachers most of the students speak Hindi. The students who speak English but some of them they do not speak English properly and their pronunciation is really amusing.

The study also indicates that all the students are very curious to learn English language. Pedagogical situation is different in school and college. In school most of the English teachers use the stereo typed translation method while new approaches like communicative, structural and situational are adopted by only few teachers of the colleges. The teaching of English is not based upon the specific aims and objectives. Most of the students do not want to study theoretical English their prime interest is to obtain good marks. They do not have interest to learn speaking English and grammar. The teaching is only examination oriented. The students want to secure good marks in examination and teachers expect good result.

The study also presents that almost all the students are unaware about phonetic transcription, phonemes of language and speech sounds. They read phonetics in twelfth class but do not have knowledge about consonant and vowel sounds and stress pattern. Ten words were given them to pronounce but 25% students could pronounce few words correctly but at the same time when they were suggested to articulate different given words many students faced problem in articulation. In Godwar area of western Rajasthan there is a common problem with rural students is that their pronunciation is unchangeable. It is a great challenge for a teacher to teach them the correct pronunciation. In both Hindi and English language they face problem of articulation. Their mother tongue Godwari always hampers them in their learning process of English. The sound /t / is pronounced as /s/, /s/ as /t /, /s/ as /h/, /b/ as /v/ and some students do not know difference between the consonant sounds /s/ and / / . They cannot articulate the nasal sounds / / in words like English and monk. Most of the students use bilingual dictionary and 64% students offered Hindi as a compulsory subject at first year of graduation. It has been found that in J.N.V. university, Jodhpur students become graduates without studying English. This study also proves that girls are more serious about their pronunciation and language. A few girls do not speak Godwari at the campus of school and college mostly they talk in Hindi and sometimes in English. Evfn many students of English literature can not communicate in

English. When teachers teach in the class many students of who come from rural areas do not understand what is taught in monolingual language.

Suggestions

It is a great challenge for English teachers to face above mentioned problem in every region of Rajasthan. Almost all the teachers have this problem of articulation of particular sounds among their students in the area where they teach that's why they need to adopt new approaches and techniques in teaching English. Teachers must update their knowledge to make teaching effective and interesting. Now students do not come to classes for attendance; they attend classes if teachers provide some extraordinary new matter which is not available in ordinary books.

To improve students' pronunciation, phonetics should be taught from 6th class level, therefore the teachers of English should be given compulsory training to teach English. Refresher courses for English teachers should be conducted by the government. The latest innovations like online-teaching, e-learning programme and language lab facility should be provided in Godwar region to solve the articulation problem among the students. The teachers must teach English with definite objectives so that students will heartily offer English as compulsory subject at graduation level. Now in the age of information and technology English should be taught compulsory at first year, second year and third year level of graduation and in every three years degree course its mark should be added in the division.

The examination should be conducted in both the aspect of language oral and written. There is a very urgent need for senior secondary examination to be reformed so that learning model, answers by heart cannot help pupils to pass. Many school students have gained sufficient marks in English to get admission in college by this method. Any examiner knows this truth. But these students learn answers not English. The two things are poles apart. Any examination which can be passed by leaning by heart is an unsuitable one, as it is possible to pass an examination without any real grasp of language. The students of English literature must be taught one paper of language and one paper of literature at all three levels of B.A. to make

Gautam Sharma / English Language Teaching at Undergraduate Level in Western Rajasthan : Some Challenges and Suggestions

them fluent in English. Now it has been observed that many students who have completed B.A. with English literature and M.A. in English cannot speak English fluently.

Now it is important for a language teacher to be sensitive towards the individual differences present in his learner. The teacher must guide his students, assist them and encourage them so that learner is able to understand, identify and create their own learning style and use strategy according to their personal needs and strengths for understanding and use of English language thus in turn they can become good language learners in terms of achieving success in their goals of language learning.