RESEARCH ARTICLE

ADMINISTRATIVE INTERVENTIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO COLLEGE STUDENTS IN REWARI, SOUTH HARYANA, INDIA
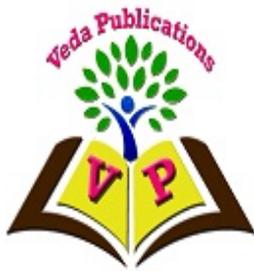
Pratibha

Assistant Professor of English, Kishanlal Public College, Rewari, Haryana, India
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2266-1796
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ABSTRACT

English undisputedly plays a very important role in the educational sector of India, because of the demands of the employment sector. Higher education sector is no exception of this trend and hence not oblivious to the fact that students need to study English compulsorily at college level. However, in semi urban and rural districts like Rewari, situated in the south of the Indian state Haryana, this compulsive prescription of English comes with its own unique challenges. This paper is an attempt to explore the approach of the educational administration towards teaching of English in the colleges (both government and government aided) of Rewari, as well as the systemic interventions and the ground level challenges, and pedagogical issues faced by the teachers. This study adopts a qualitative and conceptual approach, using an explanatory analysis of existing literature, policy documents, classroom observations and secondary resources and data to explore the administrative and pedagogical problems in teaching of English in semi urban areas. The paper also studies curriculum alignment, faculty appointment, training and development, the Hindi-English medium transition challenge, assessment methods, infrastructure and technological support. The discoveries underline a need for the context sensitive policies and administration which attempts to bridge the gap between the aspiration and implementation in achieving of the ambitious curriculum objectives. The conclusion offers suggestions and recommendations for amendments in the policies and community sensitive strategies to teach English to the college students of Rewari, Haryana.

Keywords: *English, English Teaching, Education, Language Policy, English Pedagogy.*

INTRODUCTION

If there is anything paradoxical or ironic in the higher education space in south of Haryana, it is the compulsory prescription of English because while it is globally recognized that English is a mandate requisite for upward mobility in one's life and career, it remains inaccessible to a large segment of students in smaller towns, sub urban and semi urban areas like Rewari, a district in southern Haryana. This small city is an amalgam of urban and rural demographics, and this is a certain embodiment of the contradictory nature of English teaching in this part of the world. The major chunk of the college students of the district come from Hindi Medium schooling background and combat English formally only as a part of their prescribed college curriculum. Administration and teachers in higher education institutes navigate a treacherous path trying to negotiate gaps in policy and implementation, changing dynamics of the job market and slower pace of the policy makers to match the steps of the global scenario, socio-cultural impediments and resistance and a shift in student aspirations, systemic bottlenecks amidst emerging opportunities in the field of English etc. Further sections of this paper analyze how administrative and pedagogical frameworks interact in the overarching space of English classrooms in Rewari colleges with an emphasis on factors like a) curriculum-policy gaps, b) faculty development, training and administrative support c) assessment system d) infrastructure and use of technology in teaching English d) socio-economic and socio-cultural divide e) employability and English proficiency etc.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In India, English became a part of the lives of masses owing to its colonial legacy. Although it has been a favorable situation keeping in mind the fact the linkage of the knowledge of English with employability, social capital, global acceptance etc. but simultaneously the policy implementation has been largely problematic and stratified. It's a great paradoxical fact that English functions as an aspirational as well as an alienating force in Indian higher education system. Krishna Kumar (1991) observes that "English in India stands for mobility and privilege; but it also signifies exclusion, failure and inadequacy for the vast majority of learners."(29) In regions like Rewari, this dual aspect of English becomes more pronounced, as students hail from rural, Hindi dominant backgrounds but ironically, they must compete in an English dominant academic and job market. Ramanathan (2005) argues that the students from rural background have double disadvantage—by their restricted access to English language from early years and secondly by the lack of pedagogical Ramanathan (2005) argues that rural learners are doubly disadvantaged—first by their limited access to English from an early age, and second by an appalling dearth of pedagogical innovation at college level. She writes : "The problem is not merely that rural students don't know English ; it is that our education system has never imagined a pedagogical route that meets them where they are." (102). This applies acutely to colleges in Haryana, where a strange uniformity in the syllabi overlooks the regional disparity in knowledge and preparedness.

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As far as the policies and administrative limitations are concerned, there have been studies that have come down heavily on the top-down nature of education policy in India. Sarangapani (2003) avers that : "Local realities are rarely taken into account in the design and delivery of curriculum, especially in higher education." (50) In Haryana, government and private colleges have not been granted colleges autonomy to adapt syllabi or initiate or run other kinds of programs without approval from the Directorate of Higher Education. This administrative rigidity limits innovation in imparting of English language instruction.

Teacher training and institutional capacity also remains under the scanner when the relevant discussions are held. According to the National Education Policy 2020 there is an urgent need to invest in teacher capacity-building, especially in languages, through continuous professional development and pedagogical support. However, implementation in districts like Rewari remains uneven. English faculty is invariably assigned large classes with minimal technological support, in complete absence of a structured training program. As Mahboob (2010) avers : "English language teaching cannot be improved by focusing only on materials or testing; it must include structural changes at the level of institutions and administration." There is enough research to show that technology can help tab the resource gaps, but only if integrated in a systematic manner. Warschauer and Healey (1998) state: "Technology will not transform the language classroom by itself; it must be embedded in a coherent pedagogical and administrative framework." Colleges in districts like Rewari have digital resources which exist only in name but are not put to use due to lack of administrative planning and technical support. In terms of gender, caste and class also English can be a tricky terrain for students - a place of both ambitiousness and supreme alienation. Annamalai (2005) writes : "The spread of English makes us think and establishes the inevitable hierarchies of regional societies of India unless the pedagogical innovations at the local level initiate challenging these rigid structures." This is particularly true for Rewari, where there are so many female students who face familial or community-level stereotypes which that impact their learning and access to English learning resources.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

This paper takes a qualitative and conceptual path to find out the challenges involved in teaching English at the college level in Rewari, Haryana. There is no reliance on any kind of fieldwork data, rather this research is based on mindful engagement with extant scholarship and literature, policy documents, institutional records and classroom observations. The main factions of the research are:

a. A wide range of literature dealing with English language teaching in rural and semi-urban India. These studies are greatly insightful into various structural gaps and routine impediments that the students and teachers have to face in contexts like Rewari.

b. Theoretical framework from sociolinguistics and education policy critical studies which help us uncover how issues of power,

language, and access contribute significantly in classrooms and institutions, invariably beneath the usual surface of formal syllabi and curriculum.

c. Larger systemic factors pertaining to designing the syllabi, training of teachers, exam preparation, support of the institution etc., and various socio-economic and sociocultural factors — influencing how English is taught and experienced by learners in the region.

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is based on the two very important theories complementary to each other : Sociolinguistic Theory and A Critical Analysis of Policy in Education. Together, this amalgamated theoretical lens helps discover the complexities of English language teaching in a semi-urban space like Rewari at institutional, cultural and linguistic level. The sociolinguistic theory of language, power, and identity emphasizes how language is deeply entrenched in the dynamics of social structures, cultural identity along with power relations. In multilingual contexts land spaces ike India, English is not merely a language of communication but a marker of social mobility, aspiration, and inequality. As Pennycook (1994) argues in *The Cultural Politics of English as an International Language* that learning is always rooted in various broader structures like social, political, and economic forces. In Rewari, where most college students hail from Hindi-medium or rural schooling backgrounds, English is majorly seen and felt as a 'linguistic gatekeeper'—a language that gives access to golden opportunities but also creates a psychological and pedagogical impediment.

This dynamic calls for an administrative understanding that goes beyond syllabi completion to recognize English as a social phenomenon. Critical Policy Analysis in Education refers to how education policies, particularly those pertaining to languages, are shaped by ideologies, some administrative and bureaucratic hierarchies, and also at various political forces at macro level conveniently ignoring the micro realities. Ball (1994) says in *Education Reform : A Critical and Post-structural Approach* that policies are twofold : text and discussion —they together not only represent original and official intent but also display the various assumptions and silences of those in power. Applying this to the context of Haryana where policies around English language instruction are often framed at the state level with little flexibility or autonomy for colleges in districts like Rewari to adapt curricula, teaching methods, or assessment practices based on the needs of their learners. A critical analysis of the policy allows us to put under the scanner and question not only what is ordained but also what is omitted or in the actual scheme of things of teaching-learning environment. By offering a synthesis of the two theories, combining sociolinguistic insights with critical policy analysis, this paper juxtaposes the issue of English language teaching within a larger landscape of socio-administrative reality. It explains classroom challenges not merely as pedagogical gaps, but as the result of deeper disjuncture at many levels- structural, administrative and policy.

CURRICULUM AND POLICY DISCONNECT

In colleges across Haryana, the English curriculum is largely standardised. While this uniformity appears absolutely practical in theory, the classrooms reality

is different — especially in places like Rewari. Majority of students pass out from local and govt schools where English is still not a medium of instruction, or where exposure to it is limited. When the same students enter college, they are assigned a torturous English curriculum which is prescribed compulsorily with little or no attention to the fact that they might not be ready for that level of content or their level of competence in the language. Teachers often are at the receiving end that their students need more basic, rudimentary help but their hands are tied as to they do not have the freedom to modify the curriculum or introduce some crash courses or bridge courses. As a result, the teaching becomes focused on just helping students pass the exams at the end of the session and not on helping them truly learn the language. The policy suggestion could be that colleges should be allowed some fluidity to modify or adapt English teaching based on the real needs of the learners. Creating simple language support modules based at the level of the students could make a big difference.

LACK OF SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS' GROWTH

Many English teachers especially the young appointees and those who are in the infancy of their careers or working on contractual non regular basis — often feel unsupported. Training workshops, if there are any , address broader issues and not the specific ones particular to the regional challenges of teaching in rural or semi-urban areas. Having any kind of mentorship or platform where teachers can have a shared platform to express their concerns are also rare. The focus of the administrators is usually on whether the syllabus is being completed timely rather than on whether the teachers feel fully

equipped, comfortable or confident in their jobs. This negatively affects the quality of teaching in the long run. A suggestion here could be regarding regular orientations and training sessions that actually confront the micro realities of teaching English in low-exposure landscapes and space. Creation of semi structured, informal learning groups or mentorship platforms within teaching departments could offer support without needing major infrastructural paraphernalia.

THE LANGUAGE TRANSITION GAP

For many students in places like Rewari, English is a dreadful experience rather than being a subject. Throughout school, they have studied in Hindi or even local dialects like variants of Haryanvi. Then at college level too, this journey doesn't stop and owing to this background, compulsory English at college can feel equally daunting to them. Unfortunately, this is rarely acknowledged in the way curriculum is designed and prescribed. In absence of any introductory modules, or remedial teaching, there is practically no system in place to help students ease into English anno spaces where they can learn without fear and be comfortable with the language without being judged. The result is silent classrooms and intimidated students. A perpetual hesitation to answer and even ask questions- there's lack of participation on students behalf and they slowly keep losing their confidence. A policy change could be that a simple pre-semester English orientation course for the students could be organised which would give the learners a head start and more confidence in voicing their concerns probably making the rest of their college journey a smooth sail and less intimidating.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

In most colleges, the focus of English exams is on memorising answers and writing them down. Whereas the essential skills like speaking, listening comprehension, or even just the ability to express an idea clearly — take a back seat. Since these do not show up in the exams, so not much attention is given to these factors in the classroom. Teachers remain under constant pressure to derive good results, and simultaneously are often left handling large class sizes lacking time to give detailed feedback. As a result, even when students perform badly in the exams, there is no module how to improve. Changing the assessment methods even if by some percentage could improve the scenario a little. It would be more fruitful if there is an inclusion of more hands on skill base like group discussions, oral presentations, or short reflective writing tasks etc.

UNDERUSE OF TECHNOLOGY

Some colleges in Rewari have had technology inclusion in imparting of instruction like use of smart classrooms and language labs which is an encouraging development. But the practical reality is different -these resources are not always put to a good use. There is a huge challenge in maintenance of these equipment and most if the times, teachers are either not trained to use them or are not very confident regarding the same. There is a constant need for regular technological support team and a clear plan as to how to integrate technology for language teaching, and in absence of that, expensive equipment is left to eat dust in distant corners. Another untapped potential is orienting students towards the correct use of the smartphones. A simple set of administrative instructions and ensuring the presence of a tech support team in the colleges combined with basic training for teachers and students, could prove exponentially useful. Even introducing one app-based assignment per semester should be a great start.

THE ROLE OF BACKGROUND AND INEQUALITY

Most of the students in Rewari colleges are from working-class families. In fact, some are first in their family history to attend college. Female students particularly face challenges that go beyond academics — umpteen restrictions on their free mobility, limited access to resources like mobile phones and internet, and societal stereotypes and expectations like domestic chores etc that adversely affect how much time and space there is for them to study. But higher education policies are often designed as if every learner starts being at the same page which is clearly not the case. In absence of the recognition of these distinctions – there is systemic risk of leaving behind exactly learners who need the most support. A simple gathering of basic feedback on part of the college regarding social and educational backgrounds of the students, creating various categories and plan simple support interventions can go a long way. Spoken English clubs or evening language practice sessions in hostels etc could also be organised to facilitate learning.

ENGLISH AND THE JOB MARKET

English communication skills, even though basic, in today's world can open doors to many opportunities and job market. But in many Rewari colleges, there is a huge gap between learning the language skills and career preparation. There are placement cells but

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only moderate support is offered in terms of including soft skills or language support. Students complete their degrees with documents and certificates, sans the confidence to face interviews or workforce situations where communication skills are expected. There can be small beginnings on part of the college by organising seminars where industry professionals and leaders can share experiences, or by offering mock interviews in business English and help and support in and resume-writing. If also supported and coordinated by the administration, can help students see English not just as a subject but as a helpful tool for building their futures.

CONCLUSION

Teaching English in a place like Rewari's colleges integrates a lot more than just classrooms and textbooks. Curriculum design, teacher support, infrastructure, and the lived realities of students together contribute to a successful teacher learner interface. With the acknowledgement of the administration and taking steps to bridge the multifaceted gaps in instruction and learning, whether via flexibility in policy, better training, or student-cantered programs- English can cease to be an impediment, and shall instead be a stepping stone.

Suggested Policy Recommendation : A District-Level English Language Support Framework

One of the most advantageous steps the policy makers could take is to consider developing a district-level English Language Support Framework for colleges in semi-urban and rural areas like Rewari. This framework would not aim at replacing the standard curriculum but would complement it with more flexible and locally adaptable tools and support systems. It shall be a simple system to allow institutions some room to respond to actual student needs, not just policy outlines.

Key components of the policy could include: Functional English Modules at the beginning of the academic year specially designed for students who come from Hindi-medium instruction or regional-language backgrounds. The focus of these modules would not be advanced but basic- vocabulary, conversational fluency, and confidence-building rather than academic grammar or concrete and complex literary texts.

Some grant by the administration to support regular in-service training of teachers on subjects like teaching English in environments with low resources, using a pedagogy to support bilingualism effectively, and profusely integrating digital tools into language learning. There could also be some community collaborated language clubs in colleges, especially for first-generation learners and female students to promote a very healthy peer interaction in a low-pressure environment. These clubs could be initiated and run by students, with administrative facilitation and support. Assessment guidelines could be revised to suit the needs of the students locally by adding assessment components such as dialogues, interviews, or group discussions — not just end-semester exams. Some liason officers for language learning could be appointed by administration in each district, responsible for continuous monitoring of English learning outcomes, teacher training needs, and technology integration in affiliated colleges. This would ensure regular feedback and dynamic policy adjustment at the district level.

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