

# Govt. Naveen College Bori

Best Practice No.1

1. Title of the Practice

**BRIDGING THE URBAN RURAL GAP BY FACILITATING BETTER COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN ENGLISH IN STUDENTS**

2. **OBJECTIVES OF THE PRACTICE :**

The paucity of skilled teachers of English in rural areas greatly affects the learning of this language at the school level. A 3 year under graduate course in English at the college level also fails to provide them proficiency in English that is required for employment. This creates generally a huge gap in the intake of the rural students in the job market.

The objective of this best practice is to create an anxiety free atmosphere where students acquire the language without undergoing any stress. This practice also aspires to create a level playing ground so that our students can compete with their urban counterparts and don't get discriminated because of their lack of proficiency in English communicative skills.

The objective of this enterprise is also to create a pool of student facilitators who would promote these communications skills among their peers as well as willing learners outside the institution.

3. **THE CONTEXT**

Effective communication is one of the most important life skills that should be learnt by every individual. Communication is a complex process of give and take with all its intricacies and dimensions. The facilitation of oral communication in large classes rarely fructifies due to constraints of time, rigidity of syllabus or other factors. The absence of language labs or other audio visual aids also greatly hinder the learning of the language.

The insufficient exposure of rural students to English language also creates greater anxiety and stress among them. This inhibits the process of learning. The objective of this practice is to train them in the skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading And Writing in a graded, sustained fashion so that they get acquainted with the sound and structural patterns of English language.

The challenge of facilitating communication skills in English among students has to be also addressed in a socio linguistic perspective where communication in language also fulfills the social function of the language where students gain the ability to express their ideas to diversified audience. The whole endeavor requires the harnessing of all the resources howsoever meagre they may be and a sustained enthusiastic approach from all stake holders.

4. **The Practice:** Developing proficiency in English language among rural students is a rather challenging task. This is primarily because of their scant exposure to the spoken language and their inability to use the language as a medium of social exchange. This has given rise to many issues especially in the area of higher education, where students are unable to access or comprehend most texts that are in English. Lack of

initiatives on the part of teachers to promote the language outside classrooms also adds on to the problem as any language that is learnt as second language has to be acquired in a phased systematic and sustained manner in a stress-free atmosphere for which special attention has to be given.

The Objective of facilitating better communications skills among students was taken up after discussing this issue with the student community in their language classes. Their positive attitude and trust on the teacher's words were enough motivation for the instructors to take on the challenge.

Our Institution caters to around 40 neighboring villages from where students come for higher studies. The medium of instruction in all these rural schools is Hindi. There exists in the mind of students a general apprehension or even fear for the English language. The difference of English and Hindi medium often creates an inferiority complex among students who have studied in Hindi medium. The purpose of this best practice followed by our institution is to give these students a sense of confidence by honing their communicative skills in English. As students also fail to find any role model who are proficient in their language, it was envisaged to create a pool of such students who would gain significant proficiency in English to take on the role of facilitators for their peers and others .

The Practice includes the conduct of workshops in English spanning at least a week each. The target group of students is shortlisted on the basis of their performance in their class and also by assessing the interest they have exhibited in learning the language. The level of workshops is initially of an elementary or basic nature with the aim of entering an intermediate / advanced level by the time they would graduate. This phased and structured exposure to the language has significantly reduced the fear and anxiety that students experience in the learning of English. The mitigation of fear simultaneously created a more conducive learning atmosphere as students learnt to communicate and exchange ideas among themselves.

The nurturing of the peer group is an achievement of this practice. The selected peer group has now become Brand ambassadors of this project. Their success stories can be assessed by the fact that they not only conduct workshop for other students but also confidently communicate in English in different webinars and platforms with their instructor. Concerted efforts on improving their reading skills have now transformed many of them into avid readers.

5. **Evidence of Success:** Evidence of success of this best practice can be assessed by the continuous interest that students have displayed towards these workshops. The initial hesitation even to the extent of avoiding listening to prolonged conversation in English gave way to a gradual acceptance and approval, as their listening skills improved. This breakthrough in ELT is no mean feat for any instructor in L2 because with the steady improvement in their listening skills the sounds and structures of English could be better assimilated by the students.

Efforts in the direction of improving their Reading Skills also yielded positive results as students attending these workshops started seeking books in English from the College library .These workshops also initiated the development of other skills such as critical and creative thinking. The ability to collaborate and help others in the classroom and outside sparked a general interest in others who also wanted to be a part of this training team. Participation of students in webinars along with their instructors also illustrate the confidence that they gained in these workshops.

## **6. Problems encountered and resources required**

The objective of this workshop was initially a little hazy and unclear among the students who found it difficult to accomplish something which they had failed to achieve even after years of studying English in schools. The psychological wall that deterred them from proactive listening, was tough to dismantle. It was achieved by providing them with prolonged listening practice and guiding them through a variety of e resources that improved their skills of listening.

In the absence of language laboratory, the instructor's cell phone and personal laptop became the aids in the classroom. Many of the students who did not have their personal cell phones participated in groups. Such group activities subsequently triggered spontaneous exchange of ideas till a point of time where students could associate this enterprise as a part of the social function of languages.

### **Best Practice Two**

1. **Title of the Practice:** “Shiksha Daan Yojana” for developing employability skills in students.

2. **Objective of the practice**

The principal objective of the “Shiksha Daan Yojana” is to provide certain skill sets and training to the students of this rural belt so that their economic dependence over their gradually diminishing agricultural income is reduced and they acquire certain employability skills through which they can seek employment. The translation of this objective on ground would probably bring about a significant change in the mindset of students who would then be able to employ these skills and make themselves ready for the opportunities that awaits them outside their geographic locations. The over dependence of this agrarian society on farming leaves them unprepared for many other opportunities that exist in society. A wider perspective regarding the availability of gainful employment or entrepreneurship has to be therefore nurtured so that they can gradually improve their quality of life. This would eventually be able to give a boost to the economic growth of this region.

### **The Context**

Unequal opportunities for students from rural areas usually tilt the balance against them in the job market. Students here are economically backward and mostly dependent on their family's agricultural income. The objective of acquiring higher education is usually not supplemented by any goal setting for the future. Lack of exposure to the available opportunities usually results in a blinkered view of the world, where they remain ignorant of the many areas in which they could try their hand to translate formal education that student receive in HEIs to an opportunity for gainful employment, requires a planned, sustained approach. “Shiksha Daan Yojana” is one such step in that direction.

### **The Practice:**

The Practice involves the exposure of students of this rural belt to the many opportunities that await them for gainful employment. This is accomplished by holding periodical workshops. Dr. Amarnath Sharma has conducted over 30 workshops for students on employability development skills. The content of each of these workshops is decided by taking into account the views of the stake holders. The content is divided into separate modules that include information about competitive exams, soft skills, personality development and entrepreneurship development. The help of many resource persons who are proficient in their respective field is taken.

### **Evidence of Success**

The evidence of success may be difficult to project because many of the participants who have attended these workshops may be still struggling to get a foothold in the job market, especially in this post Covid times. Still the institution takes pride of the fact that more than 15 of our students are presently employed in various areas that includes sales, office management, media, purchase and logistics. Apart from this some of our students have turned out to be budding entrepreneurs.