
Challenges of Teaching English in Schools and How to Overcome Them

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Annotation: This article explores the main challenges faced by English language teachers in schools today, such as limited teaching resources, large class sizes, student motivation, and insufficient teacher training. It also presents practical and methodological strategies to overcome these issues. Based on global research and teaching practices, this paper aims to provide teachers, educators, and policymakers with actionable solutions to improve English instruction and learning outcomes in school settings.

Keywords: English teaching, classroom challenges, student engagement, teacher development, digital resources, pedagogy.

Introduction: In today's interconnected world, English has become a global lingua franca, which makes English language education a top priority in many national curricula. However, teaching English in schools is often fraught with challenges that affect the quality of instruction and learner outcomes. Teachers frequently work with **insufficient materials**, **large classrooms**, and **linguistically diverse student populations**¹. Moreover, students may lack **motivation**, and teachers themselves may not have access to proper training².

Understanding these problems and proposing realistic, sustainable strategies is essential to improve the effectiveness of English teaching in schools. Education systems must address both structural issues and classroom-level pedagogy in order to foster successful language learning experiences³.

Literature Review: Research on English language teaching has consistently pointed out several systemic obstacles.

Harmer (2007) highlights that teacher preparedness is one of the most significant determinants of learner success⁴. Teachers who are confident in their pedagogical approach and classroom management tend to achieve better outcomes.

Brown (2001) discusses how cultural and linguistic differences between teachers and students can lead to misunderstandings or ineffective teaching strategies⁵. These are especially common in multilingual or multicultural classrooms.

¹Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge University Press.

²Harmer, J. (2007). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. Pearson Education.

³Nunan, D. (2003). *Practical English Language Teaching*. McGraw-Hill.

⁴Harmer, J. (2007). *Ibid*.

⁵Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*. Longman.

Richards & Rodgers (2014) emphasize the importance of communicative and task-based approaches to make language learning meaningful and interactive⁶. Technology has also emerged as a powerful ally in language learning. Larsen-Freeman (2011) and Nunan (2003) argue that **digital tools**, such as online platforms and mobile apps, can support vocabulary building, pronunciation, and grammar acquisition⁷.

According to Crystal (2003), English's status as a global language places additional pressure on schools to produce competent users⁸. Yet, few systems are fully equipped to meet this demand, particularly in developing countries⁹.

Analysis and Discussion

Key Challenges

1. Lack of Resources

Many schools operate with outdated textbooks, no audio-visual aids, and little access to the internet. In rural areas, teachers may have to teach English with only a chalkboard¹⁰.

2. Overcrowded Classrooms

When class sizes exceed 35 or more students, it becomes nearly impossible to offer individual feedback or sufficient speaking practice¹¹. Language acquisition thrives on interaction, which is limited in large groups¹².

3. Low Student Motivation

Students often fail to understand the real-life application of English, especially in non-English speaking countries. Without motivation, learners are less likely to participate actively¹³.

4. Insufficient Teacher Training

Many English teachers lack access to modern training programs that update their knowledge of methodology, technology integration, and classroom management.

5. Linguistic Diversity

In multilingual classrooms, some students may have an advantage over others depending on their native language's similarity to English. This creates inequity and frustration.

Practical Solutions

➤ Use of Technology

Introducing mobile apps like *Duolingo*, or platforms like *Google Classroom*, makes English more accessible and engaging¹⁴. Even low-tech solutions like recorded dialogues can help.

➤ Smaller Group Activities

Within large classes, teachers can break students into smaller groups for interactive tasks such as role-playing or storytelling¹⁵.

⁶ Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

⁷ Larsen-Freeman, D., & Anderson, M. (2011). *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*. Oxford University Press.

⁸ Nunan, D. (2003). *Ibid.*

⁹ Crystal, D. (2003). *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Scrivener, J. (2010). *Learning Teaching: The Essential Guide to English Language Teaching*. Macmillan.

¹¹ Ur, P. (1996). *A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. Cambridge University Press.

¹² Thornbury, S. (2005). *How to Teach Speaking*. Pearson Longman.

¹³ Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational Strategies in the Language Classroom*. Cambridge University Press.

¹⁴ Richards, J. C. (2008). *Second Language Teacher Education Today*. *RELC Journal*.

¹⁵ García, O., & Wei, L. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education*. Palgrave Macmillan.

➤ **Student-Centered Approaches**

Methods like *Task-Based Language Teaching* and *Project-Based Learning* encourage autonomy and real-life language use .

➤ **Regular Teacher Development**

Continuous professional development through online courses and workshops ensures teachers stay updated with best practices .

➤ **Cultural and Linguistic Inclusion**

Lessons that acknowledge students' own languages and cultures foster a more inclusive environment. Translanguaging strategies may support understanding while building confidence in English ¹⁶.

Conclusion

The challenges of teaching English in schools are multifaceted but not insurmountable. With a well-planned combination of methodological innovations, strategic investments in resources, and professional development, schools can transform these challenges into opportunities. By focusing on both teacher and student needs—while embracing diversity and modern technology—educators can build classrooms that not only teach English effectively but also inspire students to use it confidently in the real world.

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¹⁶ Warschauer, M., & Kern, R. (2000). *Network-Based Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

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