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**Teaching English to the Gujarati Speaking Students: Problems and Remedies**

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### Abstract

The very nature of Research is to beget new questions rather than solving old ones. Piles of research are getting dust in the shelves which talk in abundance about English Language Teaching across the globe; nevertheless not yet the question seems to have been perfectly answered. Teaching English Language to the non-English speakers is even more polemic and therefore demands a great deal of attentive research. New trends and ways are flowing down the wild plants these days which (instead of easing English teaching) baffle the teachers. One needs to be very specific so far as teaching English to the speakers of other languages is concerned. Therein another very significant question rises which is: whether the first language helps the students to learn English as a second language or not. Some languages like Hindi, Urdu and Gujarati share common grammar; whereas the same languages do not share grammar with languages like English and French. Therefore a peculiar pedagogy is required to teacher English to the learners whose first language happens to be Gujarati. Since the post colonial period, ELT in India has got a tremendous attention and special place in Indian academics. Gujarat, as one of the most leading states of India, has come up as a hub of business and academics both on national and international canvas. Therefore the Gujarati students, for last three decades, have realized an urgent need of learning English for one or the other reason. However in Gujarati medium schools too English is taught as a second language (using a stereotype way of teaching), Gujarati students soon after their higher secondary education or/and graduation chase spoken English classes to learn English. Very few students are such who prefer to join special courses like B.A., M.A. or M.Phil. in English and attain good command over English. Eventually the same students tend to be the teachers of English and start teaching English as a second language in the same way they had learned. Though there are the students who need to learn English for altogether different reasons. In USA alone, more than 90 per cent non-English students get enroll for different courses which raise the need of pedagogy for the American teachers who are supposed to teach English or other subjects in English to the speakers of other language(s). This paper exclusively tries to investigate the proper way of teaching English to the Gujarati speaking students.

### Lead in

Teaching English in Gujarat has occupied a huge place for more than one reason. Gujarat, as universally acknowledged, has become a hub of business and education in last two decades. Most population which was during post independence period was depended on agriculture has now settled as business people in different places of Gujarat, outside Gujarat and overseas as well. Therefore the typical Gujaratis who were



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somewhere in past centuries were known as just farmers have now dominated almost all the sectors. These words suffice to assert that Gujarat has nominated itself as state which symbolizes tremendous success in almost all the fields at national and international platform. The time has gone when the Gujarati speaking students and businessmen were thinking to be confined to Gujarat only and they have stretched their boundaries up to no limits. Such a progressed scenario of the state has also raised the need in people to learn new skills and be updated to run with time. As we all know that the language which can be called the lifeblood and bridging link between the world and the individual is none other than English. Therefore teaching and learning English as a second language in Gujarat is under the limelight for last more than a decade. To link with the world at large in any field, learning common language is the prime need which can never be ignored. In that sense, English in India has no more remained a language of Britishers now. Rather it has become a window to world. English is taught and learnt in all the states of India mainly for academic and business purpose and not just to showcase the knowledge of foreign language. So the belief that Indian people are learning English still under the influence of Macaulay is closer to extinction.

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 helped the growth of nationalism which ultimately freed India from foreign fetters. (English Language Teaching, 2008: 2)

Indian has seen the time when the Indian people especially young students could occupy place in any job only if they knew English. Fortunately, the time is gone now and the Indian the perspective of Indian people towards English has absolutely changed.

### Teaching English as a Second Language in Gujarat

M.Vijayalakshmi and Dr. Manchi Sarat Babu mention in their research paper entitled *A Brief History of English Language Teaching in India*,

“English has a status of associate language, but in fact it is the most important language of India. After Hindi it is the most commonly spoken language in India and probably the most read and written language in India. English in India is used not only for communicating with the outside world, but also for inter-state and intrastate communication. English symbolizes in Indians’ minds,



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better education, better culture and higher intellect. Indians who know English often mingle it with Indian languages in their conversation. It is also usual among Indians to abruptly move to speak fluent English in the middle of their conversations. English also serves as the communicator among Indians who speak different languages. English is very important in some systems – legal, financial, educational and business in India.” (2014:1)

ELT in Gujarat is normally looked at from mono angle which is most misleading. Since English has now occupied a permanent place in Gujarati academics too, ELT in Gujarat requires to be relooked and reformulized. Gujarat is the state where even the regional language Gujarati differently spoken at different places. For example, Sorathi Gujarati is different from the Gujarati which is spoken at South Gujarat and so is the case with the places like Kachch, Ahmedabad and Surat. Thus the Gujarati spoken in all over the Gujarat seem to be quite heterogeneous; whereas English is supposedly considered as homogenous language which is not the case. There are several areas where the English teachers need to be careful.

### Problems faced by Gujarati Students and Teachers

Dr. M.F. Patel and Praveen M. Jain enlist some problems faced by Gujarati speaking students which are catchy.

We know that Gujarati is second language for those who have brought up in the Gujarat. It is taught as second language in Gujarat state. It has been observed from the society of Gujarat that the people or Gujarati learner find this language very difficult. Why, the Gujarati learner feels it too difficult. Naturally to learn English needs a boost, an internal motivation to learn another language. As we know that first language is learnt naturally. No any special training is given to learn mother tongue while to learn second or foreign language the special training is given to Gujarati speaking learner. The important question is that why Gujarati speaking learner of English find it difficult to learn English. Gujarati speaking learner are learning almost in vacuum. The Gujarat is one of a state of India. Gujarati is spoken in Gujarat. It is used every where, in all government department and other department. The Gujarati is widely spoken and there are many dialectical varieties within. The code in Gujarati is based on Indian language, Sanskrit. From the throughout studies in the field of linguistic Sanskrit is found the most scientific language. So naturally the Gujarati is also one of scientific language of the world. The Gujarati has its own speech and script and Gujarati speaking people have mastered it. It is very difficult to find the subsidiary environment using another language among Gujaratis. Now we see that which difficulties are faced by Gujarati speaking learner.



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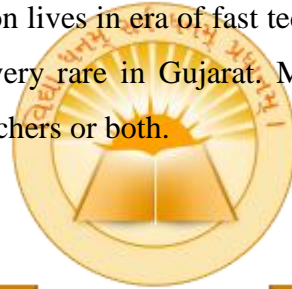
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1. Linguistic Problem
2. Social and Political Problem
3. Pedagogical Problem

(English Language Teaching, 2008: 21)

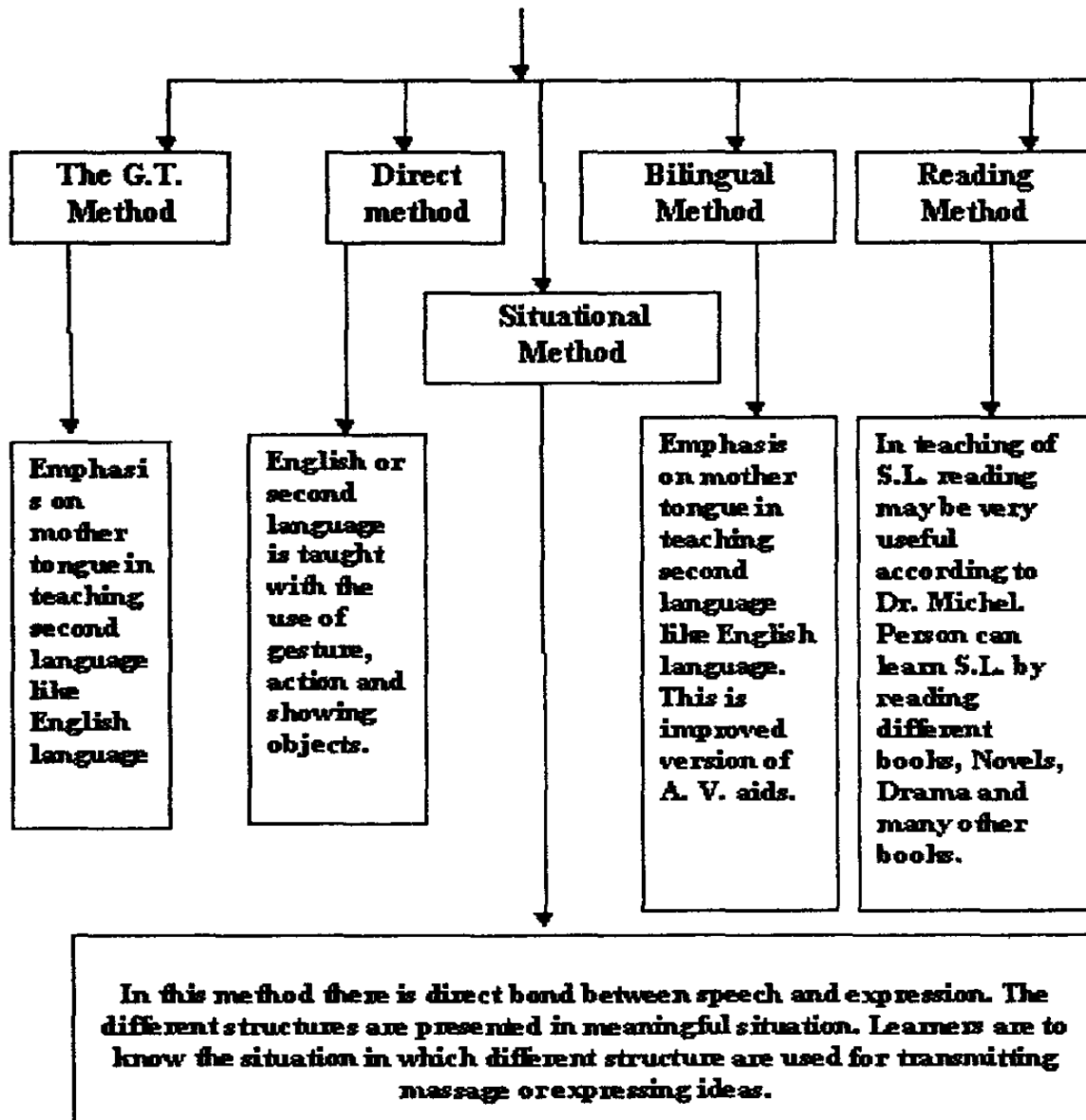
Mostly Gujarati students are found to learn English language in assistance of Gujarati language. Teachers to teach English using Grammar Translation method. Nevertheless Gujarati and English fall arduously different from each other in Grammar, culture, literature and many other ways. “English as a second language (ESL) teaching and learning has not much for decades. The majority of ESL courses are taught the same way and millions of hardworking learners still cannot speak English.” (West) In Gujarati medium schools, vocabulary

Most of the students find it difficult to make correct pronunciation of English words based on Gujarati script. Teaching Grammar has also become questionable which is simply based on some tentative B.Ed. methods and techniques. Present generation lives in era of fast technology, therefore it is but must to modify the age-old teaching methods which is very rare in Gujarat. Most of the Government primary and high schools lack either required gadgets or teachers or both.



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## TYPES OF TEACHING METHODS



Patl and Jain, 2014 : 71

### Remedies and Conclusion

No remedy is final remedy so far teaching English as a second language is concerned yet some efforts are needed. Here are some suggestions this research prescribes.

- English teachers from KG to PG should compulsorily be taken to the teaching coaching programs keeping the target group in mind. Anyone before giving charge of a teachers must be trained keeping the ESP and TESOL in focus.



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- Child acquires mother language without any formal teaching or training. English teacher who teach English as a second language must know whether or not the first language helps the students to learn second language.
- All English teachers should be associated with different types of research programs of FLA and SLA. The research works they do must reflect and assist in their class room teaching. The result of classroom teachers must be observed and supervised.
- Examination and assessment system from High school to Post Graduation must give due importance to the oral English.
- Number of conferences and seminar take place on ELT every year and the researchers come up with extremely innovative ideas of recent trends of teaching English but whether or not these ideas are actually implemented in class room is still s subject of research.
- Age old teaching methodologies need to be abolished and replaced by the latest technology. Implementation of CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning)
- Some kind of monitoring and supervision is must exclusively for English Language Teaching.

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