



STATUS OF SPOKEN ENGLISH IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS OF RAJASTHAN

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Abstract

A language is a systematic means of communication by the use of sounds or conventional symbols. It is system of communicating ideas and feelings using sounds, gesture, signs or marks. Rajasthan is basically a Hindi speaking state, in government offices and schools Hindi is main language, very few people use written and spoken form of English. Those who use English are not efficiently using it. Therefore it is an urgent requirement to study status of English pronunciation and also to suggest strategies for improving English standard (Pronunciation) in government schools of Rajasthan, here people speaks many languages and dialects. So, the correct pronunciation of the words is a major problem in teaching second language because the pronunciation is greatly influenced by the regional language and dialect. The sounds of words which are not used in the mother tongue, is difficult to pronounce correctly. The teacher should provide appropriate situation and opportunities to the students by imitating the words, by using lingua phone and language laboratory, drill techniques in classroom the skill of correct pronunciation can be developed among the students. This paper reflects the prevailing condition and status of English pronunciation in government schools of Rajasthan.

Keywords: Language, Communication, Second Language, Pronunciation, Dialects.



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English communication is an essential prerequisite for anyone aspiring to enter a prestigious job in a public or private undertaking. Therefore individual who lacks the desired fluency is often deprived of lucrative vocational and professional opportunities even if they are otherwise competent and displays the right approach to the written aspects of the language. This would seems quite disappointing when we realize that in our country only a handful of young men and women can claim reasonably fair competence in conversational English.

The English language plays a significant role in connecting the whole world via internet as it has become global language now. If any new advancement, incidents, disasters or innovation happens it may reach to whole world within seconds as it all happens with the help of English language.

According to University Education Commission 1948, "If under sentimental urge we give up English, we would cut ourselves from the living stream of ever growing knowledge .Unable to have access to this knowledge our standard of scholarship would fast deteriorate and our participation in the world movements of thought would be negligible. Its effect would be

disastrous for our political life, for living nations must move with the times and must respond quickly to the challenges of their surroundings. English is the only means of preventing our isolation from the world and we will act unwisely if we allow ourselves to be enveloped in the folds of a dark curtain of ignorance. Our students who are undergoing training at schools, which will admit them either to university or vocation must acquire sufficient mastery of English to give themselves an access to the treasures of knowledge.”

The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) emphasized the significance the English language as ‘Our youth should acquire knowledge from all sources and contribute their share to its expansion and development. In the attainment of this objective, study English is bound to play an important part’.

The Chief Minister Conference (1961) describes “English should be taught along with Hindi in order to get outside affairs for all India services, Engineering, Medical and Forest department.”

We can make use of English to promote our worldwide and spiritual heritage through globe. English has thus become an effective means of promoting Indian view of life and strengthening our educational and cultural identity in the world.

Rajasthan is basically a Hindi speaking state, in government offices and schools Hindi is main language, very few people use written and spoken form of English. Those who use English are not efficiently using it. Therefore it is an urgent requirement to make effort in improving English standard in schools of Rajasthan govt. Rajasthan is state of many languages and dialects. So, the correct pronunciation of the words is a major problem in teaching second language because the pronunciation is greatly influenced by the regional language and dialect. The sounds of words which are not used in the mother tongue, is difficult to pronounce correctly. The teacher should provide appropriate situation and opportunities to the students by imitating the words, by using lingua phone and language laboratory, drill technique in classroom the skill of correct pronunciation can be developed among the students.

The importance of English language at secondary level is for attainment of basic proficiency and development of language as an instrument for knowledge acquisition. English is important not only as a subject but also as a medium of instruction.

Proficiency in spoken English cannot be acquired without adequate theoretical knowledge, training and practice, all put together. This is almost true for all languages, but especially in English. One important reason being the apparent discrepancies between the spoken and written form of words, which is between spelling and pronunciation. Glaring and ridiculous errors usual creep in due to inevitable consequences of mother tongue interference and over generalization. Some words are frequently mispronounced by even advanced level students. For example women, procedure comb, tour, buries data, suggestion, digestion, drought etc. However, the pronunciation of isolated words, although important, does not cover the entire range of spoken English. From the view point of connected (or overall) speech, the supra segmental features such as stress, intonation and rhythm are much more important.

One important reason behind the problem of pronunciation in Isolated English words in the fact that phonetic transcription, which deserves teaching at the high school level, is not taught at any level in school, colleges or not even in universities.

English learning is not just a matter of acquiring the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing but it consists of developing a communicative competence where these skills are often used for transaction of knowledge.

Fluency and accuracy in conversational English seem to be an exclusive privilege of those having the background of exceptionally good public schools. The average students never find himself in an environment, either at home or at school, where in familiarity with conversational English can be developed to any extent. The scenario in government schools of Rajasthan is not up to mark with regard to English spoken as well as written aspect is concerned. In the present paper efforts has been made to show the prevailing conditions English language in government schools of Rajasthan.

Status of English in Government Schools

Teachers in government schools usually give emphasis on developing reading and writing skills, very less attention is given on listening and speaking .Teachers mainly focus on reading from textbooks, adhere only to written words and printed instructions, neither Teacher discusses beyond text books nor students interested in extra reading or any other information. Reading is the major activity conducted during teaching English, very less attention is given to correct pronunciation. Not only students but even few teachers also commit glaring mistakes while pronouncing Basic English words. Apart from reading,

teachers ask questions based on text, which are answered by only few students. Due to lack of self-confidence Students hesitate to speak in English this leads to lack of class interaction. Teachers explain the content only with the help of mother tongue substitutes. All this leads to lack of interest, confidence and command over English language among government school students as well as teachers.

- All teachers teaching English need to be trained in the use of phonetics, morphology and syntax, as clarity and knowledge are two important aspects for correct pronunciation vocabulary and sentence structure.
- In Government schools, teachers teaching English are not confident and comfortable in using English. They neither are aware of the importance of transaction of lessons in English nor are they equipped to do so. In service training to government school teachers in linguistics should be compulsory aspect after every two three years.

The teachers teaching English generally ask students to open the books and start with reading. Although they have to maintain records of daily dairy but steps of lesson planning and teaching aids are rarely used by them. The aim is basically to complete syllabus. Homework at the end of the class is generally given in commanding tone by teachers.

- In Government schools speaking in English were hardly seen, usually teacher explains by using mother tongue substitutes and translation method. Students at government schools are unable to communicate in English; they had not achieved desired level of English competencies. Even teachers in government schools lack confidence in English communication. There selection procedure is basically based on merit exam which does not test the communication skills of would be teachers.
- The main reasons for this lack of desired competency in English language is poor environment of Home, parent's illiteracy lack of position, attitude and seriousness in teachers towards teaching English language.

In Government schools generally English is taught by using mother tongue or regional language only few teachers use English substitutes. English teachers are not using English language any time in the entire period they give reasons that students would not be able to understand the lesson taught in English Medium and use of mother tongue is necessary. According to them, if they speak in English throughout the lesson, student do not understand anything and then it will defeat the very purpose of teaching a second language for the first

time to first generation learners. Hence translation of English words, phrases, sentences in the language of convenience help students to comprehend the content. Grammar cum translation method is commonly used in these schools.

- Teachers generally wrote difficult words phrases etc on black board and used the same to make the children write, practice speaking and listening skills. Teachers ask students read aloud individually or in chorus. Very less effort is given to improve their pronunciation. Sometimes even teachers are not aware about correct pronunciation of few words
- In Government schools speaking skills of teachers in terms of pronunciation, intonation, appropriate pauses in speaking etc. were observed to be unsatisfactory. This incorrect content their by transferred to students unknowingly which leads to vicious circle of errors.
- One of the most serious drawbacks of the present system of teaching English in this country is that the spoken aspects of the language are not treated separately and intensively, either in schools or in colleges and universities.
- The devastating aspects of Government school English teaching are widely discussed in this paper, which required urgent attention of teachers and teacher educators in order to bring positive changes in language learning among Government schools. Keeping NCF 2005 in mind, teacher educators and teacher should focus in developing skills in student related to teaching of English. Apart from reading and writing, weight age should be given to listening and speaking in order to develop required confidence in students to face present society requirements.

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