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Language: A Connect between Culture and Society

Prof. Ruma Agwekar

(B.Sc, ADSM, MBA (Fin.), Dip. EXIM

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Abstract:

Language a very important aspect of the communication system gives description to ideas and perceptions. Every language is easy to deliver through its speaking and writing skills. Humans have the capacity to acquire mother tongue, are able to speak it fluently by three years old. A mother tongue indicates the strong tie with the culture and the society. The languages are categorised as second language, foreign language or also local language. A language is acquired either by adoption, learning or adaptation.

The languages have evolved through years, as major communicator. They have revolutionised the societies, built up culture and communities. The frame of language has built up people and nation. The languages - their multilingual orientation has improved rationalisation. The choice of language indicates a person's lifestyle, culture or even livelihood. (About 200 teachers, of Adi Dravida higher School, Tamilnadu, (secondary, primary, Principal), who are a connect between the culture and society, were approached to opt for learning English as a second language).

Keywords: Language, Connect, Culture, Society

(A) Introduction:

As students speak, write, and represent, they also listen to, read, and view the ideas and experiences of others. ... Language helps **students develop an awareness of the skills and strategies they need to complete learning tasks successfully** and to communicate about themselves as learners.

Languages don't limit our ability to perceive the world or to think about the world, rather, **they focus our attention, and thought on specific aspects of the world.** There are so many more examples of how language influences perception, like with regards to gender and describing events.

Language is one of the most important parts of any culture. It is **the way by which people**

communicate with one another, build relationships, and create a sense of community. There are roughly 6,500 spoken languages in the world today, and each is unique in a number of ways. Although English is not the most spoken language in the world, it is the official language in 53 countries and is spoken as a first language by around 400 million people worldwide. ... It gives you an open door to the world and **helps you communicate with global citizens.**

The journalist Manu Joseph wrote in a The New York Times article that, due to the prominence and usage of the language and the desire for English-language education, "English is the de facto national language of India. It is a bitter truth." In his book, *In Search of Indian English: History, Politics and Indigenisation*, Ranjan Kumar Auddy shows that the history of the rise of Indian nationalism and the history of the emergence of Indian English are deeply inter-related.

Under the Indian Constitution, English is the language of India's Supreme Court and of all the high courts of India. However, as allowed by the Constitution, Hindi is also used in courts in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan by virtue of special presidential approval. As of 2018, the high courts of Punjab and Haryana were also awaiting presidential approval to use Hindi alongside English.

The first occurrence of the term Indian English dates from 1696, though the term did not become common until the 19th century. In the colonial era, the most common terms in use were Anglo-Indian English, or simply Anglo-Indian, both dating from 1860. Other less common terms in use were Indo-Anglian (dating from 1897) and Indo-English (1912). An item of Anglo-Indian English was known as an Anglo-Indianism from 1851.

In the modern era, a range of colloquial portmanteau words for Indian English have been used. The earliest of these is Indlish (recorded from 1962), and others include Indglish (1974), Indenglish (1979), Indglish (1984), Indish (1984), Inglish (1985) and Indianlish (2007).

(B) Objective:

1. To provide ESL to interact with the outside world.
2. To improve self-confidence and social dignity amongst the teachers through SEL.
3. To acquire proficiency in English as a foreign language (EFL).

(C) Research Methodology:

The core group identified Adi Dravidar Schools, Tamilnadu as their base. There are 11 schools have a population of over 3000 (including boys and girls) The schools provide Higher secondary and primary education to the population of economically backward and socially marginalised. The people of this community need to be empowered and have to learn various ways to- amongst the people. Also, it is of utmost importance for them to learn skills to earn income.

The people from the community lack resources and access to education, employment, and

other income earning opportunities, which are limited. Various social development programmes and educational programmes have been identified to bring prosperity and integrity to the community.

Let's Teach English a NGO has identified the need of the educational development. The requirement was floated with the schools, primary and secondary. The requirement raised was for the teachers, secondary and primary grade, also The Principal of the school, age and sex no bar.

(D) Secondary Research:

259,678 (0.02%) Indians spoke English as their first language. It concluded that approximately 83 million Indians (6.8%) reported English as their second language, and 46 million (3.8%) reported it as their third language, making English the second-most spoken language in India.

Indian English (IE) is a class of varieties of the English language spoken in India, and among the Indian diaspora elsewhere in the world. English is used by the Indian government for communication along with Hindi, as enshrined in the Constitution. English is an official language of 7 states and 5 Union Territories and also an additional official language of 7 states and 1 Union Territory. English is also the sole official language of the Judiciary of India, unless a state governor or legislature mandates the use of a regional language, or the president has given approval for the use of regional languages in courts.

After gaining independence from the United Kingdom in 1947, English remained an official language of the new Dominion of India and later the Republic of India. Only a few hundred thousand Indians, or less than 0.1% of the total population, spoke English as their first language.

India ranks 50 out of 100 countries in the 2021 EF English Proficiency Index published by the EF Education First. The index gives the country a score of 496 indicating "low proficiency". India ranks 8th out of 24 Asian countries included in the index. Among Asian countries, Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia, South Korea, Hong Kong, China and Macau received higher scores than India.

India now claims to be the world's second-largest English-speaking country. The most reliable estimate is **around 10% of its population** or 125 million people, second only to the US and expected to quadruple in the next decade.

It is **both the most widely spoken first as well as second language in India**, while English is just the 44th most widely spoken first language even though it is the second-most widely spoken second language. ... There is a clear class element at work— 41% of the rich could speak English as against less than 2% of the poor.

(E) Primary Research:

A database was prepared of the teachers of Adi Dravida Higher School, Tamilnadu. The teachers are of higher grade, secondary grade or primary grade. They are conversant in Tamil and are totally unknown to English as a language. The database was filtered and updated.

The number of teachers approached for the purpose were above 200. A database of volunteers for teaching was gathered through advertisement on social media. The names and details of the teacher was forwarded to each volunteer by their respective volunteer coordinator. The volunteers made the references their contacts. Which has been referred as point of contact. The volunteers had to adhere to the norms of making a call. In case of unavailability of the point of contact the volunteer left polite messages with their introduction and work details. The volunteers did face some intermediary problems, such as:

1. Inability to get through the call.
2. The teacher's reluctance in learning the second language.
3. The teacher's busy schedule, or some other household work.

The volunteer had to access the teacher in a minimum time frame. If the teacher did not correspond or was showed inability for the class, new teacher was allocated. The teachers were associated in a short period of 6 days with their volunteers. Each volunteer had to update on the sessions conducted. A validation was kept through google feedback form.

The validate was on two platforms 1. on the group about the communication, the lessons learnt and any obstacles achieved. 2. A feedback form had to be filled after each session completed. Weekly the updates feedbacks were matched. In case of a miss a feedback follow-up was done strictly on What'sapp messaging.

During the interaction as it was the first call, both the parties were not known to each other, the interaction was suggestive of many apprehensions, suggestions, questions with respect to why this dialect, why this particular language, how will it help, how will it serve the purpose.

(F) Data Analysis:

Even though more than 200 odd list was obtained from the school, less than 50% could be converted into interactive communication. The interaction between the volunteer and the teacher is twice a week for 1 hour each. The course is of 10 weeks.

1. At point of contact the student (Teacher) came up with various direct questions. The questions were related from purpose of the language, the applicability of the language, the adaptation of the language. Some trivial questions were also raised as to the point of contact being old, or at retiring age, or the society does not involve upgrades, or I do not have much time.

A language is ability to communicate with a difference. It helps in disbursement. It helps in getting things done. The language is a speedy way of communication. A fastest way to get going in a given environment. It is thus required that a person knows the local language very well. It is also required that an individual picks up the mother tongue.

In response to the ambiguity and confusion about learning so late – Reasoning of life is for continuity, continuous learning, for constant approach was explained.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis exists in two forms: the weak form and the strong form. In the weak form, the theory suggests that language has an influence on our world view and our thinking process. The strong form states that language determines our thought process.

2. At the point of contact (Teacher), there was ambiguity and confusion about the language – the Teacher was explained that knowledge of third language can offer a broader arena, a viewpoint in better perspective. The point of contact here was also told about English being a very familiar language. It is also a universal language. In India various documents, including banking, court and government rules and regulations are followed in English. The hold on the language will help you easy accessibility to documents and increase your awareness. The language reframes and restructures your mind. It will help discipline your life. You are enhancing your scope of interaction and movement. It is easier rebuild confidence and optimism. Regain comfortability of culture and knowledge. English as a second language is helpful as it offers a competitive edge in education, society and employment. has been made compulsory in many schools. It has been made part of the curriculum or has been undertaken as an educational development drive or programme by many institutions, NGOs.

The NEP, 2020 has emphasized on the use of mother tongue or local language as the medium of instruction till Class 5 while, recommending its continuance till Class 8 and beyond.

It recommends that all students will learn three languages in their school under the formula. **The three languages learned by children will be the choices of States, regions, and of course the students themselves.** However, **at least two of the three languages should be native to India**, one of which is most likely to be the local/ regional language. **The rule will apply to both private and public schools.** High-quality textbooks, including in science, will be made available at home languages

In cases where home-language textbook material is not available, the language of the transaction between teachers and students will still remain the home language wherever possible.

Teachers will be encouraged to use a bilingual approach, including bilingual teaching-learning materials, with those students whose home language may be different from the medium of instruction. The original draft of the NEP made teaching Hindi to all school students compulsory but that clause was removed in the final document.

3. Let's teach English 10 weeks curriculum-

The 10 weeks curriculum prepared by the NGO Let's teach English keeps the following aspects in mind:

1. Improving the conversational aspect of the point of contact.

2. Conversing more on relevant topics.
3. Becoming easy and authentic with the grammar.
4. The time period allows perfecting the parts of speech.
5. The volunteers are given freedom to follow their own curriculum or method of instruction.
6. Every week the point of contact is introduced to a word. This is to build vocabulary, part of speech and improve sentence making.
7. The set of words are also to build soft skills as independence, confidence, optimism etc.
8. An activity as pair and share is carried out. This is to identify the common points, activities you like or any social happening or story. The activity builds up conversation, it helps a free flow, curbs inhibitions or restrictions.

4. Social Emotional Learning:

Social emotional learning (SEL) is a methodology that helps students of all ages to better comprehend their emotions, to feel those emotions fully, and demonstrate empathy for others. The five disciplines of social emotional learning are self-awareness, self-movement, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision making.

Social Emotional learning. A proper communication gives a confidence and right approach to the outer world. It is an integral part of the human development. It helps develop healthy relationships, without confusion and ambiguity. Build emotions, empathy, healthy relationships with friends, family and your network.

Social emotional learning develops rapport with the internal and external environment. It helps goal setting and decision making. Social emotional learning can lessen stress, a positive approach and happier, meaningful relationship with the child. A teacher well-equipped with the SEL model can develop model for child development in coherence with the society.

5. Language as a tool for cultural development:

As suggested earlier in the study the database is of, economically backward, socially marginalised secondary, primary school teachers and principals. To improve the involvement of the group it is important to undertake different skill and educational development programmes.

A teacher has to be intensely involved with the society. They bring about the much-needed change in the society. The educationist in exchange programmes, as a creator or curator has to know various embodiments of the culture and the society. This holds true not only for the society within but society around and across various cultures. A SEL option offers a bridge between the society and culture. It is also a tool for social and cultural development. A conversant language, which is familiar, e.g local language, regional language will get many messages across. A conversant and smooth flow will give faster and better output. The language is a direct response of social norm, behaviour and mannerisms. The knowhow of a language can strengthen your expressions of a culture.

If culture was a house, then language was the key to the front door, to all the rooms inside.” — Khaled Hosseini, Afghan-born American novelist and physician

6. Acquiring English as a foreign language (EFL):

In India the fluency in English is considered as an intelligent, resourceful, person of the society. The English language holds a competitive standing, is a benchmark to qualify various examinations. The parts of India as Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu has a maximum population of people conversant with spoken and written English. English holds a position of one of the most conversant, widely acclaimed universal language. Learning a foreign language satisfies an individuals constant yearning for search and learning. The most important making a competitive curriculum vitae.

In this rapidly changing scenario acquisition of foreign language, gives prompts, response and improves mingling with the different societies, norms and cultures. A particular language is indicative of its mannerisms; thus, an individual can improve one's thought process, offer to the society in leaps and bounds.

A teacher who offers momentum to the society can offer flow, a rapid change to the society. E.g, various orators, politicians, thinkers, scientists; speakers have brought a phenomenal change, a vast difference to the society. This change need not be universal, but to your internal and immediate circle of interference.

(G) Conclusions:

1. The Contact database was not interactive.
2. There was lack of communication from the senior authorities to the teachers, with respect to making the contact.
3. The teachers looked less inclined to learn the second language.
4. There was lack of interest or initiation from the teacher's side.
5. The programme was introduced in the times of pandemic. The teachers did not show interest for learning in the free time.
6. Many of the volunteers withdrew from the programme for sickness and trauma due to pandemic.
7. The low turnout could be the volunteer's inability to justify the importance of SEL or ESL.

(H) Recommendations:

1. NGO should take initiative on regular basis to reach out to teachers for such programmes.
2. The educational programme should be extended to students of the schools.
3. Other languages can be added to the educational programmes. This would offer wider platform for interaction.
4. The educational programme should be extended to a year so as to offer larger span for learning.
5. Appropriate communication should be received from the signing authority to prevent

communication gap.

6. Appropriate research and exact communication should be developed with the database.
7. An orientation programme or introductory communication should be developed for the teacher, student for 100% learning.

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