English Learners' Needs Analysis and Technology Integration for Effective English Instruction: Urgent Need of Indian ELT

Tukaram Rangrao Hapgunde and Rajesh K Yadav

ABSTRACT:

A close study of ELT practices in Maharashtra reveals a lack of proper learner needs analysis, no technology integration, outdated curriculum and study materials, and inadequate exposure to the target language, leading to the failure of Indian ELT. Consequently, there is an urgent need to revisit traditional teaching methods and integrate technology to address English learners' psycholinguistic needs.

Keywords: ELT, Needs Analysis, ESL, Exposure, English Language Instruction, OERs, Technology Integration, LSRW skills, GMT

INTRODUCTION

This research paper examines the effectiveness of existing English language instruction in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. It aims to analyze non-native English learners' needs and explore the feasibility of integrating modern technology for effective English instruction. The study reveals that the lack of competent English teachers and modern resources can be mitigated by using Open Educational Resources (OERs) and modern technology like the internet and mass media. The research emphasizes the need to redesign the curriculum, create local need-based study materials, and integrate technological tools to address the psycholinguistic needs of learners in Maharashtra and UP.

Institutes like ELTAI have confirmed the failure of Indian ELT. K. Elango noted in the 16th International Conference of ELTAI (2022) that English language teaching in India has failed, with millions of learners unable to use the language for basic purposes. "English language teaching has failed in our country, not miserably but significantly obvious indicator is the millions of our learners, including at tertiary level, are unable to employ the language even for basic purposes.....Sadly, it is also true of those in English medium schools that have mushroomed at every nook and cranny of our country, pointing to the desire to learn it as perceived to be the gateway for upward mobility".

This article explains the ELT ethos in Maharashtra, based on primary data collected from 70 faculty and 850-degree students through specially-designed questionnaires and secondary data from published sources and OERs.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

There is a growing realization that the traditional approach to ELT needs to be revisited. Many stakeholders are dissatisfied with the existing model, which fails to address learner needs, technology integration, and efficient teaching and evaluation. The compulsory English curriculum superficially focuses on writing and speaking, ignoring receptive skills like reading and listening, which are crucial for exposure and comprehensible linguistic input. It lacks a functional approach to language, especially grammar, essential for developing spoken English fluency.

The curriculum does not provide adequate study materials, practice opportunities, or guidance on building English language proficiency. Psychological factors like anglophobia, lack of motivation, and negative mindsets about English are not addressed. Linguistic factors such as inadequate exposure, overuse of the grammar-translation method, and lack of oral-aural components are also overlooked. Sadly, it expects learners to make practical use of the mechanics of the English language without clearing what exactly 'the mechanics of the English language' and linguistic competence constitute. The curriculum proves to be just ambiguous hollow writing without a thought of learners' psychological and linguistic needs and the application of language pedagogy confuses teachers and students. It reflects a lack of holistic understanding of ELT and pedagogy, methods, approach, curriculum etc among the curriculum designers and its implementers. It reflects severe neglect towards learner needs and expectations. A lack of resourcefulness, dedicated and intelligent effort; and sound understanding of the target situation and learners' needs among the curriculum designers in designing and delivering English in a non-native Indian context.

Lack of authentic knowledge and guidance about the basics of the target language, inadequate exposure, and poor quality study materials contribute to a poor English learning experience in Maharashtra. The overuse of the grammar-translation method (GTM) and lecture-based teaching, combined with the lack of oral-aural components in the curriculum and exams, are major linguistic challenges. Key issues in non-native English Language Teaching include insufficient language practice opportunities, inadequate oral-aural elements, low student participation, and neglect of skills like spoken communication, writing, phonetics, and syntax.

Effective English instruction requires systematic practice of micro-skills in listening and speaking, which is currently missing. The traditional approach uses culturally alien texts without cultural orientation, lacking creative efforts. There is an urgent need to adopt new methods for teaching and evaluating English language skills. The current approach does not ensure comprehensive coverage of the four fundamental skills of the target language. In short, a close study of the prescribed curriculum and the feedback of the ELT stakeholders give the impression that the basic things of effective English instruction like culture, exposure, practice, learner involvement, learner needs analysis, technology integration etc are inexcusably side-lined. The lack of relevant, adequate, accessible, complete and need-based study material is one of the leading linguistic factors and requirements of English learners in Maharashtra.

Mindful and educative integration of pro-English building ICT for effective English language instruction is a positive call and welcome trend in Indian ELT. Stakeholders of non-native ELT exploit modern technological tools like YouTube channels, smartphones, Wikipedia, e-dictionaries, e-books, computers, and digital language lab software like *FluentU* in the teaching-learning of English. However, a considerable number of teachers and English learners need to be sensitized to the linguistic and academic virtues of the mass-media tools and ICT gadgets for the effective realization of the objectives of Indian ELT. The analysis of the data underlines the need to train the English faculty and students for effective integration of modern technology in their teaching and evaluation of English. It appreciates and advocates the educative use of Open Educational Resources like YouTube, subject-specific YouTube channels, computers and Smartphones for effective English instruction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Define and devise an efficient, holistic approach for non-native ELT.**

2. **Produce accessible, authentic, local need-based audio-visual study materials.**

3. **Conduct serious needs analysis of non-native English learners.**

4. **Integrate modern technology into English language teaching.**

5. **Ensure practice opportunities in the English classroom.**

6. **Recruit quality English teachers through MPSC/UPSC.**

7. **Design quality study and practice materials.**

8. **Introduce a holistic, appealing curriculum for English.**

9. **Revamp traditional methods of English Language Teaching.**

10. **Provide intensive teacher training for technology integration.**

11. **Modify exam patterns to include practical and aural-oral elements.**

12. **Address negative mindsets and attitudes towards English.**

13. **Enhance exposure to the basics of the target language.**

14. **Use YouTube creatively for effective teaching-learning of English.**

15. **Build learners' confidence and positive self-image.**

16. **Combat anglophobia and glossophobia.**

17. **Develop motivation and passion for English among learners.**

18. **Teachers should act as resourceful facilitators and personality development coaches.**

19. **Be rational about the role and use of the mother tongue.**

20. **Design an exclusive Indigenous Indian ELT model.**

Addressing these recommendations and the findings can significantly improve non-native Indian ELT. Serious note of the findings and recommendations and the right response by the stakeholders of the non-native Indian ELT shall change the face and results of the non-native Indian ELT. To further enhance English Language Teaching (ELT) in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, several additional strategies can be implemented. Establishing regular workshops and training sessions for teachers can promote collaboration and professional development, ensuring they stay updated on the latest ELT methodologies and technologies. Interactive online platforms and gamified learning environments can boost student engagement and retention. Encouraging parental involvement by providing resources and strategies can support English learning at home. Peer learning programs, where advanced learners mentor beginners, can foster a supportive community. Localized content creation, reflecting the local culture, can make learning more relevant and relatable. Organizing language immersion camps or exchange programs can provide students with real-life practice opportunities. Reforming assessments to focus on practical language use and real-life communication skills, rather than rote

memorization, is essential. Incorporating multimedia resources like films, music, and podcasts can expose students to diverse accents, dialects, and cultural contexts. Implementing a robust feedback mechanism will allow students to provide input on teaching methods and curriculum effectiveness. Finally, promoting creative activities such as storytelling, drama, and role-playing can make learning more engaging and help students develop confidence in using English

REFERENCES

Aslam, Mohammad. Teaching of English. Cambridge University Press India Pvt. Ltd. 2008.

B. Saleem. A Companion to Teaching of English. Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, 2001.

Bao, Y.Y., & Liu, S. Z. (2021). The Influence of Affective Factors in Second Language Acquisition on Foreign Language Teaching. Open Journal of Social Science, 9, 463-470.

Geetha Nagaraj. English Language Teaching Approaches, Methods and Techniques. Orient Longman Hyderabad, 1996.

Gosh, R.N., Das, B.K., Sastri, H.N.L. Introduction to English Language Teaching, (Vol-III). Madras; Oxford University Press, 1977.

Gaybulloyevna, GulnoraAndullayeva. Personality Factors in Language Learning. Scholars Press. 2021.

Patil, Z. N. (Ed.). Innovations in English Language Teaching: Voices from the Indian classroom. Orient Black Swan, 2012.

Jalaludin, Mohammad. Need Analysis of ELT Students at AMU Aligarh. LAP Lambert Academic Publishing, 2016.

Kalia, Pooja. English Language Teaching in India: Trends and Challenges. Research Journal of English Language and Literature, Vol. 3.3, 2015.

Long, H. Michael (Ed.). Second Language Needs Analysis. Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Tickoo, M.L. Teaching and Learning English. Orient Blackswan, 2013.

Yardi, V.V. Teaching English in India Today. Saket Prakashan, Aurangabad, 2009.

Dr.Tukaram Rangrao Hapgunde, Associate Professor, Department of English, Adarsh Education Society's Arts, Commerce & Science Hingoli, (MS)

Rajesh K Yadav, Assistant Professor,Department of English,VSSD College, Kanpur