

## Learning and Teaching of English in Nagaur District: Problems and Solutions

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English is the chief vehicle of international communication in the world today. The term Global English has brought the whole world on one stage where people can communicate with each other without any kind of language hurdle. Two thousand years ago, the English language was quite unfamiliar to the world, people were confined to their own community and living just like in separate boxes. Gradually it was a great achievement of men that they created a language (English) which has become common to all. And this language brought the whole world under one umbrella. This is how English language has become the Lingua Franca in the age of globalization breaking all sorts of boundaries either culture or social or geographical etc. It is the only language widely used in the world. David Crystal rightly says in his book (1997) "a language achieve a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognised in every country."

### English in India

Nowadays, English language is in great demand in India. It is a symbol of people's aspirations as far as quality education is concerned. English represents the scientific knowledge, modernization and development. English is a medium for understanding technology and scientific development. In India, English gradually has acquired socially and administratively the most dominant roles: the power and prestige of language is defined by the domains of language use. J. Maurais rightly says in this connection,

Ultimately the legal system, the national media and important professions were conducted in English. Skilled professional Indian became

the symbol of Westernization and modernization. Raja Rammohan Roy was committed to the idea that the “European gentlemen of talent and education” should be appointed to instruct the natives of India. English came to be used by Indians, as well. (2006: 47)

During the British regime it was the imperial language – the language of the rulers. It dominated the language scene. The motivation to learn and use this language was very strong. It had behind it a lot of political, economic, administrative, and social force. The association of English with India has been for a very long period. During this entire stretch of time English has moved along various points of the scale. It has merged into the Indian society in such a manner that it is really difficult to assess its proper position. It compels one to wonder whether the fervent nationalists will ever be successful in removing this language from the position it enjoys in society today.

### **English language teaching in Rajasthan especially in Nagaur district:**

Rajasthan was not as active recipient of English education as the southern States were. As a matter of fact, the then princely States of Rajputana were not much aware of the development of the English language and its teaching, though they understood the status of English and it is for the same reason that some of the princes and kings took eager interest in learning English and some of them went to England also. But for the States of Mewar, and Amer very few of Rajputana States took any interest in the development of English. As a matter of fact, English education spread in Rajasthan through two doors: enlightened and elite Indian groups and Christian missionaries. So the Royal States didn't take much interest in it. Missionaries were allowed to spread their

education on their own way. In the year 1818 through patronization of the British government, English rulers were eager to establish their authority in Rajasthan. But communication was a major problem for both the colonizers and the royalists. This prepared the background of English education in the land of Maharajas. The task of developing English education in Rajasthan was undertaken by an English educationist Javen Cary who was very keen on creating an environment of English learning in Rajputana. With the help of British resident Actorloni, he started English schools in Ajmer and Pushkar in 1819, and then in Bhinay and Kekari. As soon as India got independence, the Govt. of India started thinking about education, educational institutions and educational reforms. Various ELTIs, RIEs and Boards were established in order to create an atmosphere for education. This is how the State Institute of Language Studies and Board of Secondary Education were established in Rajasthan. The SILS was the govt. agency to take care the affairs of the teaching of English in the State.

Today, the colonial complexes towards English language have been changed and people have realized that with fluent command over language they could have better prospects for job. In Rajasthan, especially in Jaipur many multinational companies have brightened the future of youngsters. But still in rural Bharat the adaption of English language seems a hard nut to crack to the students. They face problems especially with the pronunciation. Needless to say Nagaur has been a great center of royal activities and it played a pivotal role as it is located very near to Ajmer. But as far as education is concerned Nagaur could not develop in the way as it was good in old days. It is lagging behind in the field of English and technical education as well.

The teaching of English in Rajasthan in general and particular in Nagaur has become a great problem. So there is a need for patience at all levels, that is, at the policy framing level, the course designing level and at the class room practice level. The problem acquires a multidimensional scope because of the added complication of English being a foreign language and taught as a second or third language. The followings are the some of the problems that are popping on the scene of the learning and teaching English in Rajasthan and particularly in Nagaur district:

1. It has become very difficult to find good teachers to teach English in the educational institutions. The teachers of English are interested only in their 'service conditions' and not in 'service' to the community of the students; in most of the cases unionism has killed professionalism. As Professor V K Gokak says in his *English in India: Its Present and Future*,

The functional years for the teaching of English in schools and colleges are in the hands of the teachers who neither know enough English nor are familiar with the latest and far-reaching developments of in the pedagogy of English. (1963: 69)

A teacher whose English is faulty cannot be a model in the classroom where English is taught; most teachers, once they get a job, particularly in government sector, cease to learn. Teachers try to cover the portion to be covered and ultimately with great difficulty, cover it up! Learners come to colleges because they want some certificates- a degree or diploma.

2. It is often observed that mostly students take English as a subject of study in a very

light manner or to just qualify the exam. Their prime aim is just to get passing marks and clear it somehow. Hence they do not pay much attention on improving grammar and communication skills. They neither take any interest in the subject nor try to prepare themselves for the competitive examinations. They forget the fact that basic knowledge of English is required for various examinations rather they consider English as drab and monotonous which consequents in poor academic result and little knowledge of English. So the purpose of introducing this subject cannot be served. Most of the students take it considering it as important and prestigious subject with having good scope. They have no depth or keenness for the subject. Some come from different streams having no background of English. Hence they lack basic knowledge of concepts and acquire only superficial knowledge. This causes a great impediment in teaching English to the students in general and marginalized ones in particular.

3. Generally curriculum designed has major lacunas such as stale, old syllabus and lacking new changes. Changes done are very slight. Curriculum tends to be conventional, not up to the mark and not updated, for instance, latest developments in Grammar and new contemporary writers and their works should be included while designing the curriculum so that it would arouse interest in the learners and be able to enhance their knowledge. Teachers will also get updated knowledge and broaden their mental horizon. While designing the syllabus the learners and their opinions are never taken into consideration. The syllabus thus designed does not have any direct reflection of the lives

and problems of the learners. Defects in curriculum are also a big problem in teaching English. In India there seem to be no thinking or whatsoever with regard to the textbooks. The textbooks once prescribed in the syllabus, remain there for many years. No one thinks about the recent developments in the field of teaching and learning English.

4. The teaching of English suffers from the faulty methods as the teachers in most of the cases are not exposed with the latest trends and techniques of the teaching English. Oral or lecture method is favoured in colleges, i.e., teacher uses English as the ordinary language of the English lesson, unless someone clears advantage is to be gained by the use of the mother tongue. Grammar is taught on memorization basis.

5. Many major defects are also noticed in our examination system. College and Universities examination pattern generally do not cover the whole syllabus in a detailed form. Students leave many topics in order to get pass marks and prepare themselves to attempt five set questions that are almost predictable. In this case, the students do not get thorough knowledge of the concerned subject. There is no viva: voce at the undergraduate level, so their communicative skills are not developed. Moreover, sometimes examination answer sheets are not checked up properly which results in bad lot of the students for next class which causes obstacle in teaching English efficiently.

6. Most of the colleges are situated in the areas where there are no infrastructure facilities like adequate class rooms, lights, furniture, water or blackboards etc. Under these adversities, teaching English becomes a very difficult job.

The latest teaching equipment like Laptops, Audio Visual aids (LCD, OHP, Printer, and Scanner etc.) are not available in most of the colleges. Without these teaching tools, English cannot be taught in an effective way. Now UGC has started providing funds for the establishment of knowledge centres and network resource centres in the colleges. But even then, the learning of English has not taken a shape in the area of study.

7. A well-arranged library is a key factor of successful teaching. It reflects the output of the college; students also take admission in the colleges for getting good books and update their knowledge through them. But this is a great dilemma that in most of the institutes, libraries are not computerized or well-equipped. In this condition, students do not get updated online information. Moreover, some colleges lack full time librarians also. So both students and teachers face great problems which hinder the teaching and learning of English.

8. Language, particularly the English language, has become not only a means for power and exploitation; it is also a site for struggle. The English knowing class is not interested in any serious changes in society in educating the masses for the newer changes and developments at large scale. The babu or lower-middle official class is interested only in maintaining the feudal order. The result is no proper planning or political will in implementation and lack of coordination among various agencies, Central Government, State Government, Universities, colleges etc. and the aimless drift continues without any directions, clear-cut policies, goals, aims and objectives.

These are the serious problems that Nagaur district has not improved yet as far as English education is concerned. If students of Nagaur district want to beat the students of Jaipur or other students of developed city it is prime need to achieve a good command on English. The followings are some basic solutions through which students of concerned district can come out to the above problems:

The comprehensive upliftment of the students from rural background can be actualized by education and this can be done only by well trained teachers. First and foremost a suitable environment should be created for students. Old teaching methods should be less in use and teachers must skillfully use new methods so that students may have good understanding and command on the language which they are not acquainted with. And gradually they can acquire it. Teachers should give more emphasis to communicative approach rather than any other ineffective methods. They should make students able to communicate in English inside and outside of the class room. For this an English environment has to be made so a teacher should conduct group discussion, debate, role playing, creative games in which students actively and wholeheartedly can take part.

English should not be treated as a subject or an alien language. On the other hand it should be accepted widely in modern world. Today computer plays a vital role in the process of teaching and learning. Audio visual and computer have made the English language learning easy and interesting as well. CALL has reduced the burden of the teacher. CALL enables the learners to look beyond the conventional mode of learning. New era and encourages self-learning. Curriculum must be formed according to the students belonging to rural areas that

should not be totally unfamiliar to them. 'So local, folk and Dalit literature should be used for the language purpose either in the actual form or in translated form.' (2012: 71). Time to time syllabus and course materials must have change and contain those elements which are of use and interest of students.

'Pratham; English language training programme developed by Indian network of NGOs', such programmes should be encouraged so that English language can be made learning easy. Today internet has reached mostly to the every Indian villages and that brought revolution in education system. Through which e-learning could be possible in such remote areas. English teachers and learners can use E learning website and new media tools. Various language councils and institutions have started interactive language learning websites. Vocabulary development programme, blogs and digital storytelling, video sharing websites like YouTube, English Language Podcast (listening comprehension) can be used for English language learning. Many Apps related to English language learning, can be operated on mobile phone and nowadays smart phones are available to everyone. So in present time technology has made English language learning easy and interesting but the need is to understand its proper use.

In nutshell, English teaching to the students of Rajasthan in general and Nagaur in particular has been facing great perspectives, problems and challenges but these problems can be overcome by creating adequate atmosphere among the students. The govt. has to also play climactic and culminating character so as to solve and minimize the maximum deterrents and deterrents that are coming in the way of the teaching of English. The teachers also have to develop new strategies to combat shortcomings

in teaching English. Teaching of English should be imparted with latest technology and more student-friendly tools. It should be more task-based and made more interactive; only then, genuine purpose of teaching English can be served.

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