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## Strategies for enhancing English language proficiency among learners in schools located in rural settings

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**Abstract**

Language represents one of the ways we convey our thoughts, emotions, and feelings. In today's globe, English is among the most widely spoken languages, and the language is taught as a second or third language in various parts of the world. English learning as a second or third is established at the primary school level and is taught until the postsecondary levels of schooling. The majority of kids in rural primary schools are deficient in English due to many factors, including a lack of experienced and qualified instructors who are conversant with current approaches and techniques of teaching, as well as a shortage of classroom resources. The goal of acquiring any language is to communicate, which means communication is impossible if one does not master the language or have the opportunity to communicate effectively. It is inevitable that language and communication are in great demand in our ever-changing environment. Language is fundamental in communication, and English is, without a dispute, the most significant and widely used medium of communication on the planet. Every individual should work hard to develop effective communication skills in all their languages, which constitute the most critical criteria for success in each individual's job. This journal article will dig into the many methods in which English language learners in rural regions gain vocabulary competency, as well as the tactics that their instructors in rural community schools use to raise learners' levels of proficiency.

**Keywords:** language proficiency, literacy, learning environment, rural setting, vocabulary acquisition

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### Public Interest Statement

Attaining language Proficiency is one of the key objectives of language instruction. In order to improve their proficiency levels, language learners practice the four modalities (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in order to communicate meaningfully, effectively, and creatively in their target language for real-life purposes. Proficiency-based instruction is learner-centered and builds upon what learners need, already know, and can do, and it respects diverse learning styles, while encouraging the development of a wide range of skills and learning strategies. This paper therefore explores strategies that would be used to enhance learners language proficiency in schools located in rural settings.

### Introduction

Because English has become such an essential language in our society, teachers must devise effective techniques for teaching children and undertake this responsibility in the best possible way. Students in cities have higher levels of English proficiency when compared to those studying in rural regions. As a result of this paradox, this article seeks to highlight the primary reasons that impact the low English proficiency that is prevalent in the majority of our nation's rural pupils. Furthermore, because of these limitations, this study hopes to demonstrate the key ways that instructors may use to fully improve English proficiency for students in rural regions who are deficient in this topic. Furthermore, it is critical to identify the root causes of these faults and provide a solution to prevent the scenario from harming more children from rural regions across the country (Evans & Nthulana, 2018). Some of the fundamental causes for low vocabulary proficiency in rural regions are based on various conditions that will be discussed in this article in order to demonstrate how learners in rural areas acquire vocabulary proficiency. The findings of this journal article may be used to provide feasible solutions to raise English vocabulary proficiency in rural pupils.

### Literature Review

The English language is imparted as a compulsory subject in the majority of our country's rural primary schools and high schools. However, there is an outstanding difference in the English vocabulary proficiency indicated by the comparison of students from rural and urban areas. According to certain research, the reasons for differences in their learning and accomplishment success are geographical region, resources, technological availability, and instructor quality. Life is very different in most rural locations, and it affects the ways in which learners from these regions acquire vocabulary proficiency (Biswas, 2018). Most rural places have a completely distinct perspective of living, which is not only dependent on education. Those in rural regions do poorly in English acquisition compared to students in metropolitan areas due to their parents' levels of education. Other considerations that determine how these learners acquire proficiency include the financial element, logistical assistance, fewer trained teachers, and a lack of suitable literature. The major objective of this work is to determine the finest approaches in which English education might boost the competency of those learners from rural regions who have particular issues towards the language (Izquierdo, Zúñiga & Martínez, 2021). Another goal is to provide the best ways that instructors might employ to improve English vocabulary proficiency in learners living in rural regions. Furthermore, the final goal is to determine what the primary causes are that impede kids from learning effectively and how to avoid these issues that limit most rural children from having strong English proficiency. Because English has become one of our country's primary languages, it is critical to improving English vocabulary proficiency among children from rural regions, which may have substantial advantages for these kids. English proficiency is required for the country to eradicate poverty, famine, sickness, illiteracy, and loss of dignity. As a result, it is critical to identify methods for professors to assist students in rural regions in improving their English skills.

Understanding the variations in behavior and culture of English learners in these countries is

critical in understanding how they learn so that their instructors can build a good environment and appreciate the variances, as well as offer specific activities that are more suited to learners from the regions. Another suggestion is to avoid using books and dictionaries excessively since it may be dull for rural pupils since we want them to be motivated and active in acquiring vocabulary proficiency (Izquierdo, Zúñiga & Martínez, 2021). Furthermore, the instructors must encourage learners to study not only for the sake of completing the English courses but also for the sake of life and their professional lives. Therefore, they must understand that English is extremely essential nowadays, and the professor must be a facilitator of knowledge to make the rural students respect English. When discussing various issues that may lead to lesser English vocabulary proficiency among learners from rural regions, one of the utmost important points to emphasize is the reality that most instructors are hesitant to relocate to rural regions to teach because of a variety of circumstances. To begin with, some causes include isolation, cultural adaptability, encouragement, infrastructure, and certain values of rural households (Motseke, 2020). Whenever we consider isolation, we often picture about loneliness since most academics who do not live in cities might feel separated from their comfort zone, and they are often hesitant to relocate to cities. Another issue is the cultural adjustment to rural surroundings, which includes daily routines as well as society and student culture. That is, instructors from urban regions are unfamiliar with the many behaviors and patterns of perspectives that exist in urban areas, and pupils exhibit distinct personalities from those learning in urban areas. As a result, this scenario is related to the resources available to instructors that may enable them to deliver instructional techniques in the rural areas (Biswas, 2018). Another issue identified by this journal article is the absence of physical and educational infrastructure because of the proximity of rural primary schools to English-speaking communities. Apparently, most instructors in these regions are not furnished with sufficient infrastructure to generate quality strategies directed at increasing the English vocabulary proficiency levels of learners from the rural areas.

### Methodology

Motivation is a vital idea that increases pupils' enthusiasm to study; therefore, it is critical as a vital idea that increases students' enthusiasm to study. Therefore, instructors must develop activities that allow learners to connect with the language hence they may learn more readily and interactively. Motivation could be demonstrated when learners understand how to consciously regulate their attitudes on their own (Makena, 2020). That means that when they feel a favorable self-perception regarding their development, they will focus their activity on their proficiency and learning. The instructor's position is a significant aspect in generating motivation, which means that teachers possess a great deal of responsibility in motivating students to improve their English vocabulary proficiency levels (Rafique et al., 2018). Educational infrastructure is concerned with resources like publications and also visual items that beautify classroom environments and inspire learning, as well as rudimentary scientific laboratory apparatus, radios, and computers that have become common in the standard classroom. As a result, the use of these sorts of materials is more constrained in rural regions, resulting in less engaging ways for instructors to enhance engagement in English classrooms. Some rural households' ideologies tamper with pupils' performance because they sometimes believe education is not that essential. This implies why several other pupils do not get engaged in education as much because it is not a component of the values that ought to be emphasized in the foundation of the household. Thus, values from inside households might occasionally impact English competence in these settings (Ling & Yamat, 2020). Rural pupils understand that English language abilities are necessary to get a good career. In this situation, the difficulties that rural students encounter are numerous. Learners from rural backgrounds do not have enough fundamental facilities for studying English. Most primary-level institutions within rural areas include provisions for exclusively teaching in the vernacular. Furthermore, kids are introduced to English at a relatively late time. As a result, when rural students enroll in English-speaking medium-level institutions at a later time, they fail to meet the English language standards of postsecondary learning.

The enforcement of the English language upon students from low-income families and those with little financial resources has a negative impact on their college achievement. Most of these students' families are impoverished farmers who work minor occupations and have little knowledge of the outside environment, current events, educational laws, or the progress of the country (Motseke, 2020). Most of the learners find it challenging to finish their secondary school level because they must support their parents in bringing income while keeping their teeth and nails. They also undertake unusual jobs to help maintain their household financially. Because of their poor income, parents believe they are not capable of offering a decent education to their kids. Children from such homes and backgrounds struggle to cope with the vocabulary standards set in most urban schools and institutions. They are incapable of completing their college education because they speak little English back within their rural location. Only a handful of them are devoted or have the sufficient direction to finish their college education. There might be one possibility to begin teaching the English language at the elementary level (Ling & Yamat, 2020). However, the difficulty is that in primary schools, primary school teachers do not have a better college education and do not emerge from homes where English is spoken at home. As a result, variables such as teachers' indifference in engaging students influence learners' attitudes toward learning proficiency in English vocabulary. A proper environment is not developed to meet their communication demands. In due time, the absence of pressure to succeed and give favorable examination results places them under intense scrutiny.

### **Analysis and Discussion of the Findings**

The learning and teaching approaches in the classroom environment require two participants who must be actively involved, and they include the instructor and the student since language acquisition does not lie totally on the teacher. Learners should also take on greater responsibility for their studies. Teachers and learners collaborate to produce practical and intellectual activities that modify both the content and form of the objective topic via interactions with one another. In addition, the English instructor is a character in the English language study program. According to the literature, the instructor establishes the tone for instructional experiences (Coady, 2020). Teaching resources are critical in the procedures of teaching and studying any topic. They assist in making learning a more enjoyable experience for kids by providing a realism of events that inspires self-activity and creativity on the side of the learners. Attitudes are the sets of values that the student has about individuals within the target group as well as their own society and culture. Language attitude is an essential subject to understand since it serves a significant part in language acquisition and learning. Attitudes in language learning are seen as both input and outcome in schooling (Makena, 2020). Motivation and encouragement are the most commonly utilized idea to describe a student's failure or success. Furthermore, motivation has already been identified as one of the primary elements influencing the rate and degree of success of acquisition and proficiency in foreign language students. It has been observed that passive learning, an absence of appropriate teaching resources, student motivation, and mindsets toward foreign language learning make rural pupils ineffective in English language acquisition when compared to metropolitan students. Based on the needs of the pupils, the English instructor performs a range of responsibilities in the classroom. The sort of work under consideration might be utilized to categorize jobs. The instructors' roles are variable, not constant, and liable to alter based on the participants' affective elements. The duties of teachers differ among all teachers and also all the classrooms, topic to the subject matter, and capability to ability. An effective instructor captivates the students in the classroom. The author, Coady (2020), compares the instructor to an actor, stating that the instructor may have multiple roles to perform at different points in time. He distinguishes both fluent and accurate practices and the role of the instructor in promoting the sort of communication that must take place in the classroom setting.

The teacher acts as a manager, motivator, and adviser when carrying out fluency activities. The effective instructor must keep in mind that the major purpose of the activity is to help pupils engage with

one another and enhance language acquisition. Since the beginning of the exercises until the end, and with motivation to carry on, the teacher only needs to be available to pupils when they require assistance (Coady, 2020). The instructor also serves as a controller, conductor, and coordinator during the precise tasks. The instructor only becomes available to the pupils after commencing the activities and motivates them if and when they require assistance. Throughout the precision exercises, the instructor takes on the duties of conductor, coordinator, and monitor. Furthermore, dependent on the conduct of the classroom pupils, the instructor functions as a regulator, developer, and entertainer. This includes a range of jobs as well as a sense of autonomy and obligation. A controller, as shown by Rafique et al. (2018), is a teacher who creates authority within the classroom environment. Someone who acts as an entertainer when they provide sports and recreational activities to pupils or when reading literature to them is an effective controller. A competent instructor is complemented and given epithets depending on the role they play inside and outside the classroom environment (Rafique et al., 2018). The educators' three primary roles, according to Ssentanda, Southwood & Huddleston (2019), include a prompter, contributor, and input supplier. They believe that during the course of an exercise if pupils become confused and are unable to weave altogether the vocabulary they require, the instructor may act as a prompter and provide subtle cues to assist them in navigating clear of the difficult situation. The teacher, who assumes the function of a contributor, helps the learners by gently providing new understanding to facilitate the activity and maintain their motivation constant to foster innovative ideas (Ssentanda, Southwood & Huddleston, 2019). Without additional language help, kids might require between five and seven years to master English and acquire the vocabulary proficiency required for effective participation in an institution's curriculum. This scenario is partly due to the rising linguistic demands of instructional engagement over time, particularly with regard to the language employed in published writings beyond the preschool and elementary years (Ling & Yamat, 2020). As a result, pupils in the higher primary and secondary school grades might necessitate English assistance, particularly in establishing proficiency and fluency in academic applications of English. Academic language has proven challenging to define despite the fact that it has been described in functional, lexical, rhetorical, grammatical, and pragmatic ways. As a consequence, efforts to foster its growth in schools have been uneven, in the same problematic way that efforts to evaluate its effectiveness have resulted (Hidayati, 2018). The time it takes to reclassify as a completely fluent and proficient English speaker fluctuates greatly among foreign and native English learners with diverse background factors.

Although there is this prevailing variety between linguistic and cultural groupings, certain language groups typically take lengthier periods of study and tend to achieve competence at a reduced rate compared to others. This disparity in time to reclassify might be attributed to disparities in the way academic language competency is measured, the appropriateness of the exams used in the reclassification of the ELs, as well as the quality of education delivered to the ELs. It might also be in instructors' ideas about ELs' capacity to fulfill high educational requirements, as well as the instructors' attitudes towards their role in helping learners achieve proficiency (Ssentanda, Southwood & Huddleston, 2019). The educational research department has failed to give concrete reasons behind why certain ELs find more difficulties as compared to the others in achieving the English vocabulary competency required for reclassification. Additionally, there has been little research regarding the pedagogical aspects like instructor credentials and objectives, in addition to the quality of education offered, and learners' characteristics like preceding education level, household economic position, motivation, and traditional views. Bilinguals do not develop their second languages by being independent of one another but rather through consistent interaction and practice (Motseke, 2020). Several elements of dual language acquisition, comprehension, and application appear to be strongly connected, and the acquisition of strong first language abilities appears to enhance the development of the second language's English skills. This interdependence has been demonstrated to be particularly pronounced in domains linked to the development of literacy competence and in typologically comparable languages. Evidence suggests that

there are substantial positive relationships between literacy capabilities in English learners' first language and literacy skill growth in English as a second language (Rameez, 2019). Academic interventions that provide systematic assistance for ELs' linguistic development frequently facilitate and increase their acquisition of English abilities, particularly literacy.

Evidence suggests that English learners are in danger of losing their mother tongue if they are exposed to English throughout their childhood or early elementary years in school. This is true even if pupils are enrolled in dual language instruction. Loss or diminished skill in the L1 leads to lower levels of bilingual competence and, consequently, the benefits associated with it. Cognitive benefits, increased self-esteem, and employment opportunities are all associated with proficiency in English. Evidence reveals that several institutions should provide enough training to English learners in order for them to acquire English vocabulary proficiency, along with accessibility to academic topics at their grade level, from the moment they first join school through the completion of the secondary levels (Makena, 2020). Most rural schools ought to be capable of meeting the multiple needs of long-term English learners, including language, academic, and socioemotional requirements. Special coaching courses are established after regular class hours to provide personalized attention. An instructional system should be implemented, and students ought to be separated into groups. Constant monitoring of their academic achievement boosts their confidence because they will remain in contact with you on a frequent basis. This personalized engagement helps a great deal toward assisting students in succeeding not only academically but also professionally (Evans & Nthulana, 2018). A respectable degree of vocabulary knowledge may be attained if students utilize the language regularly, but far too many students would not attempt it because they lack confidence. Another significant contributor to their absence of proficiency is memorization. They are pushed to learn crucial material because their primary goal is to pass their exam. A large number of pupils also do not have the opportunity to come up with topic options. They peruse the text without comprehending its meaning. They are less at ease when they are surrounded by other pupils who can interact in English. When most of the students arrived, they felt disoriented. The majority of the students felt disoriented when they were unable to deliver a presentation. Temperament and aptitude development programs may have a broader influence. Students from remote places are eager to broaden their horizons. Male and female rural learners are pursuing studies. Different techniques for teaching English to pupils from urban and rural backgrounds are worth considering (Omidire, 2020). This would increase rural students' confidence and allow them to compete with their metropolitan counterparts. Furthermore, it should be of great assistance to these students throughout placement. Even though rural connection roads are being built and rural advancement is happening at all levels, the routes remain rough and inadequate for rural students. Just as better access is crucial for social progress, the learning method should affect modifications in rural learners and increase their competency.

### Conclusion

Understanding the variations in behavior and culture of learners in these countries is critical so that they can build a good environment and embrace the variances, as well as offer specific activities that are more suited to learners from these regions. They must encourage learners to study not only for the sake of completing courses but also for the sake of living; they must understand that English is a living language. As a result, the lecturer must be an informational facilitator and instill in pupils an appreciation for English. English teachers, particularly those who educate rural kids, must be patient and methodical. They are supposed to perform miraculously under difficult circumstances. This is a major challenge that may appear impractical. However, it would be extremely unfair on the section of the English instructor to underestimate the severity of the matter and deprive pupils of opportunities that are primarily achieved through effective communication. The precision parts of instructing English as a tool of communication would be lost.

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