

The Second Language through the First Language – An Experimental Approach

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Abstract

This paper entitled ‘The Second Language through the First Language – An Experimental Approach’ attempts to teach the second language to the learner through his mother tongue. This idea is resulted due to the fact that the learner to some extent is familiar with the concepts in his mother tongue, but the actual problem is in making sentences in English. At the initial stage, the learner finds it difficult to think in English and convert the same in English. Hence the authors started exploring a method where the learner gets the concepts in his mother tongue and is initiated to convert the same in English. Here the status is the stock is sufficient, but the supply lacks free flow. On receiving the first version of the converted matter from the vernacular language to English the authors carefully identify the problem areas of the learner. A thorough analysis is made in the presence of the learner with an attempt to rectify the overall defects in the writing.

After this, a second attempt is made and a considerable improvement is experienced. By this time, the learner gains some knowledge of writing sentences of his own. If another attempt is made there will be a lot of improvement.

Key words: Teaching English, different methods, problems, implementation, language skills, fledged training, confidence, implementation level

Acquisition of Language Skills at the Entry Level of Engineering Course

Training the second language with respect to almost all skills at the entry level of an engineering course has become a difficult task in the present scenario. A higher satisfactory level is not generally realized by the teachers of English. Having knowledge about the different methods of teaching English, the teachers' problems arise at the implementation level on the learners. This difficulty is due to many reasons.

- i) The level of English of nearly 50% of students at the entry level in many engineering institutions is mostly disgusting.
- ii) Lack of interest of students towards improving their language skills.
- iii) The duration of teaching the students i.e two semesters not found to be sufficient in offering a full fledged training.
- iv) Total ignorance of students related to the basics of English language.
- v) Teachers' lack of involvement in training the students.
- vi) Teachers' way of treating the subject only in the examination point of view.

What Methods can be Initiated in Training the Students?

The teacher first of all should assume the role of a trainer. He should explore all possibilities in the course of his teaching to train the students in learning the language skills. Depending upon the creativity of the teacher many methods can be applied on the learners. The teacher should see to it that the learners' confidence level is increasing day by day and also the interest shown by them.

'The Second Language through the First Language – An Experimental Approach' is a paper showing the method of making the learner to improve his writing skills through his mother tongue. An article on 'India's Independence' was written by the authors first. Then it was translated in simple Tamil. In the same way, it can be done in many languages, "even basic language can be taught" (Pavesi 81). The translated version was given to a student who is not that much good in language and needs improvement.

By going through the translation of the student, it is understood that there are nearly 39 problem areas. The problems identified are as follows.

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Dr. R. Murugan and Prof. N. Lakshmana Perumal

The Second Language through the First Language – An Experimental Approach

- i) Problems in the use of tenses.
- ii) Improper sentences
- iii) Certain spelling errors

The problems are noted below.

1. Problems in Tenses

S.No	Errors in Tenses	Corrections Offered
1	Fall down	Brought down
2	Flies	Flew
3	Freedom does not got easily	Achieving freedom was not easy
4	Freedom got by.....	Freedom achieved by.....
5	Have enjoyed	Enjoyed
6	We have changed	We became
7	Has celebrated	Is celebrated
8	Will celebrated	Is celebrated
9	Prime Minister...can be accepted	Accepts
10	Flag can be raised	Unfurls
11	Gun salute	Is given
12	Speech was given	Addresses the nation
13	Respect the freedom fighters	Pays homage....
14	Function has been conducted	Is conducted
15	Collector has flag hoisted	Hoists the flag
16	Collector accepted the police salute	Accepts the police salute
17	Has been celebrating	are celebrating
18	Will deliver their wishes	Express their wishes
19	Prize has been distributed	Prizes are distributed
20	Freedom fighters has struggled	Freedom fighters struggled

2. Improper Sentences

S.No	Improper Sentences
1	Youngsters and old people have enjoyed the newly got freedom.....
	Youngsters and elders enjoyed the newly got freedom.....
2	According to those places, those minister of that places has flag hoisted and national anthem has been played.
	Similar celebrations are carried on in many states. The Chief Ministers of those states hoist the National Flag and National Anthem is sung.
3	Same as that, the schools, colleges, offices, and other places are done this process.
	Similarly, in places such as schools, colleges, offices the celebrations take place.
4	Arts and sports has been conducted and prize has been distributed for the winners.
	Sports and cultural events are conducted and prizes are distributed for the winners.
5	Our unions and our unity have been prevent and that has our duty to prevent it.
	It is our duty to safeguard our unity and integrity.

Certain Spelling Errors

This learner does not have problems in spellings. Except two words all other words have been written correctly.

The problems identified are explained to the learner clearly till they are understood properly. At this stage, the learner is again asked to translate the same article.

Now, the learner has absolute familiarity with the content of the article as it has already been attempted.

By going through the translated version it is found that the learner has now committed only six mistakes. This result has clearly proved that English could also be trained through one's mother tongue. This could be immensely useful for those having poor communication skills.

If nearly 50 articles in mother tongue are given for practice, there could be tremendous improvement in the writing skills of the learner.

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