

**A STUDY FOR KNOWING THE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES OF
STUDENTS IN LEARNING ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE IN
SCHOOLS UNDER WBBSE**

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ABSTRACT

English is in India today a symbol of people's aspirations for quality in education and a fuller participation in national and international life. Its colonial origins now forgotten or irrelevant, its initial role in independent India, tailored to higher education (as a "library language", a "window to the world"). Though it has been recommended in Indian education system through commissions, plans and projects for a long era but the problem faced by the students always remained least discussed. So a study is been attempted to know if there any difficulties exist in learning English as second language in terms of gender, area or type of learning generations vernacular learners.

So our aim here will be to knowing the learning difficulties faced by the students while learning English as second language in schools under WBBSE.

Keywords: Students' learning difficulties, WBBSE, Second Language Learning, Gender, Locality, Type of learning generation.

INTRODUCTION

This study started with a brief discussion of the beginning of English language teaching in India from the Charter Act 1813 and Macaulay's Minutes 1835. Macaulay's recommendations had their impact in that all funds appropriated for the purpose of education should be best employed on English education. The few landmarks of English language teaching in India during the colonial period are:

- a) The establishment of Universities of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras in 1857 as a Follow-up of Wood's Dispatch 1854,

- b) The Indian Universities Act 1904 which fixed the area of jurisdiction of Universities,
- c) The Calcutta University Commission 1919 which recommended the separation of Intermediate classes from Universities,
- d) The Sargent Committee Report 1944 which suggested guidelines for the conduct of refresher Course for all teachers.

English in the post-colonial period was also discussed particularly on the formation of the Education Commission or Radhakrishnan Commission 1949, which suggested that English should be replaced by an Indian language as the medium of instruction for higher education but not by Sanskrit. This Commission chose Hindi to be the federal language of the Union. It further recommended that students of higher education should be made conversant with three languages: a regional language, a general language, namely, Hindi and English. The Secondary Education Commission 1952-53 also considered the issue of English language teaching and recommended the following languages to be studied at the secondary level, (a) mother tongue, (b) regional language, (c) link language, that is, English and (d) one classical language, which could be Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit, Arabic or Persian.

The Three Language Formula was reconsidered by the Indian Education Commission 1964-66, where it still recommended that both Hindi and English should be the link languages and that English should continue to serve as a library language and as the medium of instruction in all major universities, so that a reasonable degree of proficiency in it should be essential for the award of the degree. The development of English language teaching in India continued with the establishment of a number of English language teaching institutes and the Regional Institutes of English.

The first English Language Teaching Institute (ELTI) was first established in Allahabad in 1954 in collaboration with the British Council and then the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) was started in Hyderabad in 1958 also in collaboration with the British Council.

The 1986 National Policy on Education also emphasized on the development of regional languages, vigorous implementation of the Three-Language Formula, the development of Hindi and strengthening the study of English and other foreign languages in the country. The Acharya Ramamurti Commission was appointed to review the 1986 National Policy on Education. The Program of Action submitted its report in 1990. So this Commission for the first time analyzed the problems of implementing the three-language formula. Regarding learning of Hindi and English, it stated clearly that the criteria for studying English should not be measured by years of

study but by hours of study. More importance was also placed on the level of attainment in the subject. Thus, this Commission made the suggestion that the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan (KHS), the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) and the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) should be responsible for the development of Hindi, English and Modern Indian Languages respectively in consultation with the Central Board of Secondary Education, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and the State Governments. Thus the history of English teaching-learning at school level started in India.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is observed from the previous studies that the result of the secondary students in English is poor in general in West Bengal. In this context question may arise that the students are having any difficulties on particular subject or not. So a study is attempted to investigate for knowing the learning difficulties faced by the students while learning English as second language in schools under WBBSE.

TITLE OF THE PROBLEM

A study for knowing the learning difficulties faced by the students while learning English as second language in schools under WBBSE.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the learning difficulties of the students toward learning English as second language.
- To find out the gender wise differences if any in the learning difficulties of students toward learning English as second language.
- To find out the locality of school wise differences, if any in the learning difficulties of the students toward learning English as second language.
- To find out the type of learning generation based differences, if any in the learning difficulties of the students toward learning English as second language.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- **WBBSE**-> West Bengal State Government administrated autonomous examining authority for the secondary level or standard 10 examinations, established on 1951. Full Form is West Bengal Board of Secondary Education.
- **Second Language**-> Second language or L₂ is a language that is not the native one of the speaker but is learnt for communicative or official purpose.

- **First generation learner**-> Who are learning in formal Education system for the first time from his/ her family.

METHODOLOGY

- **Geographical area** -> The study will be delimited to Birbhum district, West Bengal.
- **School** -> The study will be delimited to ten schools under West Bengal Board of Secondary Education.
- **Students** -> The study will be delimited to 100 students including girls and boys.
- **Variables**-> The study will be delimited to the following variables:
 - Gender (Male/ Female)
 - Locality of School (Urban/ Rural)
 - Type of learning generation (First generation learner/ more)
- **Population**-> Students studying in class IX of Bengali medium as well as Government aided schools recognized by WBBSE located in all the districts of West Bengal formed the population of present study.
- **Sample**-> The students from 10(ten) schools under WBBSE from Bolpur area of Birbhum district in West Bengal who study in class IX were selected randomly as the sample for present study. The total sample consists of 100 students from class IX.
- **Tool**-> On the basis of research topic a self made questionnaire was made to collect the information.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire for knowing learning difficulties of students in learning English
as Second Language in schools under WBBSE.

Name:

School Name:

Gender: Male/ Female Class: Locality: Urban/ Rural Learning generation: First/More

Instructions:

1. Please read each Item carefully and answer all Items.
2. You are requested to express your own opinion.
3. In every statement there are '3' options 'Agree', 'No comment' & 'Disagree'. The respondent is required to make his/ her opinion by putting (✓) mark in the box provided.

Sl. No.	Statements	Agree	No Comment	Disagree
1	I do not know how to learn English.			
2	I become conscious about error while speaking.			
3	I think others may laugh about my errors.			
4	While speaking a subconscious translation always goes on.			
5	In other subjects I do better than English.			
6	Other than text I understand nothing in English.			
7	I need more help from my class teacher.			
8	Teacher does not use teaching learning materials in class.			
9	English seems not an interesting subject.			
10	It is a complex language.			
11	Only mother tongue is not enough.			
12	English is a must for higher studies.			
13	If anyone speaks good English I wish to speak so.			
14	Fluency in English is necessary for character building.			
15	English class is my favourite class.			
16	We speak only English in English class.			
17	I face difficulties to use English in real life situation.			
18	There should be enough scope for mother tongue in higher studies.			
19	Knowledge of English can open the window to the world.			
20	No one speaks in English at home.			
21	English vocabulary is poor.			
22	I do not watch English TV channels.			
23	I do not read English news paper.			
24	English text book is not interesting.			
25	I do not get a chance to read English literature.			
26	Teachers speak in English to give a scope to practice.			
27	Watch cartoon in English.			
28	English teacher always speaks in English.			
29	Gradually my speaking skill is improving.			
30	My skill of writing is better than speaking.			

- **Scoring Procedure**-> A score of '3', '2', '1' were given to the responses of the samples in the given order for the favorable statements and they were reversed for the unfavorable ones. The grand score proved useful for data interpretation.

- **Reliability & Validity->** Validity of the questionnaire was examined seeking opinion from respected experts and reliability of said questionnaire was measured by split half method.

DATA ANALYSIS

VARIABLES	SUB VARIABLES	N	MEAN	SD	t-VALUE	SIGNIFICANCE AT THE 0.05 LEVEL
Gender	Male	60	59.91	6.88	2.12	Significant
	Female	40	52.63	7.33		
Locality of Schools	Urban	50	59.5	8.06	2.28	Significant
	Rural	50	56	7.39		
Type of Learning Generation	First Generation Learner	35	50	8.58	1.75	Not Significant
	More than One Generation Learner	65	60.84	7.47		

From the above table it is observed that there are significant differences at 0.05 level in the learning difficulties of the samples in learning English as second language with respect to Gender, Locality of school except Type of learning generation.

Male students have high scores and mean values (Male-59.91, Female-52.63) than female students.

Urban area students have high scores and high mean value than rural area students (Urban-59.5, Rural-56).

First generation learners have low scores and low mean value than more than one generation learners. (Mean value for first generation learners-50, mean value for than one generation learners-60.84).

CONCLUSION

This essay has argued that difficulties are factored in learning a target language. Investigating male and female, rural and urban & first generation learner and more than one generation EFL

learners' difficulties in learning English and the differences in views made by these groups. This may lead to conclude that they are well aware of the importance of English and learn it as an essential subject. It was also found that there is a significant difference between males' and females' learning difficulties. The current findings contribute to and have implications for a variety of different areas, such as affective variables in Second Language (L2) learners, research in learning difficulties of EFL learners, and English education policies and practices in India. First, this study adds to the research on learners' difficulties toward English and the growing body of studies on the spread of EFL.

English curriculum and class activities should be planned according to students' needs, feelings, behaviors and also teachers should recognize and respect the students and encourage them to positive views toward English learning. Last, examining the relationship between views of learners and gender, locality, type of learning generation, the study provides a more comprehensive picture of difficulties of EFL learners.

However, the participants can not represent all the Indian EFL students. Another limitation is that although view, in nature, is not static, this study does not capture any changes in views. However, due to the limited time for data collection, future studies on view changes in students might alter the Indian EFL learners' perceiving toward the language of English.

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