

Meeting needs of Global Worldthrough English Language Teaching: a Paradigm Shift

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Abstract

English language has been in widespread use around the world for well over a century. With the recent increased pace of globalization, and the resulting profound changes in the kinds of connections that exist between nations and peoples in different parts of the world, English has become even more of a global language. During the recent years, along with all the changes that have taken place in every domain of our lives, we have witnessed major changes in teaching learning process and more prominence is now being given to use of innovative technique in teaching of language to children to develop them as global citizens. This paper deals with the background of globalization, how the globalization has its impact on English language, the methodologies and benefits of English language in global world. This paper also shed light on the paradigm shift, which have been brought because of globalization for effective teaching and preparing the global perspective.

Keywords: English language, globalization, teaching learning process, paradigm shift, global world.

Introduction

“There is nothing permanent except change” says Heraclites, the pre Aristotelian Greek philosopher.

The term globalization and its impact on society and its environs is a current theme that is discussed in local to international for all over the world. The ongoing globalization and internalization processes have led to a tremendous expansion of the English language. Globalization and English language are said to work as pull factors for one another. While on one hand the English language plays a major role in the progress of globalization (Phillipson, 2001) by facilitating political understanding, economic activities and cultural exchange, on the other hand globalization functions as a driving force to strengthen the position of English as a global language (Bamgbose, 2003). English is controversially chosen not only as the means of commerce, science, and technology but also as a global language of communication among people from different first language backgrounds, across lingua cultural boundaries (Seidlhofer, 2005). English learning is thus encouraged and even officially demanded in various parts of the globe resulting from the fact that English medium education brings professional success, social, and economic advancement.

Several languages have carried globalization in today’s world but English is the most dominant. McKay (2002) contends that the number of people using English today is vast and these numbers are growing. This growing is fueled by the advantages that English offers to those speaking it and these advantages facilitate and assist people who are familiar with the language and can readily use it. Expanding use of English around the world, according to Crystal (2003) English has reached a high status in more than seventy-five countries. The dominance of the English speaking countries in various fields gives English an even higher status, and helps it to be predominant over other living languages. He also reports that English is now the dominant language of international relations, security and travel, media, education, and communications. This is easily observable from the increasing numbers of people in the world today who want to learn English to benefit from the opportunities that speaking English can provide.

Teaching of English in Past Era

English language teaching has undergone tremendous changes over the years, especially in the last ten years. Students are burdened with studying, learning and grasping the materials, and of course, lectures with the collection of relevant information from prescribed texts. Many career alternatives once regarded insignificant are gaining importance at present such as communication skills, soft skills, technical skills, interpersonal skills, ICT literacy etc. The need for chiseled graduates to merge successfully in the tough competition of Survival in the global market is in great demand nowadays. For this, a change in the trend especially the teaching learning process of English language has to undergo a transition for the betterment. Seasons change, fashion changes, attitudes of human beings change and so as English curriculum has also gone under change since last century. Now the emphasis is more on to the functional aspect of English, fluency to express their thoughts, feeling and opinion in a well-structured way.

Teachers need to understand the global demand and accordingly should move from primarily being the information keeper and information dispenser to being an orchestrator of learning where knowledge is co-constructed with the student. Teachers of global world have to become facilitators, guides, mentors, sources and resources who make use of spontaneous teachable moments to scaffold children's learning.

The Indian Scenario

There had been much of changes in the attitude of people as to what they perceive to be a language. When British masters tutored the Indians, they were exposed to native language in every sense of the word. The methodologies adopted were also akin to that of what was practiced in English speaking countries. After their retirement, the glory, richness, depth and vastness of the language started fading in India little by little and it has come to a stage wherein educationalists and language experts thrive hard to choose the best out of the innumerable existing methodologies. The prevailing trends of teaching English, especially in India, lacked both in quantity and quality or may fail to obtain a universal appeal. Rigid curriculums and huge syllabi continue to threaten students who speak regional dialect but love to excel in English.

Referring to the English language education in India, the NCERT Position Paper on Teaching of English (2006) states that:

“English is in India today a symbol of people's aspiration for quality in education and a fuller participation in national and international life. Its colonial origins now forgotten or irrelevant, its initial role in independent India, tailored to high education (as a "library language," a "window on the world"), now felt to be insufficiently inclusive socially and linguistically, the current state of English stem from its overwhelming presence on the world stage and the reflection of this in the national arena”.

Methodologies Adapted During the Previous Years

Communication is the groundwork based on which any idea can progress and develop into a fully-fledged one. Without that, sustenance in any field is impossible. Some of the recent trends in the ELT are quite apparent while the others are still to make their presence felt. Some are yet to come into existence and therefore subject to evolution and change. During the last decade, various crucial factors have combined to affect the current ideologies of teaching of English such as the ineffective methodologies, unsuitable materials, integration of contextualized teaching, over emphasis on multi language skills etc. Teachers who practiced Grammar Translation method during the previous decade solely relied on black board as the apt tool to impart communication skills and the nuances of English language. Later on, overhead projectors, acted as another medium for the teacher dominated classroom.

Such teachers believed in the dictum of drill and practice. As such, audio tapes acted as medium of Audio-lingual method. In the later years of 1970's, audio-lingual method fell into disregard. During 1980's and 1990's, there was a sweeping change over the existing trends then, and more emphasis was laid on authentic and meaningful contextualized discourse.

Most traditional ways of teaching are considered to follow what is called transmission approaches because they seek to transmit a set of pre-determined, pre-selected and pre-sequenced bodies of knowledge from teacher educators to student teachers. These approaches or models have several characteristics in common. First, they often limit the role of teacher educators to that of conduits who pass on easily digestible bits and pieces of personal and professional knowledge to student teachers. Second, they entail a master-pupil relationship in

which student teachers are expected to learn some of their master teacher's pedagogic knowledge and skills, and then try to apply them in their classrooms. Third, they rarely enable or encourage student teachers to construct their own visions and versions of teaching. Fourth, they are essentially top-down approaches that depend on externally produced and expert generated professional knowledge to influence teacher behavior. Finally, they create a debilitating dichotomy between the expert and the teacher, that is, experts are expected to produce knowledge, and teachers are expected to consume knowledge. Transmission models generally produce teachers who also end up playing the role of a conduit. That is, they become passive technicians channeling the flow of information from one end of the educational spectrum (i.e., experts) to the other (i.e., learners), without in any significant way altering the content of information. Their primary goal is to help their learners comprehend and eventually master content knowledge.

In order to achieve that goal, teachers usually rely on the theoretical principles and instructional strategies handed down to them, seldom seriously questioning their validity or relevance to specific learning and teaching contexts that they find themselves in. More often than not, their success as classroom teachers is measured in terms of how closely they adhere to the professional knowledge base transmitted to them, and how effectively they transmit that knowledge base to their learners. As Karen Johnson (2006) explains, research findings depict L2 teacher learning as normative and lifelong, as emerging out of and through experiences in social contexts: as learners in classrooms and schools, as participants in professional teacher education programs, and later as teachers in the settings where they work. It describes L2 teacher learning as socially negotiated and contingent on knowledge of self, students, subject matter, curricula, and setting. It shows L2 teachers as users and creators of legitimate forms of knowledge who make decisions about how best to teach their L2 students within complex socially, culturally, and historically situated contexts.

The post-transmission perspective seeks to restructure teacher preparation so that it transcends the limitations of transmission models. In doing so, it expects teachers to play the role of reflective practitioners who deeply think about the principles, practices and processes of classroom instruction and bring to their task a considerable degree of creativity, artistry, and context sensitivity. Aiming even further, the post-transmission perspective anticipates teachers to play the role of transformative intellectuals who strive not only for academic advancement but

also for personal transformation, both for themselves and for their learners. What it entails is that teacher education needs to pay attention to broader historical, political, social, cultural, and educational factors that impact on teaching.

Paradigm Shift

Dewey (1902) has taught us that the ‘child’ and the ‘subject’ are interdependent elements, which shape school curricula. When examining the way in which we deliver curricula in schools it is vital that our aspirations for the ‘child’ are intertwined with the ‘subject’ matter we wish to deliver. As it is rightly said which is old and archaic should be removed and replaced by new and innovation should be included so that it can meet up the need and demand of present situation. In the same manner our curriculum has also been reframed and amendments are done keeping into consideration the needs of three pole of education system i.e. student, teacher and society. Some of the areas are:

- **Teacher-centered to child-centered-** As the world is in the state of constant change so as the teaching strategies. Previously the main role in classroom was played by the teacher and the students were the passive knowledge acquirer but as we know such strategies leads to anarchy. Now, the main stress and focus is laid on the self-construction of knowledge and the student himself is the active part in the acquiring the knowledge.
- **Books to activities-** Books are the pivotal tool for the delivering of knowledge in the classroom but it is now not the only source of delivering content. Now there are many new and innovative techniques are used by the teacher in his/her classroom teaching the most accepted and loved by the children are teaching through games and activities in the teaching learning process.
- **Rote learning to self-construction of knowledge-** The children of global society needs to imbibe with the skills of global citizenship. As child cannot be able to survive by rote learning technique as the need of globe is innovate and changing, so the need of teacher is to prepare the child which have the capacity to construct the knowledge and bring modification in his/her thought to better tackle the problem.

- **Creating local to global citizen through re-defining education-** In the ever-changing world, we are now focusing more on the need and demand of global society and somewhere we are ignoring the local or national need of ours. The child should be brought up such that he is able to meet his global and local needs both altogether.
- **Teaching should be joyful and meaningful-** Children are the soul of the classroom. Understanding the needs and keeping them enthusiastic and energies is all depend on the teacher and the way of teaching. The teaching done in the classroom should be meaningful for the child but it should be even more joyful than only the child's involvement is assured.
- **Restructuring the curriculum-** The classroom of now deals with the diverse background in terms of their status, culture, language, race, tradition, intellectual abilities and many more dimensions. Likewise the curriculum should be in state of constant restructuring of curriculum which in later on be beneficial for the students, society and prepare the child for global society.

As the world is moving with speed and to make up with it is important for us to change accordingly. Preparing student for global world/ society is not an easy task. It required too much pain to understand the need and demand of both student and society to bring out best for the students and for the society as well.

This can be seen in our education structure also. Traditional method has now a day's been replaced by the innovative, attractive, interactive and collaborative learning. Focus has now shifted from rote learning to self-construction of knowledge and theory through play way methods. For equipping the child to meet up the demands of 21st by preparing, he/she as a global citizen and for doing that language play an important and dominant role.

Many methods have evolved in recent scenario to mold the child to develop him/her according to the global society. One such method is language games. Language games are games used by the teacher to teach the various element and structure of second language like grammar, structure of speech, pronunciation skill, for the development of vocabulary and many more. Through language games child is being itself exposed to the situation and motivated by the teacher to construct his language skills on her own. Language games not only provide situation and

motivate the student but create a conducive environment and fun in the teaching learning process. This new paradigm is now becoming famous amongst the teacher and student both.

Benefits of English Language for Building Global Citizenship:

- Enhance skills and confidence in English communication: speaking, listening, reading, writing
- Discuss current issues related to global citizenship while developing English language ability
- Study with people from around the world
- Develop confidence in working in groups and one-on-one
- Enjoy a variety of class activities and flexibility in learning

Conclusion

Our lives today differ significantly from the lives of our grandparents or even our parents and the recent years, along with all the changes that have taken place in every domain of our lives, have witnessed major changes in how English students want to learn. The traditional method lays more emphasis on a teacher himself and is teacher centered. Repetitive practice, mechanical drills and memorization are the hallmarks of the traditional methods. The theories and methods are constantly evolving in the English Language Teaching. The teachers of the English Language Teaching are aware of the best practices in teaching and learning and how they it can be made beneficial to the students. It is possible for every child to learn English in the most enjoyable manner if it supplied with the right kind of materials and pedagogy produced by one's own native wisdom.

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