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Appropriating the English Language as a Qualitative Attribute for Educational Perspective

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Abstract:

One cannot deny the crucial role and indispensable state of importance to the globally recognised English language not only in developing countries but also in developed countries. Since, the times of post-independence with regard to certain orthodox followers of their native languages, this is appropriate to say that "do not throw the baby out with bathwater." That means English language has become very crucial for the intellectual flights of India intelligentsia in particular and for the whole world in general. This language has been the medium of instruction and means of communication since long times. The intellectual tempo with which our youth is made efficient can be highly inspired by the deep reservoirs of knowledge contained in English language. In this context, the need is to execute the class room learning so elastic in terms of pedagogy that English language skills would be acquired very easily. That is why, Robert Frost warns against narrow mindedness as, "Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence." This statement is fully giving us the boost of learning English language that becomes a source for encyclopaedic learning across numerous fields of knowledge and various walks of life.

Keywords: English Language, Teacher's Role, Learning process, Education and English language.

Talking about the indispensable role of English language, it would be very appropriate to say that English language is the humanistic horizon of literatures, the intellectual nerve of academies, and the sound soul of scientific temper in the contemporary times. We do not normally expect that administrative wings of our cultural organisations, academic institutions, and scientific laboratories will even think of ignoring English language. One cannot deny to the fact that the commercialisation of academic arena cannot and must not be justified at the cost of essential medium of English language. Under any kind of the sloganeering in terms of national, cultural or political motivations, do we not blurring

the already vulnerable efficiency of our talent by putting aside the role of English language and literature. In this context, Ibrahim Alfarhan in *English as a Global Language and the Effects on Culture and Identity* talks about the dominance of English language, because of influences on the advertisement, news and other social events. English language acquirers must have to go beyond learning the language. The author explains that in the process one might lose some of the knowledge about his/her original culture but at the same time the proficiency of foreign language will elevate our personality as:

Therefore, as Johnson explains, people speak English frequently and this gives it the dominance it has over other languages. Wyatt (2009) examines the effect of translation of a language to other languages across different cultures and he finds that the meaning of a word may be lost in the process of translation. Therefore, most people will tend to use English to communicate instead of going through the difficult translation process. Authors from the third world countries have mostly written their books in English so as to reach a larger audience. Using their local languages may limit their audiences. (5)

Under 'British Council' publication, *The English Effect*, English language has been studied and found a developed global language for a range of reasons- historical, cultural, political, national or international. The enormous irregularities in the English system of spelling, for example, may often be seen by a newcomer as a disincentive. One of the strongest incentives for learning the language is the use to which it can immediately be put, socially, economically and culturally. The urgent need of English language is obviously asserted by the council as,

'English language skills are an indispensable tool for daily communication with most of the outside world, either in my professional or personal life. Through English I was not only able to assemble a vast professional network spanning around the globe, including China and Japan, I was also able to meet and get to know very inspiring personal friends around the region and in other, very different countries in Europe. It is vitally important that I am able to speak English; as important as being able to speak at all.' (10).

That means, the importance of English language is crucial for global identity formation with international literary and intellectual companionship.

Martin Lamb in 'Matthew Effect, 2000' in *English language education in a developing country Context* writes that under this effect, it becomes very easy to get children in touch with the basics of language learning. As per the effect,

It has been found that children who have a very slight edge in phonemic awareness when they start school – that is, they understand how words are made up of different sounds – are in a good position to make use of instruction in the alphabetic system; they start reading independently more quickly and therefore get more practice; as they practise, they develop automaticity and can give more attention to meaning, which in turn increases their enjoyment and encourages them to read more. (3-4)

This Effect provides the playful way of language learning environment as early educative experiences among the students. This would create a space for the opportunities to learn the language outside school, leading to a massive competitive gain over six years.

Nasreen Hussain Et al in preface to *English and Empowerment in the Developing World*, writes about the global characteristic of English language as 'For better or worse, the use of English in the domains of power, both public and private, has grown significantly over the last twenty years as a result of an unprecedented rise in global communication, international education, and multi-national business (x).' Moreover, the main focus is given to motivational inspiration to the development of identity formation in the modern scenario. So, the class room situation has been projected as indicated with the below mentioned text:

English Language Education and Empowerment: When English Language Education is construed as a means of empowerment, aspects of learning and teaching appear to be problematic for the Human Capital Approach. Three themes have been selected to illustrate these issues i) individuals' attitudes and motivation, ii) classroom learning and teaching practices, and iii) identity construction. (6-7)

Thus, the empowering effects of the English language learning is verily proved by the above referred writer.

In *Principles of language learning and the Role of the Teacher*, a caption discussed under 'TESOL International Association' talks about the language teacher as responsible agent of English language learning. That means a teacher has to go the level of students and

to activate their power of learning and acquiring linguistic skills. Majority of people perceive the media typed model class room situation. Most people have seen this model of teaching in films and on television. The below mentioned quote is emphasising the active role of English teacher as,

Why Is It Important for Language Teachers to Be Language Learners? For the reasons stated above, the focus of this book is frequently on language learning as much as on language teaching. To become increasingly effective as a language teacher, you must understand as much as possible about how the process of language learning works and what it feels like. Therefore, as you embark on your career as a language teacher, you also need to either continue or begin your career as a language learner (4).

Hence, the accountability of teacher is very much asserted and put to emphasis.

Bok-Myung Chang in introduction to *The Roles of English Language Education in Asian Context* stresses on the qualitative nature of English language education. Since, the field of English language is varied and encyclopaedic, the referred writer is presenting the categories of English language teachers under the three perspectives as,

{T}he first role is to recognize the importance of NNS (Non-Native speakers) interactions in communicating through English, and to encourage their interactions and to create the environment to activate their interactions in daily life in the globalized world. The second one is to emphasize the bi-directionality in communicating among NS and NNS in globalized world. The third one is to acknowledge the effectiveness of NNS teachers in teaching English in Asian countries and cultivate good NNESTs (Non-native English-speaking Teachers) who are well qualified for teaching English in each country. (201)

So, all these level of teaching and learning levels are to be assessed and applied at appropriate conditioning to gain linguistics skills.

David Nunan in *The Impact of English as a Global Language on Educational Policies and Practices in the Asia-Pacific Region* studies the impact of English on educational policies and practices in countries in the Asia-Pacific region, particularly Mainland China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Vietnam. These countries

were referred for their transition from developing state to developed one. Hence, they need to accommodate and excel in the process of English language learning.

In his book *English as a Global Language*, Crystal (1997) asserts that taking English as a global language as an entrance to come across the numerous fields of knowledge in terms of art, humanities, social sciences and pure sciences., ‘...TESOL professionals can begin to interpret the global status of the English language and English language education, observed through its use as the language of business, technology, science, the Internet, popular entertainment, and even sports. (590).’ This means that English language has an encyclopaedic nature with vital scope for information and technology.

Bok-Myung Chang in introduction to *The Roles of English Language Education in Asian Context* writes about historical analyses of English as language in Asian scenario as ‘Adamson (2002) analyses status of English language and education in China by dividing Chinese history into three periods – (i)the Qing dynasty (The first phase from 1759 to 1860: English received very low official status and was only used for trade. English began to gain official status since it was considered to be a medium to access Western science and technology.),(ii) the Republican era,(During the second period1911 to 1923, the Republican era, the government established diplomatic ties with English speaking countries. English gained somewhat high official status and was used as a vehicle for exploring Western philosophy and other ideas. And (iii) the People’s Republic of China (The third period with the first phase from 1949 to 1960, English received low official status due to the political events which were unfavourable for English. During the second phase from 1966 to1976 of third period, the Cultural Revolution swept the entire nation, labelling English speakers as traitors.) (195-96). This does not mean that in the Chinese context, English language is not a necessity, but the need has been put to obscurantism due to some national sloganeering.

Raghavachari Amritavalli under the title *An English for every schoolchild in India* enforces the proficiency of English for some Indians. Since the language is a ‘first language of public (academic, societal, creative) discourse(22).’ But it is second language for majority of citizens that leads to proper enforcement of class room situation and language learning conditioning. The below quote vehemently impresses on this very idea as,

Then we have “English for Special Purposes” (ESP) and “English for Academic Purposes” (EAP). Where to place these on the continuum? Well, on the one hand, as in Figure 1a, we can posit that the main aim of any ESP or

EAP course is to improve the students' mastery of the English language but focusing on a very specific register and lexical set. Therefore, we would place it on the language-dominant aim of the continuum. On the other hand, we could argue, as in Figure 1b, that the aims of these courses are so geared to the acquisition of subject content or the ability to operate in such a specific 'language use' situation, that they should be placed nearer the content-dominant aim of the continuum. (28)

This level of society or social learning will ultimately make a mature and global personality that in turn will open great opportunities for economic and technological benefits in international market.

M.Murali in introduction to *Teaching English As A Second Language In India – A Review*, discovers the indispensable state of English language for development of civilisation; and the spirit of national integration and cultural coherence. The same is reflected in the following quote as,

In the case of English in India, more than two centuries, India has been directly and indirectly had influence of the language, English on all the fields, such as Education, Medical Science, etc. ... Since, in India, several languages are spoken and also one set of people are reluctant to learn one common Indian language, we have to borrow a new non-Indian language. (1)

With regard to the profession of teacher, the role of English teacher is fundamental to the efficiency of language acquiring skills. This has been famously expressed by Sir Philip Sydney as,

A teacher's primary role is not only to enable the students to understand what he is intending to say or teach. It is also the duty of the teacher to understand what the student wants and says. In teaching-learning process, two things play the vital roles; one is the delivering capacity of the teacher and the other one is the receiving capacity of the students. Without the two aspects, the teaching-learning process will not be a successful one. (22).

The activeness of teacher is stressed and bilateral way of teaching-learning especially in the process of language acquisition is keenly encouraged.

Christopher Stroud in *Towards a Policy for Bilingual Education in Developing Countries* under the caption ‘Second language acquisition’ talks about the learning of the second language in non-english countries. In order to elucidate the teaching process, the SLA theory has been referred as,

According to SLA-theory (see Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Ellis, 1994), a major characteristic of second language acquisition is that it is a successive step-wise developmental progression or approximation to a target language norm. ... In SLA terminology, the stages in the acquisition of a language that a learner produces are known as interlanguages, interim systems of rules and structures that are not yet identical to the target language as it is spoken natively by the target population. (15-16)

So, this theory along with all other means of learning and acquiring language vis a vis teacher student teaching and learning processes respectively.

Finally, concluding the topic, the surely empowering tendencies of the proficiency of English language has accelerated and will accelerate the power of imagination, spirit of excellence, and the tempo of developing charisma of global personality. These distinct feats would be achieved with the proper human resource in the form of proficient and talented teachers with professional ethics who would inspire the youth of contemporary times. Hence, English language is so indispensably needed in terms of socio- political and cultural accommodations that it would, by its national, continental and global perspective lure the young generation to horizons of new thoughts.

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