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A Study on English Language Teaching Challenges and Educational Inequalities in Rural and Urban Jharkhand

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Abstract: This study examines the problems of teaching the English language in Jharkhand, focusing on the challenges faced in rural and government schools. English, being a global language, plays a crucial role in education, employment, and communication; however, its effective teaching remains a major concern in the region. The study highlights key issues such as multilingual background of learners, lack of trained teachers, inadequate infrastructure, traditional teaching methods, and limited exposure to English outside the classroom. It also discusses the rural–urban educational gap and the influence of socio-economic conditions on learning outcomes. The findings emphasize the need for improved teaching strategies, better resources, and policy interventions to enhance English language education. Overall, the study aims to provide insights into existing challenges and suggest measures to ensure effective and inclusive English language learning in Jharkhand.

Keywords: English Language Teaching, Jharkhand Education, Multilingual Challenges, Rural–Urban Gap

1. Introduction

English has become a global language of communication, education, technology, and employment. In India, it plays a significant role in academic success and career opportunities. As David Crystal observes, *"English has become the global language of communication and opportunity"* (Crystal). However, despite its importance, the teaching and learning of English remain a major challenge in several states, especially in Jharkhand, where linguistic diversity and socio-economic conditions influence the educational system. Jharkhand is a multilingual state with a large tribal population speaking languages such as Santali, Mundari, Ho, and Kurukh, along with regional languages like Hindi and Nagpuri. For many students, English is not only a second language but often a third or fourth language, which makes its learning more complex. This linguistic diversity often creates barriers to comprehension and communication, particularly in rural and government schools where exposure to English is limited.

The problems of teaching English in Jharkhand are deeply rooted in various factors, including lack of trained teachers, inadequate infrastructure, traditional teaching methods, and limited exposure to the language outside

the classroom. According to Krashen, language learning becomes effective when learners are exposed to meaningful communication and supportive environments, which are often lacking in rural educational settings (Krashen). In many rural and government schools, students struggle with basic language skills such as reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension. Moreover, socio-economic challenges, low literacy levels among parents, and the absence of an English-speaking environment further hinder effective learning. These issues collectively affect the quality of English education and widen the gap between urban and rural learners. As Nelson Mandela rightly stated, *"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world,"* highlighting the importance of improving English language education for social and academic development.

Therefore, understanding the problems associated with teaching English in Jharkhand is essential for improving language education and ensuring equal opportunities for students. The present study aims to highlight the key challenges and provide insights into the factors affecting English language teaching in the region. As Ludwig Wittgenstein noted, *"The limits of my language mean the limits of my world,"* emphasizing that strengthening English language learning can expand students' academic, professional, and social opportunities in the modern world.

"Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going."

— Rita Mae Brown

English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world and serves as a global medium of communication, education, and professional interaction. It plays a crucial role in connecting people across different countries, cultures, and professions. In today's modern world, English is not only a language but also a tool for accessing knowledge, technology, and global opportunities. As David Crystal observes, *"A language achieves a genuinely global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country"* (Crystal). In India, English holds a significant position in education, administration, and professional fields, making it essential for personal and career development.

English plays a vital role in global communication by connecting individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It is widely used in international business, diplomacy, science, and technology, enabling people to interact and exchange ideas effectively. English also serves as a common language in multinational organizations, global conferences, and online platforms. The growing influence of English on digital communication further strengthens its global importance. As Ludwig Wittgenstein stated, *"The limits of my language mean the limits of my world,"* highlighting the importance of language proficiency in expanding opportunities and knowledge.

Moreover, English plays a crucial role in education and knowledge access worldwide. A large proportion of academic books, research journals, and scientific articles are published in English. Students who understand English can access global learning resources, participate in higher education, and stay updated with recent developments in various fields. Many prestigious universities and educational institutions use English as the medium of instruction, further emphasizing its importance in academic success. Proficiency in English also allows learners to benefit from digital platforms, online courses, and educational videos, thereby enhancing learning opportunities and intellectual growth.

English also contributes significantly to career development and employment opportunities. Many multinational companies and corporate sectors use English as their primary language of communication. Individuals with strong English skills perform better in job interviews, workplace communication, and professional presentations. English proficiency opens opportunities in fields such as information technology, business, education, tourism, and international trade. Additionally, employees with good communication skills often experience better career advancement and professional growth. As Nelson Mandela stated, *"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world,"* emphasizing the role of education and language in professional success.

Furthermore, English plays a vital role in technology and internet usage. Most software applications, programming languages, and digital platforms are designed in English. Understanding English enables individuals to use computers, smartphones, and online tools effectively. It also helps learners access tutorials, technical documentation, and online learning resources. English is widely used in artificial intelligence, software development, and digital communication, making it essential for students and professionals in modern technological fields.

English also promotes professional development by enhancing communication skills and workplace efficiency. It is commonly used in meetings, presentations, emails, and official documentation. Individuals proficient in English can express their ideas clearly, collaborate effectively, and build strong professional relationships. Additionally, many professional training programs and certification courses are conducted in English, further highlighting its importance for skill development and career growth.

In addition, English supports global mobility by enabling individuals to travel, study, and work abroad. It is commonly used in airports, hotels, universities, and workplaces across the world. English also promotes cultural exchange by connecting people from different cultural backgrounds and allowing them to access global literature, films, and media. Furthermore, English plays a crucial role in competitive examinations such as UPSC, SSC, Banking, and other entrance tests, where English language proficiency is essential for success.

Thus, English has become an essential language for communication, education, career development, and global interaction. Its importance continues to grow in the modern world, making English proficiency necessary for academic success, professional advancement, and social development.

"English is not just a language; it is a global passport to education, employment, and communication."

— David Crystal

Jharkhand has a diverse educational landscape influenced by its large rural and tribal population. The state comprises a mix of government, private, and missionary schools, but a significant number of students are enrolled in government institutions, especially in rural areas. Despite efforts to improve literacy and educational access, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, shortage of trained teachers, and limited learning resources persist. The presence of multiple tribal and regional languages further affects the teaching–learning process, particularly in subjects like English. Socio-economic factors, including poverty and low parental literacy, also impact student attendance and performance. As a result, the quality of education, especially in remote areas, remains a concern.

"The limits of my language mean the limits of my world."

— Ludwig Wittgenstein

The importance of English language teaching has gained increasing attention in recent years due to its role in global communication, education, and professional development. As Rita Mae Brown stated, “Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going,” highlighting the significance of language in shaping educational and social development. In this context, Fitria explained that English for Specific Purposes focuses on learners’ needs and aims to develop language competence through structured course design; however, the study also identified challenges such as lack of qualified teachers, ineffective teaching strategies, and inadequate learning materials that hinder effective English language teaching (Fitria 55–66). Similarly, Setiyadi emphasized the importance of teacher training and pedagogical knowledge, noting that effective teaching methods and professional development are essential for improving English language learning outcomes (Setiyadi 1–163).

Furthermore, Jon et al. discussed the growing global demand for English language education and observed that educational systems are adapting curricula to meet globalization demands. However, differences in teachers’ and students’ perspectives and the lack of proper implementation strategies often create difficulties

in English language learning (Jon et al. 158–168). Likewise, Khasawneh examined problems in teaching English and found that curriculum limitations, learning environment constraints, and teacher-related issues significantly affect learning outcomes (Khasawneh 32–42). These findings support the view of William Butler Yeats, who stated, "Teaching is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire," emphasizing the need for innovative teaching methods.

The emergence of digital learning environments further influenced English language teaching practices. Erarslan reported that the COVID-19 pandemic created challenges such as poor internet connectivity, lack of digital devices, and limited teacher preparedness; however, the study also highlighted the opportunities provided by online learning platforms (Erarslan 349–367). Similarly, Ghafar noted that English for Specific Purposes requires well-designed materials and effective instructional strategies, yet challenges such as inadequate teacher preparation and limited resources remain significant barriers (Ghafar 32–42). Amin and Paiman also emphasized the growing role of digital platforms in English language teaching and found that online tools improved teaching effectiveness and student engagement (Amin and Paiman 134–148).

Innovative teaching methods have also been explored to enhance language learning. Imbaquingo and Cárdenas found that Project-Based Learning significantly improved students' reading and comprehension skills and increased motivation toward learning English (Imbaquingo and Cárdenas 587). Similarly, Ghimire et al. highlighted the positive impact of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT in improving teaching efficiency, personalized learning, and student engagement. These findings align with Stephen Krashen's view that language learning becomes more effective when learners are exposed to meaningful communication and interactive learning environments.

Moreover, Azmar and Razali identified challenges such as large class sizes, low student motivation, and limited institutional support, which hinder effective English language teaching in higher education (Azmar and Razali 434–455). Likewise, Bhandari and Bhandari reported that inadequate infrastructure, mixed-ability classrooms, and lack of trained teachers significantly affect English language teaching practices (Bhandari and Bhandari 141–155). More recently, Han highlighted the effectiveness of Problem-Based Learning in English language teaching, stating that this approach enhances cognitive skills, collaboration, and language competency among learners (Han).

These studies collectively indicate that English language teaching faces several challenges related to teacher training, infrastructure, socio-economic factors, and teaching methodologies. These issues are particularly evident in regions with multilingual and rural educational settings, where students often lack exposure to English and access to quality learning resources. In Jharkhand, similar challenges such as shortage of trained teachers, multilingual backgrounds, and socio-economic constraints significantly influence English language learning outcomes. These factors create disparities between rural and urban education systems, limiting students' opportunities for academic and professional growth. Therefore, improving English language teaching through innovative methods, digital tools, and policy interventions is essential for enhancing learning outcomes and ensuring equal educational opportunities. As Ludwig Wittgenstein observed, "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world," emphasizing the importance of strengthening English language education to expand students' academic and professional horizons.

2. Background Study

The teaching of English as a global language has attracted significant scholarly attention due to its growing importance in education and professional communication. As Rita Mae Brown states, *"Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going."* This perspective highlights the essential role of English in shaping educational development and global communication. In this context, Fitria emphasized that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) focuses on meeting learners' specific needs and improving language competencies through structured course design and appropriate teaching strategies.

However, the study also identified several challenges such as lack of qualified teachers, ineffective teaching methods, and limited learning resources, which hinder effective English language teaching (55–66).

Similarly, Setiyadi discussed the importance of teacher training and methodological development in English language teaching. The author highlighted that teachers play a crucial role in organizing learning environments and guiding students toward language proficiency, while professional experience and pedagogical knowledge significantly influence teaching effectiveness (1–163). This view aligns with William Butler Yeats, who stated, *"Teaching is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire,"* emphasizing the importance of innovative and engaging teaching practices.

Furthermore, Jon et al. examined the global impact of English language teaching and noted that educational institutions are increasingly adapting curricula to meet globalization demands. However, differences in teachers' and students' perceptions and the lack of effective implementation strategies often create barriers to successful language learning (158–168). Likewise, Khasawneh investigated the challenges faced in teaching English to deaf students and found that curriculum limitations, learning environment constraints, and teacher-related issues significantly affect English language education outcomes (32–42).

The COVID-19 pandemic further intensified English language teaching challenges. Erarslan reported that the sudden shift to online learning created issues such as poor internet connectivity, limited access to devices, and lack of digital literacy among teachers and students. Despite these challenges, the study highlighted that digital learning also provided new opportunities for flexible education and improved technological integration (349–367). These findings support Nelson Mandela's statement, *"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world,"* emphasizing the need for adaptive educational strategies.

In addition, Ghafar highlighted that English for Specific Purposes requires well-designed teaching materials and effective methodologies, yet challenges such as inadequate teacher preparation, poor-quality materials, and large class sizes remain significant barriers (32–42). Similarly, Amin and Paiman explored the use of digital platforms in English language teaching and found that online tools such as learning management systems and web meeting platforms improved teaching effectiveness, even in areas with limited connectivity (134–148).

Innovative teaching approaches have also been explored to enhance English learning outcomes. Imbaquingo and Cárdenas demonstrated that Project-Based Learning significantly improved students' reading and comprehension skills by increasing motivation and engagement (587). Additionally, Ghimire et al. examined the use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT and reported improvements in teaching efficiency, personalized learning, and writing skills among students. These findings align with Stephen Krashen's view that *"Language learning requires meaningful communication and exposure."*

Moreover, Azmar and Razali identified challenges faced by ESL lecturers, including large class sizes, low student motivation, and limited institutional support, which hinder effective English language instruction (434–455). Similarly, Bhandari and Bhandari found that mixed-ability classrooms, inadequate infrastructure, and low teacher motivation significantly affect English teaching effectiveness in community schools (141–155).

More recently, Han emphasized that Problem-Based Learning enhances cognitive and social skills in English language teaching by encouraging collaboration and problem-solving activities. The study highlighted that such innovative teaching strategies help improve language competencies and student engagement (Sage Open, 2025).

Overall, the reviewed literature indicates that English language teaching faces multiple challenges, including lack of trained teachers, limited infrastructure, socio-economic barriers, and ineffective teaching methods. However, the integration of digital technologies, AI-based tools, and innovative teaching approaches such as Project-Based Learning and Problem-Based Learning offers promising solutions. As Ludwig Wittgenstein

stated, *"The limits of my language mean the limits of my world,"* highlighting the importance of improving English language education to expand learning opportunities and bridge educational inequalities.

These studies collectively provide a strong foundation for examining English language teaching challenges in Jharkhand and support the need for improved teaching strategies, infrastructure development, and inclusive educational policies.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, the teaching of English in Jharkhand is influenced by a combination of linguistic, educational, and socio-economic factors. The multilingual environment, shortage of qualified teachers, lack of proper infrastructure, and reliance on traditional teaching methods significantly hinder effective language learning. Additionally, the rural–urban divide and limited exposure to English outside the classroom further widen the gap in students' proficiency levels. Socio-economic challenges such as poverty and low parental literacy also contribute to poor academic performance. To address these issues, there is a strong need for teacher training programs, use of modern and communicative teaching methods, and improvement in educational infrastructure. Promoting multilingual education and increasing exposure to English through digital tools can also enhance learning outcomes. Therefore, a combined effort from policymakers, educators, and institutions is essential to improve the quality of English language teaching and provide equal opportunities for students across Jharkhand.

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