



Contemporaneity of Language and Literature in the Robotized Millennium

Vol: 1(3), 2019

REST Publisher

ISBN: 978-81-936097-3-6

Website: <http://restpublisher.com/books/cllrm/>

Taking technology to the rural learners

Rema.V, Dept of English & Other Foreign Languages, SRMIST, Ramapuram, Chennai

nalin.rema@gmail.com

India lives in her villages, no doubt! Statistics say that 60% of the country's population lives in its villages. The ambience is very simple, humble and the houses are eco-friendly in nature. Fresh air, greenery, no hustle-bustle of city life- this is scenic beauty of rural India. But there is another sad face to this apparently nice scenario.

And that is the educational scenario. The harsh reality that would strike anyone on their face is the lack of proper schools-leave alone goods schools. If schools exist, they just exist and nothing more. Teachers hardly come to the schools. Then, where is the question of proper tutoring.

Now the challenge lies in front of the educators to make the rural learners first understand, rather, realize the need for learning. Then comes the most difficult task of taking lessons to them in a sweet pill which they will savour most readily. The Chalk and talk method may not work out anymore. At this juncture, technology may have to take over to instil in the rural learners the real need to learn. It cannot be just technology, but innovative technology.

This paper attempts to present a few methods by which teaching taken to the rural students may be appreciated by them in a much better way. This can be possible only if new methods are evolved to improve all the skills- LSRW.

RURAL-URBAN DIVIDE

When compared to the students in urban areas, the rural students are deprived of a number of facilities for the development of their skills. More than 3 decades ago, the rural learners did not even have exposure to the technology of internet or mobile phones. Though the scenario is very different now, they still do not access to the corporates, the BPOs or the Call centres like in the cities. Hence, they miss the opportunity to take up training from resource persons or engage themselves in internships. Training for competitive exams, exposure to language training classes, skill enhancement classes are a far cry for them. But with the technological advancement, the solution to help them is far away.

SO, WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Everything is available today at the click of a mouse. The rural students can avail the plentiful opportunities and equip themselves suitably to compete with the urbanites and also boost their self confidence.

First, the opportunity that can be utilised is something similar to a cultural exchange or the student exchange programme. The rural student can be taken to the city as a part of his/her internship and be given exposure to the urban life. They may be given an opportunity to interact with the city students and their facilities and resources. This additional exposure will enable them to overcome the disadvantage of the rote learning they do in the villages.

To compete for lucrative jobs/ Study Abroad courses, it is mandatory that students face various competitive exams. The rural learners are unaware of the competitive exams like IELTS, TOEFL etc. Many organisations like the British Council, IDP offer these courses. This has to be highlighted to these ruralites. They may avail the scholarship or internship-concession fees during their vacation and not miss out on the attendace at school also. Moreover, when they attend these courses, they'll understand the need to be proficient in their subjects and will evince more seriousness in their school education also.

Another wonderful opportunity available today is the optimum usage of the online courses. With the availability of mobile apps and internet, the students can takeup the online courses. This is especially so with the most popular Youtube videos. Learning through live video shows enhances their interest and they can record these and go back to listen and understand and assimilate the concepts even after the classes are over.

The biggest disadvantage for the rural learner is the demotivating atmosphere at home. Lack of proper infrastructure, lack of motivation from parents because of the poverty levels and the disturbances at home hinder the students' continued interest in learning. When technology is in their hands, and is channelised in a proper fashion, it will definitely enthuse them to self-motivate themselves and excel in their endeavours.

At the rural level, adequate and frequent counseling and awareness programmes for the members of the family is an integral part of the success of the whole idea. NGOs and corporates, as a part of their CSR activities, may organize these to help the parents in turn help their children. Inferiority complex, poor morale and lack of relization about the importance of education can be mitigated by pep talks with ideas related to psychology.

With the avilability of the internet, Skype classes may be conducted and mock discussions and interviews may be conducted through Skype in order to break the communication barriers of these ruralites. The most important Speaking skill may be promoted through these Skype classes.

At the grassroot level, though these ideas look formidable and far-fetched, implementing them one after the other by Good Samaritans will definitely help improve the educational scenario in the villages.

For the rural student, many of these learning methodologies may lead to an important growth in their positive attitude- and that is- self-directed learning. It induces a large degree of learner enthusiasm. It enhances learner-confidence, too.