
English Language: A Key to explore the Globalized World

Abstract:

Mrs.Nitasha Grewal

Department of English

KVA DAV College for Women, Karnal

In India, English is the direct off shoot of colonial rule. Colonial rule was primarily concerned with maintaining the imperial stronghold as a system of political units and at the same time systematically modifying a socio-cultural context in its own image. The introduction of western education in India, among other things, engendered in the Indian elite a spirit of fostering Indian nationalism amongst the people.

Today, English is undoubtedly recognized the most important language to learn for the increasingly mobile international community. This is a fact that seems to be irreversible. English, no longer is a foreign language in India although that was the role it was meant to play when the British introduced it many years ago.

English is the chief language in the Indian education system today. Today, careers in the field of science and technology, business and commerce require a good knowledge of English. Most of the works in the field of space, nuclear technology, medicine etc. are available only in English. The vocabulary and terminology used in these are available in English. Therefore, English has become a passport of getting a good job not only in India but also abroad in almost all fields. With the growing importance of computers in every field, the English language has received a further boost.

Historically, since its introduction to India, English as a language has played an important role in education. A large number of books are published in English in India. India is the third largest English book producing country after the United States and the U.K. The present paper will analyse English Language as a key to explore the globalized world.

English Language: A Key to explore the Globalized World

Paper:

Mrs.Nitasha Grewal

Department of English

KVA DAV College for Women, Karnal

In India, English is the direct off shoot of colonial rule. Colonial rule was primarily concerned with maintaining the imperial stronghold as a system of political units and at the same time systematically modifying a socio-cultural context in its own image. The introduction of western education in India, among other things, engendered in the Indian elite a spirit of fostering Indian nationalism amongst the people. As Rev. J.R Lange wrote in 1806:

“English education is also welding the natives of different presidencies into one patriotic mass, with community of feeling on Indian subjects” (Kapoor 142)

Today, English is undoubtedly recognized the most important language to learn for the increasingly mobile international community. This is a fact that seems to be irreversible. English, no longer is a foreign language in India although that was the role it was meant to play when the British introduced it many years ago. In the words of Raja Rao (in his foreword to *Kanthapura*):

“we shall have English language with us and amongst us, and not as guest or friend, but as one of our own, of our castes, our creed, our sect and of our tradition”(Kapoor 190)

The history of the spread of English in India is comparable to that of several other languages. It is familiar phenomenon for one language to serve as a *lingua franca* or language of special functions over a large area. Sanskrit, Persian, Braj, Khari boli are good examples to prove this fact. But the spread of English language has helped in removing barriers in global communication to an extent that no other language has been able to do.

Many writers across world agree that English is the ‘queen of languages’. Shri C. Rajgopalachari once wrote:

“English language is the greatest gift of Goddess Saraswati to India”. (Thorpe)

It is well recognized that English-speaking persons can be traced in all the continents of the world and is the reason for its importance in the compulsory education of many countries across the globe. India is a country with diverse regions and people with diverse languages are its citizens. People are so attached to their local languages, that they sometimes end up treating

people speaking other languages as foreigners or strangers. As India was a British Colony, English became an official language of India, for all diplomatic and administrative conveniences, and thereby came to be widely used in both spoken and literary contexts. But the reason that English remained an official language after 1947 is attributed to the fact that as a language it played an important role in unifying regions with different people under one flag and constitution. So, English could be rightly termed as the Lingua Franca of India. In a country where Individual mother tongues number several hundred, and where over 30 languages are spoken by more than a million native speakers, English is one common language that is used by people from diverse backgrounds in India as an acceptable vehicular language with high levels of adoption over decades.

Historically, since its introduction to India, English as a language has played an important role in education. A large number of books are published in English in India. India is the third largest English book producing country after the United States and the U.K. Indians writers and poets such as Tara Dutta, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Sarojini Naidu, Vikram Seth, Arundhati Roy have contributed to the rich literary tradition of India. Mahatma Gandhi had said:

“English is a language of international commerce, it is the language of diplomacy and it contains many a rich literary treasure; it gives us an introduction to western thought and culture.”(Thorpe)

English is the chief language in the Indian education system today. Today, careers in the field of science and technology, business and commerce require a good knowledge of English. Most of the works in the field of space, nuclear technology, medicine etc. are available only in English. The vocabulary and terminology used in these are available in English. Therefore, English has become a passport of getting a good job not only in India but also abroad in almost all fields. With the growing importance of computers in every field, the English language has received a further boost.

A multi-lingual educated Indian (meaning thereby an ‘English knowing’ Indian) uses his/her native mother dialect with close relatives and in intimate family circles, he uses the major regional language while interacting with the ‘ordinary folk’, but when he enters a deluxe-super market or the lobby of a five star hotel he uses English. If he travels by bus or ordinary rail-coach he uses one of the regional Indian languages, but when he travels in first-class or on a plane he uses nothing but English. Thus, in the course of its spread, English has been transformed for the

people for whom it was originally an alien language, it is argued, into their 'own' language, a language of inter-regional communication, a link language, a lingua franca, a language of education and culture and the language of power and social control.

There is no doubt that English is the language of learning. Most of the world's books are written in English. Most of the research papers are published in English and one cannot even think of studying science without learning English. The internet has transformed our lives and it would be funny to imagine an internet without English.

Language is a skill based subject not a content or knowledge subject like history and sciences. While learning history what one learns is the subject matter. One learns certain facts about history. But, while learning language one does not gather information about the language, but learns the language itself. Each language subject or area has different educational tools that are likely suited with it. The use of several technical tools has a significant effect on the learning process of each area of the language. English language skills are classified as input skills (listening and reading) and output skills (speaking and writing). For improving language skills it is essential that English should be taught with these skills :-

Listening

Listening is defined as the process of identifying and understanding the speech of the speakers. It involves; understanding speaker's accent or pronunciation, speaker's grammar and vocabulary, and comprehension of meaning. The listener should be capable of doing these four things at the same time. Therefore, listening is very important in the process of second language education. Listening is considered as a principal language skill. Through listening, people can acquire a large portion of their education, their information, their ideas, and their understanding of the world. As an input skill, listening plays a vital role in student's language development.

Reading

Reading is the process of understanding a written text by the learner. It is an important input skill which depends on the vocabulary and background knowledge of the learner in the second language. During the reading process, the English language learner can improve his vocabulary and terms, acquire new information and ideas, and enhance his real-world knowledge.

Speaking

Human communication can be taken place between the speaker and the listener if only they understand each other. Both speaker and listener have a positive function to perform in simple

terms. The speaker has to convert his message into spoken language, while the listener has to understand the language of the speaker. Inserting technology in learning English language speaking can take several forms as indicated in the following sections.

Writing

The writing process can be very difficult for learners of English language as they must do tasks like generating ideas, organization, and perfect use of grammar and vocabulary.

Communication skill is an indispensable skill to become successful in 21st century. This skill is required in every part of life. Technology also plays very supportive role in enhancing student's communication skills. Instant messaging, text messages, and other technological forms of communication are creating new writing practices that often undermine traditional, standard English for the sake of faster, more effective communication. While one might effectively argue that teaching English remains important for formal or business communication, it is also fair to say that English is becoming more complex than ever, and our students will need to be flexible and efficient users of a vast array of discourses that isolated, drill-oriented grammar lessons simply will not teach. It has also been argued in many instances that technology today is hampering oral communication in students. Parents feel that their children are more monosyllabic and teachers are experiencing a lack of word connectivity with students. Because of texting and chatting via symbols and acronyms, there is actually less "talking" happening.

Well! This is the one side of argument. But if you believe that every coin has two aspects then you will agree that technology does have positive impact on oral communication.

Audio Tape/Podcast

The use of audiotape is essential in the oral skills class. For receptive skills development, the tape player or podcasts are the easiest way for students to listen to a variety of speakers on a variety of topics in a variety of genres – dialogues, interviews, lectures, stories, songs, and poems.

Videotape/Digital Movies/Digital Storytelling

Videotape is a step up from audiotape. First of all, playing prerecorded tapes provides the audio-visual information that helps students observe, understand, and imitate oral communication, from language expressions and sentence structure to lip shape, facial expressions, gestures and

distance between speakers, not to mention other cultural, behavioral, and sociological aspects of language.

Language Lab

Another technology that is invaluable for the promotion of listening and speaking skills is the interactive language lab. A language lab consists many new and advanced software programs which are far more beneficial to improve oral skills. Such labs are better than the regular non-tech classrooms.

Apps

There are numerous apps to build oral communication skills such as:

- Paper Telephone
- Voice Thread
- Voxer
- Shake-a-phrase
- WhQuestions

Debate, discussions and presentations are other ways by which teachers can actually help their students to enhance their oral communication skills. By encouraging the students to participate in debates and discussions on various subjects in the classroom or in the seminars, they can actually sharpen their student's oral communication skills.

To conclude, one may say that English language has become the source and token of prestige, power, success and social superiority. No major Indian language today has the same 'paying potential' as English has in every sphere of life: in trade and in commerce, in administration, and in science and technology. Everywhere the highest echelons are manned by those who wield English, and in order to enter these 'hallowed upper reaches' one must possess a particular command of, and fluency in English. A look at the multi-level set up in any sphere of our national life would show that English appears right on the top.

Works Cited

- . Gupta R.S, Kapil Kapoor,eds. *English in India Issues and Problems*. Academic foundation. n.d. Print.
- . Neelam. International Research Journal of Social Sciences Vol.2 (5) *English Language is a link Language in Social Strata: A Critical Review*: 35. Web. 4 May.2013.
- . Thorpe, Showick. *Importance of English language in Higher Education*. N.p. n.d. Web.