

Language Teaching: A Brief Case Study of Indian Education System

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Abstract

Students studying in India or following Indian Education curriculum are introduced to three languages but majority of them are not balanced bilinguals/multilinguals. The existing Indian teaching system is practised only in three languages (English, Hindi with one language of their choice) both at national and international levels. India is a multicultural country (bears both the language and cultural diversity) and VIII Schedule of Indian Constitution supports 22 Indian languages. Most of the students are not native or balanced bilingual or multilingual. Language teaching is an important aspect as language is not just the medium of communication but also a medium for education.

Adopting an effective language teaching method for a multi-cultural country like India is a must. Further research is also necessary to determine the adequate solutions to these problems.

This paper attempts to analyze and identify the reason why Indian education system is unable to produced balanced bilinguals even when students study two languages for 10 years with their literature. A major claim of this paper is to develop an effective methodology for teaching in various aspects.

Keywords: Language Teaching, Problems, Methodology, Communicative Competence, Indian Education System

1. Introduction

Due to the influence of the British, we adopted English education system. In course of time, English language is promoted in the name of educational reform. As a result, this is narrowing down the scope and opportunity of Indian languages both at school and university levels. In today's classroom focus must be about teaching languages so that students use them to communicate with the native speakers of the language.

2. Literature Review

An approach that Business Studies teachers can use to teach ESLLs(English second language learners) is known as a learner-centred approach. Froyd and Simpson (2014) postulated that developing a learner-centred approach to teaching and learning is recommended because ESLLs can better acquire language when activities are planned that actively involve learners. Learner-centred approach is an instructional approach in which learners influence the content, activities, materials, and pace of learning. This learning model places the learner in the centre of the learning process. The instructor provides learners with opportunities to learn independently and from one another and coaches learners in the skills they need to do so effectively (Froyd & Simpson, 2014). A Paradigm Shift in teaching and learning can occur through technology and development in the field of education has accelerated a shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred approaches in language learning and teaching.

Taking example from a country like south Africa. South Africa has 11 official languages, and many unofficial ones. English is the most commonly spoken language in official and commercial public life but only the fifth most spoken home language. The country's democratic constitution, which came into effect on 4 February 1997, recognised 11 official languages, to which the state guaranteed equal status. According to the 2011 census, isiZulu is the mother tongue of 22.7% of South Africa's population, followed by isiXhosa at 16%, Afrikaans at 13.5%, English at 9.6%, Setswana at 8% and Sesotho at 7.6%. The remaining official languages are spoken at home by less than 5% of the population each. Most South Africans are multilingual, able to speak more than one language. English and Afrikaans speaking people tend not to have much ability in indigenous languages, but are fairly fluent in each other's language. Most South Africans speak English, which is fairly ubiquitous in official and commercial public life. English has been both a highly influential language in South Africa, and a language influenced, in turn, by adaptation in the country's different communities. Around half of the country's people have a speaking knowledge of English. English was declared the official language of the Cape Colony in 1822 (replacing Dutch), and the stated language policy of the government of the time was one of Anglicisation. On the formation of the Union of South Africa in 1910, which united the former Boer republics of the Transvaal and Orange Free State with the Cape and Natal colonies, English was made the official language together with Dutch, which was replaced by Afrikaans in 1925. Today, English is South Africa's lingua franca, and the primary language of government, business, and commerce. The new education curriculum makes two languages compulsory at school, with English the language of learning and teaching at most schools and tertiary educations. According to the 2011 census, English is spoken as a home language by almost 5 million people (or 8.2% of the population). The challenge for non-English-speaking learners, or English Second language learners (ESLLs), is not only overcoming the language barrier, but also overcoming low expectations and low academic achievement. Therefore, there is a great need to better understand how to best teach ESLLs (McCardle, Mele-McCarthy, Cutting, & D'Emilio, 2005). Lacking knowledge and skills with teaching pedagogies,

classroom management and special education could greatly hinder the teaching process and learners' ability to achieve the learning goals set forth in the classroom (Xu, 2012). The quality of assessments for ESLLs should be improved and that schools should ensure that all ESLLs receive the full range of services they need to both to bring them to English proficiency as well as to improve their performance on academic content areas. He also suggests that teachers should be given more training opportunities so teachers can better meet the needs of such students (Roekel, 2008). The grade 10 Business Studies assessments as outlined in National Curriculum Statement, places a tremendous amount of emphasis on assignments, continuous testing, presentation and a daunting year-end examination (DOE, 2011). The year-end examination consists of 300 marks and is of 3 hours duration. This paper contributes a staggering 75% to the learners' final mark, due to the high expectations of the subject there is a lot of pressure placed onto the learner. The other challenge is that teachers may not know how to meet the learning needs of ESLLs doing Business Studies. An approach that Business Studies teachers can use to teach ESLLs is known as a learner-centred approach. Froyd and Simpson (2014) postulated that developing a learner-centred approach to teaching and learning is recommended because ESLLs can better acquire language when activities are planned that actively involve learners. Learner-centred approach is an instructional approach in which learners influence the content, activities, materials, and pace of learning. This learning model places the learner in the centre of the learning process. The instructor provides learners with opportunities to learn independently and from one another and coaches learners in the skills they need to do so effectively (Froyd & Simpson, 2014). A Paradigm Shift in teaching and learning can occur through technology and development in the field of education has accelerated a shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred approaches in language learning and teaching.

Abundant research is available on the language barriers related to health, medical, medicine issued but only few researchers conducted in the area under investigation as Moghaddam, Peyvandi and Wang (2011) explored that the non-English students studying in English speaking country can feel language as a barrier and this barrier can affect the extent of student's openness to diversity (5). Are (2013) has explored in his paper that African research scholars face problem while working beyond their native languages particular in English. He also recommended that "research into the pedagogical implication of the existence of different languages within some communities in Africa must also be emphasized". Temple (2006) conducted a very interesting study entitled "Being Bilingual: Issues for cross language Research" and explored that the research different language communities are increasing very rapidly. Academicians and practitioners are developing bilingual community research. Such academicians and researchers think that they bridge the gap between two or more communities which have different languages. The medical students in Arabic countries also considered that English is a great obstacle for their learning and knowledge activities. Sabbour, Dewedar and Kandil (2008) conducted a study while using survey method and data were gathered from 400 medical students. And 150 staff members. The majority of medical students considered that the English is not an obstacle for their learning and academic activities. But on the other side the few

faculty members think that they feel English as an obstacle only in first year of their medical schools. Few students desire to translate their medical terms in Arabic and majority of students prefer to learn clinical study in Arabic language. Most of the literature related to information, library or related fields is available in foreign languages. English language is the most widely used language in almost all areas of study. Mostly student particular researchers consults /develop the literature in English language (Anderson, 1974). Constantino (1995) explored that students think that English can be barrier for their academic activities and to overcome this issue they consulted the public libraries to enhance their language skills and expertise. It is also concluded that the library can be a good place for students to learn information and literary skills and can also be the platform for learning foreign language as well (Bordnoaro, 2006) . The language issues not only occurs while conducting the research but also language is also a one of the big barrier in the class room learning. Duff and Li (2004) conducted the research to explore the same phenomenon and explored that the teachers desired to provide extensive teaching and peer interaction but on the other side student needs less peer interaction and more error correction due to difficulties in understanding the second language.

Despite the fact, English has attained the status of the international language and is quite recognized in most academic and non-academic fields, the interaction with the students and the data provided below shows how English language become predicament in the education and learning. Therefore there are gaps in the knowledge about the language barriers and this study will surely help to reflect and fill this intellectual gap.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Objective

This paper attempts to analyze and identify the reason why Indian education system is unable to produce balanced bilinguals even when students study two languages for 10 years with their literature. A major claim of this paper is to develop an effective methodology for teaching in various aspects.

3.2 Limitation of the Study

This research work analyzed the language proficiency of the bilingual learners and applied the methodology to improve the teaching to some extent and focused on elicitation methods rather than cramming method for the enhancement of education system.

3.3 Data Collection and Procedure

The researcher collected the data from students living in the hostel pursuing Masters in various courses. Students so contacted were living in the hostel in multilingual setting. Questions were asked to them about their language proficiency and the drawbacks they think their schools had.

I used various tape recorders for the data collection, asked some questions to the respondents regarding their schools and the language they are taught in and got the answers. The data collected was from 15 respondents. It includes both males and females between the age of 22-26.

3.4 Nature of Data and Participant

It is a pilot study and the researcher used the process of a simple random sampling method for the collection of data from the respective students.

4. Data Analysis

Question 1: How many languages were taught in school?

Question 2: How many languages you speak fluently with ease?

Question 3: Any difficulties you faced while learning language in school?

Question 4: Translate this sentence “Baarish hoti hai”.

NAME	BOARD	ANSWER 1	ANSWER 2	ANSWER 3	ANSWER 4
Student 1 (Female)	ICSE	English, Hindi, Sanskrit	English, Hindi	Yes, in memorising rules of a language.	It rains.
Student2(Female)	ICSE	English, Hindi, Sanskrit	English, Hindi	No	Rain happens.
Student 3 (Female)	ICSE	English, Hindi, Sanskrit	English, Hindi	Yes, to mug up the rules was a tedious task for me creates lots of confusion.	It rains.
Student 4 (Female)	BSEB	Comp. English, Hindi, Sanskrit	Hindi	Yes, as it was not in practice. Even English was not compulsory so never focused on it.	It is raining.
Student 5	ICSE	English,	English,	Yes,	It is raining.

(Female)		Hindi, Sanskrit	Hindi	because lots of theoretical work and not practical.	
Student 6 (Female)	UP BOARD	English, Hindi, Sanskrit	Hindi	Yes, but don't know the reason.	No response.
Student 7 (Female)	CBSE	English, Hindi, Sanskrit	English, Hindi	No	Rain happening
Student 8 (Female)	CBSE	English, Hindi, Sanskrit	Hindi	Yes, because they focused more at literature and more use of written language than spoken.	It rains.
Student 9 (Male)	ICSE	English, Hindi, Sanskrit	English, Hindi	Yes, at Pronouncing and grammar	It rains.
Student 10 (Female)	BSEB	Comp. English, Hindi, Sanskrit	Hindi	Yes, in understanding meaning and usage of grammar.	Rain falls.
Student 11 (Male)	UP BOARD	English, Hindi, Urdu	Mixed	No	It rains.
Student 12 (Male)	CBSE	English, Hindi, Urdu	English, Hindi	Yes, at the grammar level.	It rains.
Student 14 (Male)	UP BOARD	English, Hindi, Urdu	Hindi	Yes, in understanding tenses	Rain falling.
Student 15 (Male)	J.A.C. Ranchi	English, Hindi, Urdu	Hindi, Urdu	Yes, in grammar	It rains.

Observations

Generally speaking, based on investigation and results, we can say the Direct method is still used in education system and the result of this approach is usually an inability on the part of students to use the language for communication. From the above data we can draw the conclusion that vocabulary and grammar rules are usually taught in isolation from context. Context is more often treated as the source for doing grammatical analysis exercises. Focus is parsing, that is, the forms and inflections of words. The teacher has the authority in the classroom and students tend to follow the teacher. Moreover, students learn grammar rules deductively; that is, first they are provided grammar rules with examples, second, they are asked to memorize the rules, and finally, they are told to use the rules in other examples. It ignores contextualized learning and fails to expose learners to 'authentic varieties in a 'functional context', which usually results in students 'knowing' something about the language(competence) but not being able to 'do' anything with that knowledge (performance). Since structure analysis and vocabulary memorization are emphasized and are almost regarded as the language learning aim instead of its meanings, learning how to use the language and how to communicate through the language is ignored to a large extent which result in failure of language proficiency in either of the languages. Result shows our education system is just degree driven where student learns language for 10 years but cannot be proficient in it. Further, for some language barrier block the students understanding of concepts in other subjects as well. Where we try to be half good in something else, ending up being no good at anything.

Findings

From the interaction and research and finding from above data we can state the following key points that need to be taken care of:

- Difficult to retain things we study
- Not urging to translate abstract concepts into words and essays
- Not urging to solve critical thinking issues
- Abundance of written work
- Teachers just dictate the facts of concepts
- Barrier of hesitations
- Extroverts more active than introverts

We can state that there still prevails a traditional way of learning theory in our heads, that is called rote learning. As many schools still rely on classroom and book-based teaching, there is much repetition and pressure of exams for reinforcement and review on students. As a whole teaching-learning process is examination-centred, and degree-driven where students are over dependent on teachers. Consequently, students may be taught by teachers who lack the knowledge and skills necessary for quality education. Teacher expertise is also one of the important factors in student achievement. Students seem to study only to score good marks and to pass in exams. One is inferior or superior depending on marks secured, it is assumed. The

knowledge is largely forgotten after the semester exam is over. The only solution to these problems is to promote skill based learning instead of rote based learning and bolster innovative ideas from students.

Conclusion

The present study was conducted to know the failure of methodology used in language teaching learning 3 language for 10 years yet unable to produce balanced bilingual and English language as a barrier for students or not. The data collected the people living in a multilingual setting having different level of experience, gender and qualifications and analyzed with the help of questionnaire about language proficiency and the drawbacks their schools had.

The results in the study shows the respondents considers English language is a huge barrier in learning and understanding things clearly. Therefore communication gap between the teacher and ESLL's allude to feelings of demotivation, frustration, low self-esteem and fear of failure(Naka,2017).In order to pin point the factors involved, educators must consider the language barrier, how it is formed, at what level it is retarding the pupil, what educational approaches are needed to meet the language needs of the deprived and how varied must the teaching approaches be in order to involve the learner.

This study has some implications for policy makers and professionals. This study will help the academicians to revise their syllabus as per need of the stack holders. Students can get to know the importance related to the language issues and to know the remedies to overcome the language and recommend this research to other academic professionals as well and at large scale of population to check the gap and whether the English language acts as a barrier for them in learning or not and to make a well formed mind instead of well filled mind.

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