



Indian English in the age of globalization and ELT challenges in India

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Abstract

This paper seeks to analysis the great changes that are taking place in English language teaching in India emphasizing the importance of communicative language teaching (CLT), teacher training and raising people's awareness of new challenges in education and life. It also deals with the fact that English in India is used not only for communicating with the outside world, but also for inter-state and intrastate communication as well.

Keywords: ELT, globalization, CLT, teacher training

Introduction

India has a long history of English education of more than for hundred years. Business and economics turned the world into 'global village', language English is playing an increasingly important role in India as a lingua franca for such matters as information technology, both internal and external business, cultural entertainment, and Internet all of which have brought great changes in every aspect of our lives. The importance of English language in 21st century raises consciousness and zeal to overcome disadvantages as non-native English Speakers. Schools, education boards, universities are taking initiative to enables our teacher and students to use English more accurately and fluently.

Globalization, ELT and India

According to David Crystal "A language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country. This might seem like stating the obvious, but it is not, for the notion of special role has many facts. Such a role, most evident in country where large number of people speaks the language." Globally English has much status; Countries like USA, Canada, Britain, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa has most number of English as mother tongue speaker, The role English as associate official language achieved in countries like Singapore, Nigeria, Vanuatu and India.

As Held and Thompson remarked "globalization can be thought of as the widening, intensifying, speeding up, and growing impact of worldwide interconnectedness." Crum pointed out some years ago; English is the first truly global language. In such a situation, ELT professionals in India need to understand the current Socio-Economic Situation and its impact on their work, particularly as regard three major changes.

One of the important facts to develop English language in India is definitely British colonization for more than three hindered years. One of the objectives of English language teaching in British India was colonizing Indian mind with teaching English language. To make native language and

culture inferior and subservient was one of the major objectives of British rulers. Apart from the colonizing history of English language in India with the growing necessity of English language number of English language students is increasing day by day. Into a new age of information technology based on economic globalization and intercultural communication English language is high in demand among Indian students. In such an age the most prominent teacher of development of English language is internet, and English continues to be the chief lingua-franca of the internet – a position which is now beginning to be acknowledged in the popular media" (Crystal <1997:107)

The second major change is in the employment patterns. Many jobs that existed in the industrial era are being replaced by new types of work: "the changes are based on both shift from manufacturing and service towards jobs that require information process. In India English language used widely as a link language in offices and among the educated people. It is not only a compulsory subject at school, college and university but is also the medium of instruction to the large extent. It is the language of science and technology. It occupies the position of a second language in the school curriculum and for higher education. English lang has been assigned the role of library language

The third major change is information exchange, the application of science and technology, and the emergence of translational corporations, which place great emphasis on mastering English as an international language. 85% of international organizations make official use of English, although they may not be headquartered in an English-Speaking country, at least 85% of the world's film market is in English, and some 90% of published academic articles in some academic fields are written in English (Crystal, 1997)

Nowadays, people in India can see or hear English everywhere, TV channels especially English news channels, McDonald's, KFC, bar, restaurants, Hotels, DVD, When taking metro ride one can hear stop announcement in both regional language and English. A great number of publications in English are coming out every year. More and more

international conferences are held in English in India. and many joint ventures in India adopt English as lingua – franca, development which creates a national need for training in English. Because society is in a constant state of change, large and increasing number people need to be able to communicate and collaborate in English with people from different cultures. In learning English, students in India expect to improve their communicative competence not only for domestic and international educational vocational, and social purposes, but also as means of accessing the information sites which exist name of 'global village'.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) In India

The Central Board of Secondary Education changed the English syllabus in the 1980s. More importance was given to the language functions rather than literature. This was on par with the Activity Based Learning introduced by the State Boards in the syllabus. Thus, slowly CLT started creeping into Indian classrooms. That English is a global language is always recognized in India, but, when globalization processes began to dominate Indian business scene, English was seen to be an important vehicle for success. With the change in political attitudes toward the learning and use of English, there was also a significant shift in demands for better teaching of the language. The status of English underwent a change and every English language user wanted to improve his or her language performance. There was a sudden change in the face of education, particularly with respect to English in India. All students started realizing the need for functional English. Effective communication was regarded as a symbol of social status and pride. The liberalization of the economy led to the entry of multinationals resulting in enormous job opportunities that demanded a command of English. Students started learning the language to meet practical needs, especially relating to job search. Spoken English institutes sprang up everywhere. More training centers on Communicative Language were established. The mushrooming of such institutes made the academicians take another look at the English syllabus.

Challenges of ELT in India

The teacher in English class room faces a serious problem of concretizing the abstractness of the novel, poem, passage, words etc. they face difficulty in creating live pictures. The students find it difficult to understand the abstract idea and so they are unable to comprehend the lectures given by their teachers in English. If a poem on sadness is going on in the class the teacher should teach it so effectively that the students get tears in their eyes. This type of experience is hardly found in classroom teaching at present. In fact the teacher is always in a hurry to complete the portion and feels that it is waste of time to arouse emotions and interact with the students. Grammar translation method is widely used in rural areas. It helps the learner to understand the content of the text but bars from learning the language. The main purpose of teaching the language is kept aside and the teaching of content and theme is given importance. Translation method is thus a great problem in learning English. English is second language and in many cases third language for the students of India. So mother tongue or 1st language

interference is quite noticeable in English language classes English is pronounced in a very different way from almost all other languages of the world. Every region of the world where English is spoken has a different accent. When you are teaching English as second language, you must bear in mind that your students will not know the difference between US English, Queen's English and the entire sundry English's of the world. This could lead to confusions.

Language could be mastered by practicing all the four skills viz. Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing (LSRW). The rural surrounding does not allow the learner to practice any of these skills. The lack of audio tools also adds in the problem of lack of practice. Many teachers are unable to teach English effectively because they face lot of problems due to the lack of teaching aids. There are very few audio-visual aids available and it is insufficient for the teachers to use it effectively. Some are so costly that the colleges can only afford to buy few.

Learning English being compelled has merely become a hurdle in passing. Students only concentrate on passing marks. They do not care for learning the language as a tool of communication. Teacher and the taught both look at this subject as an unavoidable hurdle and try their level best to cross this hurdle anyhow. The report of the Secondary Education Commission says: "Many eminent educationalists and scientists have, therefore, expressed the opinion that under no circumstances should we sacrifice the many advantages that we have gained by the study of English. They hold that in matters pertaining to education sentiment should not be the ruling factor and that what was most urgently needed was that our youth acquire knowledge from all sources and contribute their share to its expansion and development. In the attainment of this objective, the study of English was bound to play an important part." (64)

learning a second or a foreign language, motivation is one of the crucial force which determines whether the learner embarks on a task at all, how much energy he devotes to it and how long he perseveres. It is known as a complex phenomenon and includes many components, such as, the individual's drive, need for achievement and success, curiosity, desire for stimulation and new experience, and so on.

One of the factors responsible for the deterioration is the pattern of question setting. It is easy to predict what questions would be asked on what books in which examinations. The students simply have to memorize. The teacher also teaches only those aspects which are important for the examinations. In most of rural areas we see that malpractice at the time of exam is a common practice. It is on its peak at the exam of English. Students, Teachers, non-teaching staff, parents, relatives, principal, officer in charge of exam, co-officer in charge of exam and many others are involved in this custom of malpractice. They all intensify the problem of learning English in rural areas.

Most of the mistakes in English are made unknowingly means when making a mistake becomes habitual; we keep making the same mistake even without realizing it. If we study this problem in a scientific manner by trying to know what is the actual cause behind making the mistake we would be able to avoid it.

The ratio of students in relation to teachers is not proportional.

This is one of the reasons why individual attention is not possible to the students. For individual attention, there is a provision of Tutorial classes for a language classroom teacher students ratio need to be proper for activities and language practice

In India most of school, college English curriculum is based on literature and many college teachers have only masters in English literature and many have not had any formal language teacher training.

Need of multi skilled teachers

Despite the fact that many types of teacher training program organized by Govt. (like NCERT) still most of the schools and colleges lacking multi skilled teacher as per English language teaching is concerned. With the swift changes brought about by development in communication and technology, there is high expectation that teachers proficiency and understanding of the language and most important their proficiency skills. To improve skills it is essential to master both the use of modern teaching equipment, such as computer, projector, and use of the internet and online teaching.

Teacher training is therefore crucial. Most Indian English teacher especially in rural schools, lack decent level of English proficiency. Even university teachers have not had any formal English language teaching training. Learning more English is not teaching English well. Multi skilled trained teachers needed in this new era.

English is not only a matter of teaching grammar rules and new words, but also of communicative competence. In addition, EFL teachers should also learn how to improve students' learning strategies.

Conclusion

The term ELT or English Language Teaching or Teaching English to the Speaker of Other Language (TESOL) is a not new or modern concept anymore, so far as the teaching of English as a discipline in India is concerned. However, when we look back into the British period we find very different style and conception of teaching English in India. If one contrasts the English language teaching in British India and English Language Teaching now one may find very interesting things pertaining to the subject. For example, the positive point nowadays we have so many technologies like computer, projector, teacher resource books, teacher training, web based learning, e-learning etc. Apart from this different certificate courses, Diploma courses, special courses teacher training courses, a course in methods of English language teaching for the B.Ed examination organized by CIEFLS, RIEs, ELTIs, CIIL, KHS, CBSC, NCERT, NCTE, DIETS are doing excellent job. Having recognized the urgencies in the teaching of ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE in this country today, these organizations wish to emphasize the need to design courses that can satisfy different kinds of 'customer' at various levels of learning.

There is no doubt that English language teaching is now an important topic in Indian education and there are many challenges to overcome. The efforts in the field, the future of Indian English language teachers and English language teaching looks very bright.

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