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**Problems faced by Gujarati speaking students to learn English as a Second Language**

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### Introduction

English remains as a second language for those who are born and brought up in Gujarat. And for years, learning and speaking English in Gujarati society is taken as something which is uncommon. A Gujarati who can speak English is always looked at through different colored glasses. It is mainly because of many reasons and one of those is English. Especially in some parts of Gujarat, is considered as a Language of elite and 'Educated' class of society. It is mostly seen as a language of Educational world. Like other states of India, in Gujarat English is taken as the ladder of success or something which can make career. Along with this, it has also been remarkably observed that English is unexceptionally found very difficult in Gujarati society. Craze of learning English in Gujarati youth has given high a rise to uncountable Spoken English Coaching Classes and institutions which claim to be *the* only who can teach English. Moreover, such a blind Bandwagon has also completely commercialized the idea of teaching and learning English; as a result of which English seems to have been a tool of making money rather than a language of high literature, knowledge, information, trade and technology. Secondly, in Gujarat, the learners can be widely categorized depending on their purpose of learning English. There are students who (hardly) complete their graduation and then run to learn English for their own reasons. On the other hand there are learners who want to learn English and when they are asked reason/s, the reply is very weird and obscure. On the other hand, there are students who want only that much English which can help them to pass competitive Exams which in reality have nothing to do with English as an international language. Almost all who want to learn English find it difficult to speak English fluently because of one than more reasons. This research paper will try to discuss those problems in detail with some possible remedies. One of the reasons of Gujaratis' poor English is the way they have learnt English during their schools and colleges and the way English is taught to them. In the method most of the time taken in use by the school or college teachers, no uniformity is seen. Secondly, there is a sea difference in Gujarati and English language grammar which is hardly taught comparatively or learnt comparatively. There is a vast difference in Gujarati language and dialect. If English grammar is taught using translation or indirect method, there must be perfection in Gujarati grammar too while teaching English grammar which is doubtful. It is but natural that no additional training is needed to learn first language so in Gujarat, people need not be trained to learn first language. One of the most interfering factors which pull people from learning English is variety of Gujarati and many other regional dialects spoken across Gujarat. The grammar of English and other dialects including Gujarati language falls quite different from each other. And English is not taught in schools keeping this variety and difference in mind.



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This paper aims to churn all issues and reach better solutions for present and upcoming students as well as teachers.

### History of English Language Teaching in India

It is beyond dispute that English has now become an only ladder to taste success. It has not only been a global language or lingua franca but also a language of Business, Technology and Academics. It links the people of end to end world. It is therefore that more than last five decades, English is taken as one of the most significant disciplines in academics from KG to PG. These are the reasons why English is the most often taught as a second language across world. In India, English is taken not only as a language of Inter-state but also Intra-state communication. English, specifically in the context of Indian academics, is taken both as an individual discipline as well as a common medium to teach and learn all other disciplines. While India is walking with the world shoulder to shoulder, it is but inevitable for our young graduates, engineers, technocrats and scientists to learn speaking and writing correct English.

In the current and upcoming era of advanced technology and science, interdisciplinary studies can never be avoided and the easiest way is none other than English. India, having realized this fact so closely, has declared English language as inseparable language and introduced it as one of the most significant subjects in Indian academics. There is a big of number of English medium schools across India besides the schools belonging to Central Board which already run in English compulsorily. This shows how India has taken English as a language of Knowledge and Technology and not as a language of "Britishers".

Dr. M.F. Patel and Praveen M. Jain mention in their book "ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (METHODS, TOOLS & TECHNIQUES)",

"English plays a key role in our educational system and national life. The British introduced English in our educational system in order to produce cheap clerks for their colonial administration and to produce, what Lord Macaulay called: U a class of people, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste~ in opinions, in morals and in intellect." So long as the British ruled over India, English could not be displaced from the position of predominance given it by Lord Macaulay. British came here as traders and their first, attention was on trade. At first they did not concentrate their attention on teaching of English. English



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helped the growth of nationalism which ultimately freed India from foreign fetters.”

### Problems faced by Gujarati Students to learn English

However Gujarat is the state that has the massive contribution in India's growth in almost all the areas like academics, business, technology, science, agriculture among others. Literacy and education is something which is taken highly serious chapter of life. Especially parents never compromise in matter of their kids' education and career. Moreover language English is also looked at something which can swiftly boost the career and helps to earn recognition. Therefore parents as well as students haunt and seek good teachers cum academy that can teach that can teach them quality English and this is a very positive sign. Undoubtedly, English plays a key role in building career. And parents well as students openly accept that there are many problems which stop Gujarati students to speak fluent English.

#### i) Cultural Difference

Gujarati is a completely different culture than that of English. Language as we all know play a key role to build any culture. Though Gujarati students have tremendous skill and strength to learn English and they do it too passionately, there are some cultural aspects which become obstacles for our students to learn English (as a second language) on an initial stage. Especially for those of Gujarati students who are coming from completely rural or agrarian society. Most of the Gujarati families belong to villages and they have migrated to cities in last five decades. Their forefathers use to be either farmers or rich businessmen. Their kids migrated to cities bound to their own culture and language of course. When these parents admitted their kids in English medium schools, it created a big chaos. Instead of learning more than one language, the students found lost amid dialects and languages. Most parents on the other hand tagged a batch of so called International Schools on their kids uniform just a part of craze or imitation.

English Language particularly in Gujarat has tremendously suffered mainly because historical and social reasons. Gujarat as a state came into existence on May 1, 1960 as a result of reorganization Act. Then people like L R Desai and Minister of Education Late Shri Hitendra Desai discussed the role of English Teaching in the then time. Gujarat soon after independence got such leaders who staunchly followed Gandhi and his ideology which advocated abandoning all that is non-Indian including language. Gandhi as such had no personal grudge for English as a language but he adhered to the idea of using indigenous language in place of English.

#### ii) Lack of Authenticity in CRT



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CRT stands for Class Room Teaching. Most schools in Gujarat prefer Grammar Translation Method to teach English as a second language. This method promotes to teach English to the students by the prescribed syllabus which contains stories, passages, and comprehensions including some very essential Grammar topics. Even having learnt English by such prescribed syllabus, Gujarati students face much difficulty all in speaking, writing and reading quality English because of many reasons. One of the reasons is Lack of Authenticity in CRT. This means that the examples to teach Grammar are not real life. Mostly they are handmade and artificial. This is why students find it quite different when they happen to speak or make use of English as a language in their real or day to day life. English required to be spoken in offices, public places, institutions, class rooms, society and many other places is absolutely different from the English taught in the school's class rooms. Moreover, in order to attain Communication Skills in English language (or any other language), nonverbal signals are equally important. Such nonverbal aspects are never taught to the students during schooling.

### iii) Linguistic Differences of Gujarati and English languages

Grammar Translation method is the most common in Gujarat to teach English to the Gujarati students from. Both Gujarati and English are absolutely different from linguistic point of view.

- a) Gujarati is a language where every letter represents its own sound; whereas in English there are 26 letters and 44 sounds which is situational and variable. In Gujarati the letter 'ઙ' represents the sound 'ઙ' but in English 'c' represents /k/ in Chemistry and /ch/ in Chair and there are endless such examples. This is the reasons why many Gujarati students feel difficulty in English articulation. As phonetics is never taught to the students in an ideal way and time.
- b) In Gujarati Grammar and Tenses, the subjective inflection changes with the tense and number; where as in English only verb form does.

#### Example:

હું ક્રિકેટ રમું છું.

I play cricket.

હું ક્રિકેટ રમી રહ્યો છું.

I am playing cricket.

મેં ક્રિકેટ રમેલ છે. / હું ક્રિકેટ રમેલ છું.

I have played cricket.



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તેઓ ક્રિકેટ રમે છે

They play cricket.

તેઓ ક્રિકેટ રમી રહ્યા છે

They are playing cricket

તેઓએ ક્રિકેટ રમી લીધું છે.

They have played cricket.

c) Gujarati language is quite different from Gujarati dialect. Sadly this difference is hardly felt while learning English as a second language. Through Grammar Translation Method, target language is learnt by the help of source language. Source language and not dialect. One of the reasons of poor English of Gujarati students is their poor Gujarati. Most students have Gujarati dialect in their subconscious mind and they try to learn English language and consequently they fail to learn correct English.

Example:

There is a difference between હું જાઉં છું and હું જઈ રહ્યો છું. English Grammar clearly shows difference between I go and I am going. Most Gujarati students fail to understand this difference simply because the knowledge between Gujarati Tenses and English is poor. If the students know the difference between Simple Present Tense and Progressive Present Tense in Gujarati, the possibilities of erring in English Tenses almost go down. On one hand, Grammar Translation Method has many benefits. It is comparatively easy and result productive; whereas on the other hand it takes students' capacity down of learning second language without the help of first. Moreover, it also stops the learner to think in the target language.

Moreover, Dr. M.F. Patel and Praveen M. Jain mention in their book "ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING (METHODS, TOOLS & TECHNIQUES)", below linguistic problems are mentioned,

- Gujarati is syllable rhymed language while English is stressed rhymed language.
- In Gujarati, the spoken language is closed to its script whereas in English, spoken language differ in its form.
- The word order in both language differ in form; in Gujarati it is SCV, SOY, or SA V whereas in English SVO, SVC, SVA.
- The Gujarati is scientific language while English is not because in Gujarati there is one to one correspondence between sound and its letters, in English 26 letters represent 44 sounds.



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- Syllabic formation in Gujarati is different from English. In Gujarati it is V, CV, CVC, CCVC, CCCVCC, etc. So Syllables are not easily recognized by learner.

### iv) Pedagogical Problems

It has been observed that in Gujarat, there are many pedagogical problems due to no clean policy for Teaching English as a Second Language. It is the biggest tragedy that in some schools, qualification of English teachers is also doubtful. In addition to this, *Teaching English* has been highly commercialized under the cover of institutionalization and liberalization. Good English teachers are rare as good English Schools are rare. Earlier most of the English medium schools were run by Christian teachers drink English language with their cup of tea but now any second person irrespective of required qualification becomes an English teacher and as a result students' English remains under a big question mark. On the other hand, Government or Educational Board does not seem to take some serious action to improve the level of English of our students as well as teachers. English is taken as a subject and taught as a subject. In certain government school where recruitment of English teacher is awaited, English almost remains untouched or out subject teacher teaches English. Such a teacher who does not know the basic parts of speech or articles' rules.

### Conclusion

This leads us to conclude that the journey of ELT in Gujarat which historically started long back in pre independence era and perpetuates till date need to be ideally modified. Not only in pedagogy of ELT but change is required also in the aptitude of both teachers as well as students. Moreover ESP – English for Specific Purpose ought to be seriously and systematically taken into consideration. English as a language cannot be prescribed and taught with a common structure and syllabus. Every discipline has its own register of language and keeping that in mind, syllabus for English should be designed. In most Universities, English is given to the students just for the first semester. In GTU for example, both in Diploma as well as Degree Engineering courses, English is given to the students as a subject just for one semester. This raises doubt if students really learn Communication Skill in English. Having shown such problems and gaps, this research opens up the gates of further work for the next generation of teachers as well as students.

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