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2026**RESEARCH ARTICLE****ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING IN THE CONTEMPORARY CLASSROOM: CHALLENGES AND NEW POSSIBILITIES****Dr. Dandu Swamy***Associate Professor, Dept. of English, Girraj Government College (A), Nizamabad, Telangana, India*

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54513/JOELL.2026.13119>**ABSTRACT****Article history:**

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English has become a global language and holds an important role in education, employment, communication, and professional growth. Its significance is especially clear in developing countries, where mastering English can offer learners more academic and professional prospects. Thus, English Language Teaching (ELT) has emerged as a vital component of modern education. Effective English Language Teaching necessitates focus on the four core language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as on curriculum design, syllabus planning, teaching methods, and assessment. Teachers should embrace learner-focused, practical methods that motivate students to engage in learning and develop communicative skills actively.

Meanwhile, the increasing prominence of English should not overshadow the value of regional languages and cultural identities. This paper explores the key challenges in English language learning and teaching. It proposes practical strategies to enhance the effectiveness, relevance, and accessibility of ELT for learners in evolving educational environments.

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English is an international, linking, and library language. English language teaching is prominent in developing nations due to the greater importance of English in those countries. When a teacher teaches learners both spoken and written English, students are likely to secure a strong position in their future careers. English is introduced across all subjects and replaces the local language. Crystal (1997) states: English is the language that has spread most widely across the globe and holds a dominant position in several key areas, such as international commerce and education. There are many key components in English Language Teaching. ELT teachers should consider this to engage learners better and support their learning. The key skills and essential elements include listening, speaking, reading, writing, curriculum, syllabus, and testing. We cannot offer English Language Teaching without these elements. It would be appropriate to set them out as follows. Halliday (1978) presents four key assertions regarding language:

1. Language serves practical purposes, defined by its capabilities and the actions it enables.
2. Language is semantic because it conveys meaning.
3. Language is semiotic because it involves creating meaning by choosing from the full range of possibilities that can convey meaning. The meanings created and shared are driven by their social and cultural settings.

Listening is the initial language skill. Listening should happen without prior planning or preparation. There is no doubt that it is a skill-based art and differs from

hearing, which is a physical capacity. This skill allows the listener to understand what others say. Listening is often overlooked among the receptive skills. We are aware that many students tune into English news on TV, English songs, speeches, and similar content.

When students listen more, they can master the skill. They should be involved in learning the same. They need to determine its importance. Listening is an active process, not a passive one. Listening is not an easy task because listeners must interpret messages. Someone who listens well can pick up English quite easily. A poor listener cannot effectively learn English, as listening is a crucial skill. To listen and understand, the listener must have accurate pronunciation and focus. If the listener is not paying proper attention, communication stalls.

Listening varies from person to person. They are listening for context, for different purposes, and for speaking. In contextual listening, context and themes are key elements. When a speaker presents his idea on any specific subject, the listener concentrates solely on the theme. In various contexts, unconscious attention plays an important role. For example, when a listener focuses on songs, it may fall under that category. The primary purpose of listening is to enable speaking. Listening supports and motivates learners to speak in English. Listening involves a range of sub-skills that must be properly developed to become an effective listener.

They are interpreting sounds, identifying structures, inferring meanings from context, skimming, scanning, predicting, drawing on prior knowledge, performing discourse analysis, and understanding literal and figurative, social, and contextual meanings. It also covers phonetic



elements such as cohesion, coherence, stress, accent, intonation, pitch, rhythm, and so on.

Learners study the target language to speak only. While other skills are important, emphasis in English language teaching primarily rests on speaking skills. Though many people desire to learn English, they might not practice it correctly. For example, most South Indian students excel in English grammar but rarely practice the language for spoken communication. Teachers are responsible for assisting learners with grammar and communication. Speaking requires both the speaker and the listener, making their roles interrelated. The speaker should encode it, and later it should be decoded.

The primary goal of teaching speaking is to help learners communicate fluently. It allows the speaker to use proper English. To enhance their communication skills, teachers ought to focus on both grammatical and communicative competence. By concentrating on grammar topics, learners should not be deprived of the opportunity to develop their speaking skills. Today, it is necessary to speak English correctly and appropriately. It requires that speaking be taught alongside the target language. Speaking helps convey the right words, patterns, and structures. It enhances how learners communicate. When teaching ELT, instructors should provide a few dialogues and encourage students to speak.

Reading is one of the four core language skills and falls under the receptive skills, as it mainly entails receiving and understanding written language. However, reading should not be viewed as a passive activity. A successful reader does far more than simply recognize individual words. Reading requires anticipating meaning, linking new information to

prior knowledge, recognizing connections among ideas, understanding context, and assessing the writer's intended message. Grabe and Stoller describe reading as "the ability to draw meaning from the printed page and interpret this information appropriately" (9). This definition suggests that reading involves constructing meaning rather than simply being a mechanical process of recognizing words.

Reading plays a crucial role in English Language Teaching as it enables learners to encounter vocabulary, grammatical patterns, cultural content, and various modes of discourse. Learners encounter English in many contexts, including newspapers, magazines, stories, poems, essays, websites, and academic texts. Reading thus allows learning to go beyond the classroom and textbook. However, simply being exposed to texts does not ensure reading proficiency. Students must be taught strategies to engage with various texts for different goals.

Deep reading demands a distinct form of focus. Students analyze a text in detail to grasp vocabulary, grammar, sentence structures, connections between ideas, and underlying meanings. Intensive reading is helpful for learners who need to comprehend a required passage, analyze an argument, or study the language of a specific text. It can assist learners in differentiating between denotative and connotative meanings and in understanding how meaning varies with context.

On the other hand, extensive reading means reading longer texts to gain a general understanding, acquire information, or enjoy them. Day and Bamford claim that extensive reading means reading "a large amount of easy material" (7). This principle matters



because students can build reading fluency when they engage with texts that are both accessible and engaging. Extensive reading can involve novels, short stories, newspapers, magazines, and other resources not part of the official curriculum. However, a key concern is that reading instruction in many classrooms tends to focus on exams. Students might learn to spot answers in passages without gaining the ability to question, interpret, or assess texts. Reading should therefore foster critical literacy. Wallace notes that critical reading demands attention to both the content of texts and the social contexts in which they are created and interpreted. In this context, a newspaper article, for instance, should not be viewed merely as a source of vocabulary. Learners can analyze the headline, word choice, portrayal of people, and selection of information. These activities turn reading from mere information gathering into active critical engagement.

Reading aloud and silent reading serve different purposes. Speaking texts aloud allows learners to practice pronunciation, rhythm, stress, and intonation, especially at beginner levels. Silent reading, however, is crucial for building independent reading habits and improving comprehension. Therefore, teachers should not limit reading practice to reading aloud only. A well-rounded reading program should offer opportunities for skimming, scanning, intensive and extensive reading, as well as reading aloud and silently.

Writing is a productive language skill and is frequently regarded as one of the most challenging abilities for language learners. In contrast to spontaneous speaking, writing typically allows time to plan, organize, revise, and edit thoughts. By

writing, learners improve both their linguistic accuracy and their capacity to structure their thoughts. Raimes notes that writing offers learners “a way to learn” since it compels them to structure their ideas and engage with language in meaningful contexts (3).

Writing comprises multiple interrelated components, including grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, cohesion, coherence, organization, and appropriate style. A well-crafted paragraph needs unity and logical progression, whereas an essay demands a clear introduction, structured body paragraphs, and a fitting conclusion. Therefore, learners require more than just knowledge of individual sentences; they also need to understand how texts are built.

A significant flaw in traditional writing instruction is its focus on writing as a result rather than as an ongoing process. Students are occasionally required to write an essay and submit it for feedback. While such a procedure might uncover errors, it does not always show learners how to improve their writing. Writing focuses on the process that involves planning, drafting, revising, editing, and ultimately producing a final version. Therefore, teachers can ask students to generate ideas, draft outlines, write initial versions, get feedback, revise their work, and polish the final draft.

Writing practices have also been transformed by technology. Students are increasingly using messaging apps, email, social networks, and other digital platforms to communicate. These forms of communication have increased the volume of writing students produce, but digital communication often includes abbreviations, informal language, and



condensed expressions. Thus, teachers ought not merely criticize digital writing; rather, they should assist learners in distinguishing between informal digital communication and formal academic or professional writing. Writing instruction should cover practical genres, including paragraphs, essays, letters, emails, reports, notices, advertisements, summaries, reviews, applications, and other professional formats. These activities can link classroom writing to real-world communication. The teacher's role should be to foster both accuracy and confidence while guiding learners to recognize that effective writing involves deliberate choices about language, audience, purpose, and structure.

Curriculum and syllabus are closely connected but should not be regarded as the same thing. Curriculum encompasses a wider scope, covering educational goals, philosophy, learner needs, institutional expectations, and the overall direction of an educational program. A syllabus is more detailed and converts general curriculum objectives into concrete instructional material and structured learning tasks. Dubin and Olshtain differentiate the two by noting that a curriculum offers "a broad description of general goals." At the same time, a syllabus is "a more detailed and operational statement of teaching and learning elements" (3435). This distinction matters because a syllabus should not just be a list of chapters or grammar topics. It must convert educational goals into impactful learning experiences.

An effective English language curriculum must take into account the learners' identities, their purposes for learning English, their current proficiency levels, the contexts in which they will use

the language, and the specific skills they need to acquire. A syllabus should then offer a structured route to achieving these objectives. Therefore, the curriculum addresses broader questions about what education seeks to accomplish. In contrast, the syllabus offers a more detailed outline of what learners will study and how their learning will unfold.

A key issue in ELT is the discrepancy between the official curriculum and what actually happens in classrooms. A syllabus might encourage communicative competence, critical thinking, and learner-centered activities, even as classroom instruction continues to focus largely on grammar explanations, translation, and exam preparation. Thus, changing the curriculum by itself is not enough to ensure educational change. Teacher training, available resources, classroom environments, and evaluation methods must align with the curriculum's goals.

The syllabus should also be adaptable to meet learners' needs. A rigid syllabus that disregards learners' diverse backgrounds and abilities may serve only administrative purposes rather than function as a useful teaching tool. Therefore, needs analysis, ongoing review, and feedback should be integral to syllabus development. A well-designed syllabus ought to be put into practice, assessed, and updated, not viewed as a rigid, unalterable document.

Testing is also a vital part of English Language Teaching. Teaching is not complete unless teachers can assess whether learners have reached the intended learning outcomes. However, testing should not be confined to giving grades. It should provide information that helps teachers and learners understand progress and pinpoint areas needing



further development. Brown views assessment as a continuous process of collecting information about learners' abilities and progress, whereas testing typically refers to a more focused activity conducted at a specific point in time. This distinction matters because a final exam at the end of a semester offers just one type of evidence. Successful ELT depends on ongoing observation, classroom activities, assignments, presentations, quizzes, projects, and other types of assessment. In English Language Teaching, reading, writing, curriculum, syllabus, and testing are closely linked components. Reading gives learners exposure to language and concepts; writing helps them structure and convey those ideas; the curriculum sets overarching educational objectives; the syllabus translates those goals into structured learning activities; and testing provides evidence of learning and identifies areas needing improvement.

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