

# Teaching of English to Rural students

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## **1. The Genesis:**

English is an international language, spoken in many countries both as a native and as a second language or foreign language. At the same time, English has become the common man's language in today's context. It is taught in the schools in almost every country on this earth. It is a living, growing and vibrant language spoken by over 400 million people all over the world as their native language. Many more people speak English as an additional language. Whatever may be about English, it is an alien language for the rural students to learn and speak. You must speak in English, learn to speak in English and talk only in English are torturing ringing tone in the minds of rural students. Globally English has become a vehicle for communicating scientific and technological information. Each and every rural student must inculcate in mind that, the ability to read, to write and learn to speak English forcefully and efficiently. English today is a powerful unifying factor in our national and international life. It is through English that we are connected with information technology and modern technology and electronic time and space.

## **2. Objective of the paper:**

1. To highlight the present situation of the rural students
2. To propose possible methods to teach English to rural students

## **3. Socio –economic and rural background:**

India is a vast and multilingual country in which the society is the combination of various caste, creed, and religions with different background. Learning of English is second alien language for rural students

which they find it as Himalayan hill climbing to acquire the process of learning. There are two reasons for their low level of competency and fluency. First, lack of environment convenience to give an encouragement secondly, they have name level teachers who do not have adequate exposure to teach them in a scientific way. Hence, they teach English to rural students what they learned in their traditional learning.

#### **4. Teaching in rural area:**

Rural students are very much affected by this diseased ELT system. There is a huge mismatch between urban and rural students. Urban students somehow or rather manage to learn and use English somewhat well with their convex in which the language is used India in spite of this deconstructing ELT. Urban students are third generation learners who have a good co-operation from parent's environment and ambience. But the rural students are the first generation who does not have any foundation in English in spite of strenuous efforts taken by the hard work teachers. If a rural student goes to school in the rural areas of our country, the teaching and learning is highly pathetic. Rural students hail from families where almost every member is immersed in economic chores to support the family income, and where almost no one in most of families ever had such an opportunity to go to school. Moreover, the rural schools hardly have efficient teachers who could claim to know English more than the minimum level of acceptable and tolerable English. The school seldom has any infrastructure facilities to teach English except a blackboard and a piece of chalk. The rural and ignorant villagers never bother about neither children's education nor the school condition and the plight of the English teachers.

#### **5. The Dichotomy between urban and rural:**

The urban students have a certain socio-economic educational and family background where English language activities are used and they have the chance to hear the sounds of English by the educated people, TV radio or electronic devices. They are exposed to the various aspects of it. The rural students do not have any background. When they come to school for

English class, feel fish out of water. There is no one to give inspiration and encouragement to learn and use language for their future life.

#### **6. How do rural student look at English:**

There are five categories of rural students who look at English language differently. They obviously express their inability. 1. I do not know how to speak English. 2. I can speak English but I fear. 3. I can speak English but not accurately and fluently. 4. I can speak English accurately and fluently but not with full confidence. 5. I do not have any person to speak in English.

#### **7. Why is learning English a tedious task:**

Even after years of learning English from the childhood at schools, colleges many students fail to learn the language. They are not able to communicate freely. Learning English as compulsory subject even a degree holder cannot speak a correct sentence in English. As for rural students, English is totally an alien language which is very hard for them in several ways. There are five difficult ways. Each one takes a long time to acquire it. They are 1. Its very sound's and its words and their meanings 2. Reading those words 3. Understanding the spoken and written English sentences. 4. Its grammar rules and regulations 5. Using all these for writing and speaking.

#### **8. Challenges encountered by the teachers of English:**

When the teachers of English to teach English and to learn English and learn to rural students they face a number of challenges. Majority of the teachers are unfamiliar with the latest developments in ELT. Rural students have a negative attitude toward learning and using English is still prevalent in the rural areas of India. They believe that English is too difficult a language for them learn. On the other hand, some teachers of English have a negative attitude towards their students. Teachers always are always under impression that these students are dull, useless, and good for nothing and can never pick up. Teachers of English prefer to go to urban rather than rural areas. Some teachers are highly authoritarian and at times they even threaten the students with punishments. Teachers never go for orientation programme, career guidance and refresher course. They must update their teaching competency according to the signs of the time. They

have limited hours of teaching and never take extra classes for the improvement of rural students. They habitually say that English is not included for the calculation of percentage of marks for the entry into professional colleges. If above mentioned barriers are completely washed away by the teachers, students will naturally have an inclination to learn English as compulsory for their bright future.

## **9. How to overcome the barriers:**

To overcome these barriers, the modern teachers have to use certain methods to teach to the rural students effectively and efficiently. Before teaching the modern methods, make the students understand and give an encouragement and interest. They should have self-interest and self-motivation to pursue the process of acquiring the language with conviction.

### **9.1. Dumb charades:**

Dumb charades is a guessing game where one student has to enact and the other has to follow his actions, gestures, movements and at last find out the action of the proverb. A volunteer mimes and never moves lips and the students try to find out. This makes the students to have imaginative power and good memory.

### **9.2. Person on the chair:**

A person on the chair is called as debate chair in which there will be three groups. One will speak for the topic and other against the topic which is already given. The third group will play the role of a judge on the chair. It enables the students to share their social evils and express their feelings in English.

### **9.3. Picture on the table:**

Picture on the table is called as pictorial method. A rural student can easily develop speaking skills through this method. In this pictorial method, a teacher draws a picture of a classroom and every student is encouraged to describe the picture of the class in his own words in spite of committing mistakes. For instance, how many students are in the class? And how many boys and girls are in the class?

**9.4. Head and tail:**

As the starting word is Mat, the next word might be Tree. Here, the word “T” is head and the word “L” is called Tail. That is what; it is called as head and tail. The next person must use the last letter of that word to form another new word. For example the third word might be “elephant”. To avoid repetitions, restrict words to a specific category or confine to a number of letters. This enables the students to have word power

**9.5. Listen to electronic devices:**

Making students listen to any type of electronic device, English conversations, showing documentary films, narration of stories, reading famous sayings, broadcasting news programs and so on. After listening to electronic devices, circulate questionnaire to fill up. This kind of practice enables the students to have listening capacity.

**9.6. Mobile phone message:**

Everyone is well -versed in sending SMS through cell. All do not type message with grammatical English. But many of them, who do not know English, send SMS in English with transliteration. This mobile phone message will give interest to the students to acquire the writing skills in correct English.

**9.7. Mobile- libraries:**

To bring back people to book reading more and more mobile libraries should be opened in the rural areas as cell towers have been erected. Mobile- libraries especially in rural areas will be an eye opener and torchbearer of future generation.

**9.8. via – vernacular:**

Any teacher who teaches English in rural areas she will have to be bilingual. The fluency of mother tongue will lead to learn the alien language easily. A rural teacher must be well- versed in her mother tongue so as to teach English to rural students. When the nuances are clarified in rural students’ mother tongue will be able to comprehend better. Hence, a strong foundation is needed in vernacular via learning of English.

## 10. Epilogue:

The father of our nation Gandhi says, "Village development is the country's development". Rural students are not dull but diligent. They are not useless but used less. They are already blessed with empirical wisdom and native intelligence. When such opportunities are given to them, they will really come off with flying colours to pick up the universal language. A Poor teacher tells- a poor student forgets. An average teacher explains – an average student remembers. A good teacher demonstrates – a good student understands. A great teacher inspires- a great student learns.

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