

CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE IN INDIA

Lakma Kumari Marraypelly

Assistant professor in English

Department of English

Kakatiya Institute of Technology & Science

Warangal, Telangana

Introduction:

Teaching English in India is not without challenges. But challenges are neither frustrating nor insurmountable. Teaching without challenges is dull and unproductive. Challenges encourage teachers to undertake action research. Results of action research can be applied to overcome challenges. The challenges range from the position of English in India, materials consumption and production, methods of teaching, blending, testing and evaluation, continuous professional development and training, learning styles, learner motivation, diverse socio-economic-linguistic backgrounds of learners, medium of instruction in schools, different school boards backgrounds, amount of exposure to English, the influence of L1, ill-trained English teachers in schools, English teachers with rich literature background in their degree programmes but without knowledge of applied linguistic areas, such as psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, contrastive analysis and error analysis, and to theoretical linguistics branches, such as phonetics and phonology, semantics, and syntax. There is a general tendency among important stakeholders of English language education to play the blame game neatly without anyone of them owning responsibility for the dismal performance of students in acquiring communicative competency. The present study is intended to be a reflective, inductive research on the basis of inputs from the teaching fraternity and aims at making it analytical and descriptive.

Research Design and Discussion

During reflection and interrogation with fellow teachers, it was understood that they do face challenges though they treat challenges and problems as synonyms. An open-ended questionnaire with 20 challenge areas identified through reflections from the diary notes maintained by the researcher over 29 years was given to fifteen teachers chosen at random. Surprisingly, the return rate was zero. While contacted, they expressed their difficulty in allotting time for reflection over these challenge areas. Many of them suggested that an objective type questionnaire would have made the assignment simpler and less time-consuming than writing down their

reflections descriptively and subjectively.

As a result, the researcher took up the descriptive part of the paper as a challenge in the study. Though the study was initially intended to be a statistical analysis, he changed it into interpretive research basing it on discursive analysis. However, the original design of the study would also be re-attempted and its result would be contrasted with the discursive analysis undertaken here. But it is for the future venture!

Theoretical Reflections

ELT in India faces several challenges. They are not to be equated with difficulties that carry a negative, backward-looking connotation while challenges indicate a positive, forward-looking connotation. While facing challenges, teachers know that they are going to take on them and not to make complaints as in the case of difficulties. Efficient teachers are those who recognize challenges in teaching English. Challenges concern the entire pedagogy and all stakeholders. Inefficient teachers are those who mistake challenges for difficulties in teaching English. Difficulties concern learners and not teachers. Of course, all teachers face difficulties in teaching English since it is neither a mother tongue that it is used for primary socialization, nor a foreign language in the sense that it is rarely or never heard and seen, nor a second language in the sense that it is taught by native speaker teachers in the English speaking community. Some of the common difficulties at all levels are spelling, assigning homework, take-it-easy attitude of students toward English as a subject, students' phobia toward using English, and almost nil habit of reading and writing. Challenges are perceived by teachers on behalf of other stakeholders from their standpoints.

Position of English in India as Associate Official Language

English enjoys a unique position constitutionally in India. However, many teachers as well as learners of English entertain certain fallacies unwittingly regarding the status of English vis-a-vis Hindi and other regional languages in this multilingual, multicultural country. Almost all of them do understand that English globally enjoys the coveted position of being the world language with the widest reach and spread for interpersonal and inter-governmental communication and for transactional purposes. Unfortunately, teachers as well as learners of English have not grasped its role and position in India.

- It is no longer British English that has close affiliation with English literature that is required in India for its political, economic, and scientific development. It is no longer the language of westernisation and mental colonisation but of modernisation and vocationalisation.
- At the same time, it is learnt in India not as an international language but a national language that keeps the country cohesive in terms of inter-ethnic, inter-

- linguistic, and inter-state communication. Its reach is far and wide and deep into Indians' marrow. It enjoys a special privilege in their heart and mind without encroaching into the social domains where their mother tongues are quite strong and indispensable. They co-exist peacefully without conflicts of any sort.
- Its role in higher education, judiciary, advertisements (both print and electronic versions), social discourse, parliament, and administration is constantly interrogated by scholars and scientists, activists and academics, politicians and pundits, and bureaucrats and policy makers. They conveniently continue to project the colonial image of a foreign language.
 - Teachers of English affirm it contradictorily both as a foreign language from students' point of view and as a second language from pedagogical positions. This blurred perception creates several methodological dilemmas.

Materials Production

When English is taught as an academic language for purposes other than socialisation, teaching becomes dependent on materials or texts to be used for the development of English language communication skills. It needs a medium for teaching English as a language that cannot be taught in vacuum.

- English literature can be exploited as teaching-learning materials since teachers are basically students of English literature. Moreover, students of different disciplines are interested in it chiefly because it provides much-needed relief from monotony while seriously engaging themselves with their branches of study and partly because it appeals to their affective domain as well.
- Literature materials are not authentic but only contrived and therefore not suitable for communicative language teaching if English language teaching aims at communicative competency in learners, contend some teachers.
- Teachers alone should produce materials depending upon the levels and needs of learners. Hence, several autonomous colleges produce their own General English course materials as in-house textbooks. On the other hand, a vast majority of teachers are not familiar with the principles of materials preparation and therefore they depend upon readymade books that are prepared with an idea of 'one-size-that-fits-all.'
- There is a belief that materials should be prepared either by teachers locally or commercial textbook writers globally on the basis of specific learner needs that are heterogeneous at least the tertiary level. It is what is called ESP materials, such as English for aviation, English for banking, English for chartered accountants, English for engineering, English for law, for nursing, for computers, and for technology.

Materials Consumption by Teachers and Students

Materials can be written for learners but they also expect teachers to play the role of interventionists and explicators. If literature forms the backbone of language texts, learners become dependent on teachers. The way a textbook is structured should indicate to what extent learners can be independent users of texts.

- Teachers become totally dependent on texts in the sense that they cover what is given in the text rather than facilitating the promotion of language skills. They tend to forget that the text is only a medium for promotion of communicative competency. Rather, they treat it as the source of knowledge of human values. Sometimes, they create an impression in students inadvertently or deliberately that teachers are an extension of, and supplement to the text. It results in a piquant situation where learners do not or cannot use the text independent of teachers.
- Since most universities prescribe literature-based texts and since questions are also like the ones usually set for English Majors, students resort to bazaar guides (keys commercially published) that they buy spending more on them than texts. It happens to be a reason for the loss of reading among students as a habit and as a necessity.
- English language learners are part of general readers in the sense that they do not read prescribed texts as much as reading materials in general. Even if materials are prepared locally as self-learning materials (SLM), students tend to read only as much as is necessary for examinations. They either beg teachers for 'important questions' or consult previous question papers if it is in the nature of objective type or genre-based like essay writing, conversation writing, and letterwriting.
- Students tend to become more and more tech-savvy. Anything that comes without technology appears to be untouchable. They prefer visuals to print medium. They are willing produce language if interactive communicative technology is exploited. For instance, Whatsapp can play a vital role in pre-writing even at the postgraduate level. Facebook can be blended with textbook. Twitter is an ideal platform to learn precise writing and summarizing. The Internet challenges the print materials by making them outdated as fast as possible.

Methods of Teaching

Since English has been institutionalized in a big way in India, it has become compulsory even on MBA and MCA curriculum these days. It is therefore no wonder that the image of the teacher is evoked once English is discussed as as an academic subject.

Teaching involves methods. There is a problem of plenty here!

- Teachers love being teachers and reluctant to become facilitators. Once they are willing to act facilitators, they are willing to use Communicative Language Teaching and its different versions. By being steadfast teachers, they would like to permanently occupy 'the-sage-on-the-stage' position by redistributing the received knowledge and wisdom. They prefer lecturing and 'shouting at' students given the present size of the English language classroom.
- Traditional teachers prefer chalk and board as educational aids but they no longer sustain learners' interest and imagination. They lose concentration and slowly switch over to the virtual world wherein they seem to be overcrowded with bombarding information.
- Teachers with technology do not get institutional support with minimum infrastructure that is needed of a smart classroom. Smart classrooms are absolutely necessary at a time when students become 'smarter.'
- Teachers are either unaware of methods of teaching English as a foreign and second language or unwilling to try one or all of them. Again, they prefer deductive to inductive method and it results in a situation where students are unable to adapt themselves to application-oriented learning.

Methods of Learning

Methods of teaching do not necessarily match with methods of learning. However, methods of teaching largely impact on methods of learning. For instance, when teachers resort to delivering wholesome lectures, say, on tenses, learners become 'tense' and just memorise them as rules. Some university questions demand students to attempt essays on tenses and prepositions and students memorise both rules and example sentences as written on the board in the class.

- The most common and popular method of learning is memorisation irrespective of the content being either literary or language. It only leads to recycling and reproducing. Learners can never attempt to use English in real life situations. They 'master' the form instead of learning the content of communication at all three interlocking levels of language: phonology, morphology, and syntax.
- Interaction is almost nil both inside and outside the class as they do not have the culture of selecting study partners according to their needs and capacities. Classroom strategies do not encourage autonomous learning as well.
- Scoring marks being the ultimate goal does not help learners try for newer methods. Take-home assignments or projects or use of English in real life contexts can bear more fruits than listening to mesmerizing lectures or memorising dry rules and frozen forms.
- They love learning through visuals, but not enough infrastructure is put in place. Free laptops from the government, wifi connectivity on campuses, UGC

sponsored INFLIB NET resources, online resources ought to be exploited at once.

Blended Teaching and Learning

Time-honoured traditional methods of teaching and all pervasive ubiquitous technology should be blended for effective outcome-based English language learning. It need not be over-emphasised that teaching should match with learning because the ultimate aim of teaching is to produce learning. If students cannot follow teachers, teachers then should change their teaching strategies so that learners can 'follow' them.

- The twenty first century learners are tech-savvy to the extent that they are branded as tech-maniac. At the same time, teachers are tech-novices to the extent that they are accused of tech-phobia.
- Many educational institutions do not have classroom buildings with proper electric facilities to make use of simple gadgets at the primary and secondary level. Smart classrooms remain a distant dream in many colleges. Students have access to them only on special occasions.
- Many teachers do not have the adequate hands-on experience on preparing e-content and ppt for use on a daily basis. They are not even well informed about YouTube language lessons that students can be guided to learn during leisure hours at the college library.
- Students have a tendency to use their smartphones for all purposes other than educational and academic and it is the teachers who can demonstrate their use for language learning. Teachers need to be equally technologically smart as students are, if not smarter than students.

Testing and Evaluation

It is a simple wisdom that what is taught should be tested and what is not taught should not be tested. Moreover, testing should be followed by evaluation. Normally, evaluation becomes optional for teachers if not for institutions. It provides learners with information on their progress in their understanding of the subject learnt. It can be used to infer feedback on how and what has been taught. Feedback is the starting point for redesigning curriculum or revising the syllabus.

The only method of testing is through two to three hour examination at the end of semester as summative exam and through one hour tests during the course of a semester as formative test. It is normally in writing even if it requires a viva voce. Listening and speaking skills are totally neglected. In the case of reading, extensive reading skills are also excluded from testing. Even writing

skills are not tested. Grammar is mistaken for writing and study skills like precise writing, summarising, and note-making are treated as micro-skills of writing! Several 'standard' English textbooks are a witness to this piquant phenomenon.

- Setting one question paper that is supposed to fit all appears to be the only option available. Customised question paper at least for high, average, and slow achievers is yet to be given some serious thought,
- Most of the questions test learners' memory and not language proficiency. Higher order thinking skills on the basis of Bloom' taxonomy are conspicuous by their absence.
- Students' score is not a reliable source of information on their academic achievement for admission to higher education or for career placement.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Traditionally, many believe in the dictum that "once a teacher, always a teacher." It is not true with the changing definition of teachers as co-learners. Teachers need to update themselves in accordance with learner needs and explosion of knowledge in the subject.

They are no longer viewed as sages from whom knowledge flows in a hierarchical manner. On the contrary, they learn so much from the way learners think and grasp the subject. Their understanding of the subject is sometimes modified by how learners bring their schema.

Teachers are 'born' and 'reborn' in every class and they need to know more than learners.

- Opportunities for CPD are not evenly available for all. Teachers working in metropolitan cities have better exposures and more opportunities than their counterparts in rural towns.
- In-service training programmes are not conducted on language issues. Teachers need to equip themselves in areas like TESL vs. TEFL, SLAvs. SLA, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, contrastive and error analysis and the like so that they can become professionals in the real sense of the term.
- Not many English language teachers do research on ELT. They would prefer English literature since they are basically and academically students of English literature. They do not even apply for major/minor UGC projects on language.
- (Action) research culture is not yet seen as a powerful way of continuous professional development. Professors are distinguished from school teachers in that the former produce knowledge and the latter consume it.

Learning Styles

Learners distinguish themselves from each other by their learning styles. These styles are acquired over a period of time due to various socio-cultural factors. Some of them can be field-dependent or field-independent, convergent or divergent, risk-taking or cautiousness, and reflection or impulsivity. As there are teaching styles, so are learning styles. All learners should not be clubbed together and treated as if they form one homogeneous group. For instance, Skehan (1989: 111) observes that the field dependent learners have greater communicative competence, greater conversational resourcefulness, and greater negotiation skills than the field-independent learners. Oxford (1995) makes a distinction between style and strategy. Style refers to the general approaches to learning a language while strategy means specific behaviours and thoughts learners use to enhance their language learning.

- Teachers should identify the learning styles of all students in the class and keep a log for each one of them so that learning input can be customised. It can become “comprehensible input.”
- Learners’ response and their creativity depend on their learning styles. Though each style has advantages and limitations, teachers need to be conscious of minimising limitations if students’ learning styles are fossilised.
- Students of the same learning styles can be clustered for group learning and interpersonal, interactive learning in the class. The choice of study partners can be arranged on the basis of learning styles.
- Learners are differentiated by their cognitive styles as well. It means how individual learners classify or arrange information, things, or objects. They can be said to belong to three sub-groups: descriptive-analytic (concentrating on a single detail common to all details), categorical-inferential (focussing on the class of objects), and relational-contextual (focussing on a common theme or function). Teachers should be in a position to recognize the learning styles of each of these or many more categories and customize their teaching.

Learner Motivation

The term ‘motivation’ in the second language learning context is understood, according to Gardner (1985: 10), as “referring to the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do and the satisfaction experienced in this activity.” It is therefore clear that just a desire and/or favourable attitude toward learning does not necessarily constitute learner motivation. On the contrary, they should be linked with the effort or drive to achieve it so that learners can be said to stay motivated. Research has identified two types of motivation: integrative and instrumental. When learners like to identify themselves with the target language group and to understand their culture, they are characterized by integrative motivation. On the other hand, if learners are guided by utilitarian objectives, they are instrumentally oriented. Interestingly, research findings in the West attest that success

is likely to be less if the underlying motivational orientation is instrumental rather than integrative.

- Indian learners of English with regional medium background view English from instrumental orientation point of view while English medium or CBSC/ICSE background learners are conditioned by integrative orientation.
- English teachers appear to promote integrative motivation since they teach English as a language through English as a literature.
- Hence, their method does not appear to bear fruits from learners' point of view since they do not stand to benefit the cultural package. They view English as a visa to better life styles and the world of career opportunities.
- Teachers promoting one of the two orientations inadvertently cause neglect and marginalization in learners who are unable to approach English teachers with their real needs for which they learn English.

Socio-economic, Linguistic Backgrounds of Learners

Indian learners of English are diverse in terms of socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds over which none can have any control. They also directly affect learners' performance and language acquisition. Exposure to English is the first criterion for acquisition of communicative competency. For instance, the use of literary texts in language classrooms that entail teacher explication and interpretation in English acts as a potential barrier for those students from rural areas with the regional medium instruction in schools to learn English for communication in the college. This is mainly due to want of exposure to any meaningful and comprehensible input as learning experiences. Learner differences are typically Indian realities.

- Indian society is highly hierarchical and each citizen is placed within its structures. The cognitive development in those students from a community that has been deprived of education for hundreds of years is very low and slow compared to those students from upper castes who easily establish epistemological superiority over the rest. Students without any literacy background for generations together cannot simply conceptualise the grammar and aesthetics of English language and literature.
- Economic background of the learner's family that provides education to select children in the family plays a major role in acquisition of English. The first decision in which money has a deciding say is the choice of the medium of instruction at school. Exposure to English in terms of books, dictionaries, membership in libraries, English TV channels, English films and plays and the like is dependent upon money.
- Parents' profession and their literacy in English also determine the quality of English language acquisition in English.
- Though majority of Indian learners of English speak the dominant Indian language of the

region, others have learnt their mother tongues that are different from the dominant regional language. Sometimes, such minority languages may be dominant languages in other regions. For example, Telugu and Hindi are minority languages in the State of Tamil Nadu but majority languages in the States of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in the case of the former and in North Indian States in the case of the latter. These languages do influence their learning of English.

Medium of Instruction in Colleges

Medium of instruction in a multilingual country assumes importance since it presents several challenges to all stakeholders. Though Unesco declared in 1950s that the mother tongue is the ideal medium of instruction, Indian reality presents a different picture. It is a country with 1652 languages as per the 1971 census and two hundred thousand Indians claim that English is their mother tongue. A couple of States have declared English as the official language. When students go to schools, they gain admission in the regionally dominant language medium. The economically well-placed students join English medium schools.

When they go for higher and professional education, it is invariably English that is the medium of universities and colleges.

- Students with regional medium background are stronger in English as a code and poorer at English as a medium of communication than English medium students. As a result, the former find it difficult to use English as an academic language, but easy to tackle English in competitive exams, whereas English medium students use it as an academic and communicative language successfully, but are unable to work out English grammar tasks.
- Students with regional medium school background find themselves disadvantaged lexically and conceptually. They take longer time to comprehend what they listen and read and still more time for concept formation.
- It is therefore quite unfortunate that many English teachers view learners of English with such regional medium background as dull, incapable of learning the basics of English, but disciplined and obedient.
- As a result, regional medium students develop certain personality dispositions in terms of the way behave and the way in which they related themselves to the academic and social environments. Instead of being outgoing, they become withdrawn; instead of being active and energetic, they become lethargic and sluggish; and instead of constructing positive self-concept, they develop negative self-concept.

School Stream Background

Plurality of Indian realities is stark and naked even with regard to the type of streams that schools follow and they are directly linked with cognitive and linguistic development of communicative competence of learners. They are hierarchically

arranged in the Indian mind. They are ICSE, CBSE in KV schools, CBSE in private schools, CBSE in government schools, Matriculation, and State Board curriculum in Grants-in-Aided institutions located in urban and rural areas, corporation and government schools in cities and small towns, and then government schools in villages, and finally schools maintained by local bodies. It is power, position, educational background, locational advantages of parents that decide the fate of children. For instance, the rural rich send their children to English medium schools in nearby towns.

- When students come to college, they carry this tag. They are treated differently.
- Students coming from the first two streams demonstrate their communicative power over others who have mastered English as a code from regional medium State-run schools while all others are marginalized and live in 'incommunicable ghettos' and are silently slaughtered in English literature-rich English classes.
- Students from these 'higher' streams distinguish themselves from their counterparts in the use of English for daily communication within the academia and take the lion's share be it in academic or cultural.
- English literally becomes a 'killer language' in a few cases.

Quantum of Exposure to English

It is a common man's knowledge that learners learn a language better when they are exposed to it as frequently as possible. Learners should get opportunities to use it spontaneously and appropriately for everyday purposes. Though it is a feat achieved in their mother tongue, it is a 'minimal level of proficiency' that all learners of English even at the tertiary level aspire to speak English as against merely passing examinations or knowing grammar. Speaking English is preceded by listening to English. Not all learners of English have the same quantum of exposure to listening in English. They have desire but no opportunity.

- Economically well-off and those who enjoy locational advantages enjoy greater exposure to English and they appear to pick up English. Others have either minimal or nil exposure other than what is provided in classrooms.
- Even technology is not providing a level-playing field to all. It depends on the location of learners' residence and strength of connectivity.
- A well-stocked library or language labs are not available uniformly to all learners.
- Lack of opportunities for more or better exposure (through English-only ambience) becomes yet another barrier to the development of communication skills in English.

Influence of, or Interference from Mother Tongue

When many languages co-exist in a culture, it is quite normal that they influence each other and no culture can preserve the so-called purity of one's tongue. India being a multilingual country, influence works backward as well in the sense that English influences one's communication in their mother tongue. This phenomenon can be approached in two diametrically opposite ways and it all depends on the perceptions. It can be positively described as 'influence' or negatively as 'interference.' In fact, research in Sociolinguistics proves that bilingualism enhances one's communicative reach and it is not a burden.

- Many English teachers prefer the English-only approach to the extent that they become intolerable to the idea of bilingual approach. It silences a vast majority of English learners in the class.
- Some teachers prefer the bilingual approach to the extent that learners freely communicate in their mother tongue rather than in the target language. It further minimizes their exposure and opportunity to use English.
- Learners tend to translate concepts and lexical items literally instead of learning English idiomatically. Collocation and colligation is often ignored.
- At the spoken level, features of spoken English are rarely followed or English is Indianized through a process of borrowal and substitution-replacement.

College English Teachers' Strong Literary Orientation

Since the colonial days, the aim of English Studies has been cultural and not communicative. Acculturation was the sole aim of literary education during the colonial period and it has been faithfully imitated by academics in a politically independent India. Those English literature scholars are expected to 'act' as English language teachers with several pedagogical limitations. In other words, they are expected to teach English for communicative purposes through enhancement of four macro-skills of LSRW.

- Teachers fail to make distinctions in aims and objectives between Major and General English classes. Their heart lies in literary projects and not in language mission.
- Many of them do research only in literature and not on language issues.
- They do not encourage their MPHIL and PhD scholars to do research in ELT. They lack basic English language research orientation.
- They are contented with the colonial literary curriculum for General English the mission of providing the 'whole knowledge of human experience.'

Parents' Role

Parents are an important stakeholder in their children's (higher) education and therefore they have an important role to play in providing education to them. English language learning is a combined effort between the institution, parents, and students.

Parents are expected to participate and be highly involved in their children's education. In fact, it is parents who choose the medium of instruction for them. Students are most successful when their parents take an active role in their education. Unfortunately, many parents' educational background is not sound enough to keep track of the progress of their children in education. Parental cooperation and participation contribute a lot in monitoring the teaching-learning process and provide feedback to curriculum planning and implementation.

- Parents do care for their children' education but do not actively monitor their performance due to lack of education and other preoccupation.
- Their socio-economic position determines their wards' success in acquisition of language skills, but most parents' background is not conducive for such monitoring.
- Parents expect teachers to continue as teachers and not as facilitators. They therefore do not seem to appreciate any non-conventional modes of acquiring English.
- Parents' attitude toward teachers' role however has changed from being a strict disciplinarian to becoming a benign human being.

Institutional Commitment and Attitude toward English (Department)

English is an institutionalized discipline within Indian academia and it is the only academic subject that has been constitutionally described and guaranteed to all citizens. It enjoys the coveted position of being the compulsory Part II language in the Arts and Science stream and the only language in Engineering stream. Its acquisition depends on the institutional commitment and attitude toward it as well. English department had a rare distinction of being manufacturing and service departments. In all engineering and professional institutions, it serves as a service department while it is both service and major departments in Arts colleges where students do English Major.

- As a service department, English department is sometimes is given step-motherly treatment.
- Statutory hours allotted for the study of English are modified in order to promote other disciplines.
- Hours allotted for its study in the college time table are inappropriate and large combined classes for English are not an exception.
- Its teachers being drafted for all kinds of extra-curricula activities is symptomatic of the institutional attitude toward English as a subject and a language.

Large Classes:

Quantity (increased opportunities) and quality (relevance & excellence) of higher education are two sides of the same coin. As per the UGC mandate, all higher educational institutions are expected to practise inclusive education in the sense that

no one shall be denied access to education on account of socio-economic disparities. However, it results in classroom size growing faster. Large classrooms and larger language classrooms are becoming Indian reality. Combining classes for English language teaching taking the total strength beyond 100 is a norm rather than an exception.

- Customised teaching and individual attention to learners become a casualty.
- Fostering active learning wherein learners are engaged in processing information being presented appears to be a remote possibility.
- Teaching of oral-aural skills appears to be almost impossible and on the verge of neglect and disuse.
- Continuous testing and evaluation appears to be insurmountable.

Recommendations:

In the light of these reflections, the following suggestions can be given some serious thought with a view to further taking discursive analysis to its logical end:

- Action research on each of these challenges can be undertaken by English teachers and results can be shared through publication with the community of teachers and scholars.
- Academic and institutional research on these issues can be encouraged by guides and supervisors.
- Theories can be derived so that they can be applied in other cultures where English is taught as a second or foreign language.
- Workshops and symposiums can be organised with a view to sensitizing teachers on these challenges.
- Reflective research articles can be encouraged in journals run by professional associations like ELTAI.
- Journals can be maintained on how teachers try out possible techniques and methods to overcome these challenges.
- Governments can facilitate national institutes like EFLU, Hyderabad and Central Universities where ELT Departments and Centres function to establish exclusive publishing houses for promoting ELT research culture among teachers and scholars.
- Indian English academia can dream of starting a research organization like MLA to cater to the teaching and research needs of South Asian teachers and scholars of English. It should also devise a standard on par with TOEFL or IELTS and Research Style Sheet or Handbook for exclusive use in the Region. It will help scholars to be independent of MLA or APA or Chicago Manual. Ultimately, it will liberate scholars and teachers from the dependency syndrome!

Overcoming hurdles to communicate better English in ESL classroom

- In spite of teaching English in India as second language for the past fourteen long years, students fail to acquire it efficiently because of

- Build confidence and never be afraid of speaking in English. Constantly tell yourself that you can speak fluent English if you try hard.
 - Build impressive vocabulary for use in different contexts and situations. Learn English phrases, not individual words.
 - Learn with ears, not eyes. Listen to plenty of authentic English using audio and video clips.
 - Learn deeply – repeat what you learn over and over again. It will require a great deal of repetition to build the new language patterns in your mind. As these new patterns develop, there will be progression from a laborious, conscious effort, to speech which is reproduced rapidly and unconsciously.
 - Don't let grammar worry you too much. But if you use correct syntax you can retrain your speech in considerably less time. Consequently, you would learn to speak fluent English more quickly.
 - Don't translate from and into your mother tongue while speaking and listening. This takes too much time and will make you hesitant. For speech to occur, your mind must be actively involved in syntax development. The more actively your mind is involved in spoken English, the more effective the learning process becomes.
 - Get the pronunciation right. You can record your own speech, replay it, analyse it, and avoid making the same mistakes again.
 - Liberally use contractions, clips, blends, filler words, etc. Filler words are very helpful in keeping the conversation going. When you don't know what to say next, or don't remember the right word or phrase, it's better to use filler words than falling silent.
 - Begin using simple sentence structures that you are comfortable with. Try to experiment with the English you know. Use words and phrases you know in new situations. Using the right words and phrases is more important than grammatical correctness.
 - Respond to people who speak to you in English. You can get many clues from the way they use English and also from their body language. Try to be as natural as possible when you respond to them in English.
 - Practice speaking what you hear. Practice where you can, when you can. Any practice is better than no practice. Try out your new language at every opportunity. If you have nobody to talk to, try 'mind talk' and 'self-talk.' If you have someone to talk to, attempt 'cross talk.' Speaking English frequently will retrain your mind to respond to new patterns of auditory stimuli.
 - Speak at a natural pace – neither too slowly nor too fast. Maintain proper rhythm and intonation of English. When you speak at normal speed, pronunciation skills such as linking between words will automatically happen.
-
- Remember to be polite. Use expressions such as 'please' and 'thank you' as frequently as possible, especially when you ask for, or have accepted, a favour from someone.

Conclusions

Teaching English sans challenges is uninteresting and unchallenging. Facing

challenges helps teachers grow professionally and epistemologically. Teachers should have guts to treat problems as challenges. It may create a sense of need in them for renovation and innovation in teaching and testing methods, materials production, reflective and empirical research, and classroom managerial skills.

Works Cited:

- Burstall, C. 1975. Factors affecting foreign language learning: A consideration of some recent research findings. **Language Teaching and Linguistics: Abstracts**, 8.1: 5-21.
- Cook, V. 1991. *Second language learning and language teaching*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Genessee, F & Hamayan, E. 1980. Individual differences in second language learning. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 1: 95-110.
- Nunan, D. *Research Methods in Language Learning*. New Delhi: CUP.
- Gardner, R.C. (1985). **Social psychology and second language learning: the role of attitudes and motivation**. London: Edward Arnold. Oxford, R.L. 2003. Language learning styles and strategies: An overview. Web.ntpu.edu.tw/language/workshop/read2.pdf accessed on Tuesday 2 August 2016. Reid, J. 1995. **Learning styles in the ESL/EFL Classroom**. Boston: Heinle &
- Heinle, Skehan, P. 1989. **Individual differences in second-language learning**. London:
- Edward Arnold. UNESCO. 2006. *Practical tips for teaching large classes: A teacher's guide*.
- Bangkok: UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education.