

TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE FOR EMPOWERMENT

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Abstract

English is a global language today. It is the language of power and becoming user friendly day by day. It is flourishing in the countries where the local language is other than English. The age of globalization and privatization has ushered in a new demand for English in various walks of life. English language has changed tremendously. The English, we use today is linked with technological revolutions. The present age is the age of enormous and unprecedented expansion in scientific, technical and economic activity on an international level. The effect is that a whole mass of people want to learn English, not for the pleasure or prestige of knowing the language but because English is the key for gaining technological, scientific and commercial knowledge. So the teaching and learning English language empowers the person. One who has mastery in English is regarded as a learned, knowledgeable, and uncommon. The knowledge of English prevents our isolation from the world.

Key Words: *Teaching, learning, empowerment, globalization, privatization, technological revolutions...*

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In the world various languages are used for communication. Language is an essential part of human life. Everyone from birth to death makes use of it. It is also used as a means to convey our thoughts, feelings, desires, plans, ambitions etc. Language is defined by O. Jespersen, as “Language is a set of human habits, the purpose of which is to give expression of thoughts and feelings (Pahuja 12)”.

Language gives rise to society and the society in its turn reshapes and remoulds the language. Learning a new language means joining a new society. Language is both an individual and social phenomenon. Human society depends on language for its very existence. The English language is regarded and deserves as a world language. It is the first language of the United Kingdom, The United States of America, Canada and Australia. It is also spoken and read by many millions of Europeans, Africans, Chinese, Indians, Japanese and South Americans as a second language. In the countries where national and regional languages are various, English has been used for communication. One person out of every four on earth can be reached through English. Randolph Quirk pointed out that, “There are now something like 250 million people for whom English is the mother tongue or first language (Pahuja 1).”

In the field like media, we come to know that over 50% of world’s newspapers, scientific and technical periodicals and more than 60% of world’s radio stations use English as medium of communication. English has become an international language in the sense that it helps in interlinking the people in other countries of the world. F.G.French has pointed out, “Because of rapid spread of industrial development, science and technology, international trade and commerce and the close interdependence of nations, English has become a world language (Pahuja 1).”

Today, in the world of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization, every country needs either's help in political, social, economical and cultural matters. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru quoted that, "English is our major window on modern world(Pahuja 2)." English is taught, learnt and used all over the world not out of any force or compulsion but it has hidden benefits. The teaching and learning English language is not merely political but it is the severe need of technological and scientific age. It is the language to understand the world in a better way.

English has been used as a library language today. It maintains the standard of education and to acquire higher education, it is the basic need. We know that all the reference books regarding the higher education are available in English language only. English is regarded as the key to the store house of knowledge. The purpose of language is communication. It involves sender and receiver. Both should be familiar with the vocal sounds, the words and phrases, the structural arrangement of words etc. Neutral English is Standard English, which is acceptable for international communication. Standard English is basically an ideal mode of expression that we seek, when we wish to communicate beyond our immediate community.

In our country, English is the medium of instruction in colleges and universities and also the language of the administration. The English language has become a part and parcel of our culture. It is used an official language, court language, for international trade and industry, important role in social life and a library language. It is the language of power. One can be enriched with information and knowledge, available in the world only by the mastery over the English language. The importance of English language has been stated by Radha Krishnan University Education Commission, "It (English) is a language which is rich in all literature, humanistic, scientific and technical. If under sentimental urges we should give up English, we would cut ourselves off from the living stream of ever growing knowledge (Pahuja 6)."

It is the fact that English helps us keep in touch with the world's ever increasing explosion of knowledge and technological advancements, which is an important factor for a developing country like India. In the field of space technology, without adequate knowledge

of English, we are unable to understand and absorb the development in it. The efforts of translation of technical terms into regional languages will be disastrous and have an adverse effect on the Indian space program.

The world is developing rapidly in all spheres of life. A minute thing has been transformed in a drastic way. This is due to the availability of advance technology and techniques. In this age of ICT, we are unable to think about this drastic change. The ancient and traditional things and styles are presented in a new form i.e. modernized form before us. In every field, we find an imitation of Western Culture and life style. We are experiencing these things, but due to inadequate knowledge of English language, it is impossible to acknowledge it fully. The revolutionary changes are reflected in the fields like agriculture, medicine, industry, transport, telecommunication, fashion, arts, entertainment and so many. India has great contribution in research and it is mainly due to the adequate knowledge of English language.

The knowledge of English prevents our isolation from the world. To keep pace with the developed nations, English language is the priority or basic requirement. The study of English will continue in our country for the progress. It will empower us with rich knowledge and develop our personality. The person with good manners, style of presentation and, mastery over English language is regarded suitable for the job. It is the need of time that the job or work of a particular person is not restricted with a limited area. The person has to take help or acquire methods of his business from outside the region or country, for this he must have the basic knowledge of English language, then he will retain his position otherwise not. The Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization have brought the world so near. The world is called as a Global village with proliferation of IT.

The person with good soft skills and presentation style is regarded liable in every field and all these can be acquired with the teaching and learning English language. English is a sophisticated language means it is used by the learned people. The person who communicates in English is respected everywhere.

In India, today also we find that the person who has mastery over English language is regarded as learned, knowledgeable, and uncommon and a person with little knowledge of English or none has a fear in mind to speak with the master of English language. The Commission (Kothari Commission) has said that “No student is considered to have qualified for a degree unless he has acquired a reasonable proficiency in English (Pahuja 7)”. The English language has bright future in India as it has become the language of many Indians, due to its very long association with Indian life. English provides us opportunities for the study of English literature, which is so vast and rich. It has also helped to develop and refine many languages.

Teaching and learning English language has a great role in empowerment as we find large number of our great leaders, scientists, philosophers, and authors are the product of English Education. After independence drastic changes came regarding the place of English in India. The various commissions appointed by Govt. of India have recommended progressive switch over to the mother tongue. A knowledge of English helps to make a person a citizen of the world. In India, it is a great approval that even if the national languages replace English as a medium of instructions, English will have to be taught. It means, it is not easy to discard it or to run away from it. If we try to be aloof from it, it will cling us and unconsciously or naturally, we are inclined to use it. By this we must understand the significant place of English language in our day today life.

In India English now exists as a second language and it should be taught as a language not as a literature. The aim of teaching English in India is to help students to acquire practical command of English i.e. students should be able to understand spoken English, read English and write English. In India big enterprises, prefer the candidates with sound knowledge of English language. Our students, who are fearful in using English and do not sincerely try to be competent are rejected in the job market. The available opportunities give them nervousness and this is because of the lack of competency in English language.

To acquire highest position in the society is nowadays depend on the mastery over English language. The English language is used in all competitive examinations, in High

Court, Supreme Court etc. English keeps us in continuous contact with the latest knowledge in the west, in every field of life and culture. English language has a great expressive power. So teaching and learning English language empower us to express all shades of human thought and behavior in an economic way.

The other benefits of teaching and learning English language are that if we want to let others our way of life and what we think, for that we must have the knowledge of English. If we wish our books and writings to win a world public, we have to know English and translate them into English. The English language becomes popular and flexible due to the expansion of ICT, Management education, metropolitan and cosmopolitan culture, international travel and migration and global connectivity. The young generation uses English language frequently, effectively and easily. English has become a tool for empowerment in multilingual, multicultural and multiracial society of India. The information of every culture and other aspects of the universe are available and translated in English language, so it becomes a global language.

English is a language that cuts cultural and linguistic barriers in multicultural and multilingual nations. The teaching and learning English language provides material and social gain. The competency in English exhibits the person's status; it is also a symbol of modernization and transmutations. It also opens numerous ways for international communication and business, science and technology, travel and tourism other than linguistic and literary study and research.

Teaching of English at different levels of education has an important role to play. English like other languages fulfills the functional, literary and cultural needs of the learners. The teaching of English language develops all the abilities of the students. The students get confidence and desire to do some innovative work in his field. They look towards the world in a different perspective. This is the main empowerment of teaching and learning English language at any level. The students can participate in any discussion; produce creative writings for magazines and newspapers.

The basic hindrance in teaching and learning process of English language is unavailability of academic infrastructure like laboratories, books, research journals, internet etc. The multimedia plays an important role in teaching and learning process. The multimedia tools have the operating system with all the instructions in English, so the competent person in English can easily operate them easily. English teaching and learning through multimedia will become easy because it stimulates the students sensations. To survive in the competitive world, the students have to learn English language.

Conclusion

English is the language of education, sports, communication, international travel aviation, the internet, trade diplomacy, finance, international law and popular culture etc. so the fluency in English is the only admit card to get a job in the competitive market. English is the only tool with which we can promote ourselves with our talent and creativity. To strengthen the position of English in teaching and learning process, we have to make some changes in the current trends, approaches, methods of teaching it. Interaction method should be introduced in the classrooms. The platform should be created for students to express themselves. Methods of teaching and examination pattern should be changed. The focus in the curriculum must be on communication skills i.e. to develop LSRW. Then the teaching and learning English language shall give sure empowerment to the rural and vernacular medium students.

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