

TEACHING FOREIGN BUSINESS LANGUAGES THROUGH LITERATURE AND ALLIED MEDIA

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Abstract

As Frank Smith says, “Language is not a genetic gift, it is a social gift. Learning a new language is becoming a member of the club – the community of speakers of that language.” Through this statement he opens the horizons of learning and understanding of multiple languages and multiple cultures. He celebrates the uniqueness of each language over the hierarchy of other being prestigious or superior. Learning one’s mother tongue is a natural phenomenon but when it comes to learning of a second language or a foreign language, it cannot be limited to the learning of the grammar, sentence structure and vocabulary. Language learning must include the social and cultural thought that exists in its native world, without which it cannot be assumed to be complete, as language is not mere words but it carries thought, emotion, feelings, cultural practices, moral values and flora fauna et al.

The present study focuses on exploring the importance of literature and allied media (stories, plays, music, folk tales, etc.) in teaching of a foreign business language (FBL) and the methods that can be effective for enhanced learning outcomes.

Keywords: FBL, Literature, Methodology, Enhanced Learning, Culture, Allied Media

Introduction:

In the fast paced era of globalization, we are everyday exploring new ways to come across different cultures and societies and it demands for a common code of communication for more effective interactions. Media plays a vital role in bringing the cultural aspects of different countries and civilizations on surface level to the universal platforms where interested may try digging out the details of the same. But no one can learn all the languages of the world, hence we depend upon some languages to serve as lingua franca; English being one of the most popular among them. But at the same time, learning of foreign languages brings with it the understanding of multiple other

languages that are close of the foreign language in their morpho-phonemic structure and syntax. As the theories of language learning suggest that a foreign language can be learned only on the basis of the knowledge of an already learned language; hence we find that the learners of the foreign language become more conscious on the use of their own language and they develop a comparative model for themselves on the basis of the new concepts brought into their knowledge. Researchers will review the effectiveness of the use of literature in teaching FBL during the contact classes and will try to come up with the appropriate methodology for teaching and learning of FBLs that can enhance learning at a better pace. Classroom is the place for introducing the theories and structure of languages whereas society, the speech community, the real life scenario is the laboratory for experiencing it. Hence the actual process of learning of a language takes place in multiple setups where language is exposed to learners through numerous media.

Literature Review

Language learning has been a phenomenon since time immemorial, may be since the inception of the human beings on this earth. Though the forms of language and communication that would exist then might have been obsolete and new forms would have emerged from time to time. To support the statement, we have numerous theories available on first language acquisition (FLA) and first language learning (FLL); like B.F. Skinner's behaviourist theory (1957) and Jean Piaget's cognitive theory (1970), etc. As per our paper, the concern is more on the teaching and learning of second language (foreign language) through literature.

Before we propose our thesis, it would be good to have a review of the available researches on this issue. Researchers have presented various models of enhancing the process of teaching and learning a second language as well as a foreign language. Rod Ellis (2010) in his paper focuses on a strong relationship between the second language acquisition and language pedagogy. According to Ellis, it is not only the SLA that concerns rather it depends on the need based on educational and professional context and accordingly the theory or practice is devised for specific learners. A classroom teaching is a collaborative research activity where the objective remains the learner's

accuracy in performance and a teacher tries to present n number of options to fill the learning gap, after careful observation and critical examination. Basically Ellis presented a framework that served formulating principles for SLA model and analysis for language teachers and educators.

Communication is the basis of all transactions, be it ideas, trade or exchange. With the increase in the concept of globalization, the quest for knowing many languages has been a necessity. In addition to Hindi and English, at least one more language is preferred by the recruiters for the multinational companies. For teaching and learning of a new language the traditional methods of teaching like bilingual dictionaries and Grammar Translation Method (GTM) have been tested less effective as compared to lively communicative approaches, hence Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method has been proved promising in the concurrent language learning scenario. According to Savignon (1991), the ability to perform in target language comes with practical performance than from passive reception only.

Media, the plural term for medium, carries with it sense of plurality in its approaches and hence it is inclusive of all human, non-human, linguistic, non-linguistic, cultural, regional and social aspects with it. In the process of language learning the role of language is defined with context to other things of existence, be it living beings, non-living things or actions or emotions. Hence the teacher or the instructor depends on the actual objects for providing a meaning to a linguistic unit (word) which may be equivalent to another linguistic unit in some other language. According to Mezieobi, D.I. (2003), the instructional material helps a lot in understanding and learning of target language. It is much obvious that in case of teaching-learning of foreign languages this media approach that is to bring forth the concept before the learner before we introduce to him/her the linguistic unit for that entity will fetch revolutionary results, positively.

Methods

Second language learning and teaching both are considered to be herculean tasks in our education system. Learning of language in the early childhood have faster pace and greater flexibility in accepting new terms, be it of any language as compared to that in an adult learner. As literature exists in multiple media therefore its application in the process of teaching and learning of languages is prevalent. And on that note, we have

following observations of the literary tools that may strengthen the learning of foreign business language(s).

Role of Literature in First Language Learning

Literature means thoughts, feelings, words, and emotions hence it would be the beauty of the language. The information that a child acquired from the peer group that he is brought up in are its primary classroom where it learns through observation. Similarly, when he reaches to school learning which focuses on the learning of a second language as he enlarges his span of language learning ability and allows the concepts of the other language to be accommodated in the same brain for meaning creation. Therefore, while teaching a third language will be an essential tool for the learner to grasp the language with its own beauty. It would be better if it is divided into several topics to understand the concept of literature in the language class.

Use of Poems and Jingles

Both the resources having good quality of words specifically rhyming words and the power of the words effect the learner on their heart and they can feel the language, if its rhyming then it would be easier the recall these words easily. Side by side singing these jingles along with will increase the pronunciation power and remove the hesitation towards the source language. Especially, when children observe the terms of daily life being used for their poems, they get fascinated and enthusiastic to know more about them. They try to get into details of the newly introduced items/terms, and this quest for learning enables them to be a better learner. If we follow the similar approach for the learners of foreign language as well, we shall enable to attract the learners of the foreign language because the learning of the primary nuances of a foreign language carries similar experience to learners of any age. Below mention example will clear the thought about the same.

For Example: in German

Schicke mir ein Blatt

Schicke mir ein Blatt, doch von einem Strauche

Der nicht näher als eine halbe Stunde

Von deinem Haus wächst, dann
Mußt du gehen und wirst stark, und ich
bedanke mich für das hübsche Blatt.

Above written poem has a good quality of words along with the expression and feelings; which will give an effective impact on learners to motivate towards the new language learning.

Fairy Tales and Cartoon Films

Fairy tales, cartoon films and folklore become the basic literature that is used to introduce language, culture and society to the young learners. These things having good imagination and quality sentence structure in a correct sequence fascinate the learners towards them. The cartoon films having good dialogue delivery and creative characters that attract learners and influences their language learning. Cartoon films are nowadays easily accessible to learners, on mobile phones and televisions, that too with numerous replays, that affects learning positively and enables learning to be more permanent and smooth. Copying these dialogues would increase the confidence level; hence it converts into the ease mood of the source language and increases the ability to make good sentence structure with emotions and feelings in the target language.

For Example: Once the learners reading the fairy tales, they have an idea beforehand in their mind what would be exactly happened. Hence, they can co relate the things like words, sentences and expression and can feel too. Thus, while reading the German fairy tales i.e. Rotäppchen, Hänsel und Gretel or der Froschkönig learners can easily start thinking in the target language.

Folk Tales and Short Stories

Characters of the folk tales have a great influence of Gods, demi-Gods, superheroes and heroes of history. They are popular among the young and the old both; hence they carry the atmosphere, culture, tradition, emotions, feelings, and become part of daily life. Once the characters are introduced to them eventually, the learner have the curiosity to know more about them and subsequently the quest for knowing more promotes their learning. In case of foreign language learners, similar trick may work to influence them for more reading and listening and along with that the imagination also goes on then the

learners start connecting his/ her life though the result would come in the form of desired language learning outcome.

For Example: Short story in German

Christa Reinig: Skorpion (1968)

Er war sanftmütig und freundlich. Seine Augen standen dicht beieinander. Das bedeutete Hinterlist. Seine Brauen stiessen über der Nase zusammen. Das bedeutete Jähzorn. Seine Nase war lang und spitz. Das bedeutete unstillbare Neugier. Seine Ohrläppchen waren angewachsen. Das bedeutete Hang zum Verbrechertum. Warum gehst du nicht unter die Leute? fragte man ihn. Er besah sich im Spiegel und bemerkte einen grausamen Zug um seinen Mund. Ich bin kein guter Mensch, sagte er. Er verbohrt sich in seine Bücher. Als er sie alle ausgelesen hatte, musste er unter die Leute, sich ein neues Buch kaufen gehen.

The above one paragraph is one of the parts of short story and gives a general idea how the person like in Germany and how they behave and act. How would be the dialogue delivery and their expression and feelings too.

Popular Approaches of Teaching Foreign Language

Teaching and learning are two way processes that go together. One is the complementary of the other. Therefore, before proceeding on any theory of teaching language it is worth mentioning that a teacher is an ever learner and every student is a by default teacher. When we discuss about the approaches, then it should be divided into two parts and they are:

Role of Learners in Language Classroom

All the settings that learners are exposed to are a learning experience for them in some or the other way, provided they are vigilant and observant. The learners should be well aware before starting the language learning processes that it needs practice, not only the practice but also frequent drilling, motivation and enthusiasm. Learning is not only the processes of creative construction but also involves trial and error, so that the maximum involvement of the learners gives the good result in the form of language knowledge and remove the hesitation towards the new thing. More the learner's feels involvement more the confidence built.

Role of Teachers in Language Classroom

Language teacher is not only the teacher but he/she is a facilitator. His/her involvement is only 40% in the class and the approach should be changed from language-based to need-based even classroom too student centric rather than teacher –centric. The atmosphere of the classroom will help the learners to involve themselves very easily, therefore the teacher should always to find out the new techniques and materials for the same and it has to be always task based learning. The approach of the teacher should be like that:

Technique → Method → Approach

Controlled Use of English for Teaching of FBL

Being monolingual in the class room while teaching foreign business language gives below mentioned advantages to the learners:

- Help to increase the vocabulary to recall in mind
- Increase the motivation and makes them comfortable
- Enhance the listening skills along with the understanding
- More listening turns the result in the form of more speaking
- Can easily change the environment of the class room in the positive direction

Underestimating the Use of Vernacular and Mother Tongue in Teaching FBL

Language learning is not only to know the words and grammar; it is to adopt the language along with the feelings and expressions as a native speaker. A word having more than one meaning, once it comes to the uses then the selection of the word should be appropriate as per the requirement and that comes only with the help of using literature in a language class. Reading of novel, short stories, newspaper or magazine makes the learner to adopt the language, even listening music or studying poem would be the great help to feel about the expression and to engross with the language. But learning of a foreign language is possible over the underestimating of the vernacular or mother tongue. Previously learnt languages coexist with the other languages learnt in turn.

Superiority Complex of Other Languages over Mother Tongue and Vernacular

Once we are learning the new things we start indulging ourselves into it and start comparing it with the existing knowledge and experience. It is a natural psychological phenomenon. But it has been observed that giving overdue superiority and importance to the other language deprives the learners from learning the nuances of their own language properly that in return affects their learning ability. It has been clearly mentioned by Mara Salmona Madrinan in her paper *The Use of First Language in the Second-Language Classroom: A Support for Second Language Acquisition* (2014), that proficiency in first language supports the second language learning. Overvaluing a foreign language hampers the learning of it as its structure and methodology threatens the learners for being unique and new from their existing knowledge. This creates an unnecessary pressure on the learner ability of comprehension.

Findings/Outcome/Classification of Learners and Different Learning Methods:

As the theories of Second Language Learning suggest that the knowledge of the first language serves as the basis for learning of the second language. Therefore it is mandatory to develop mastery over at least one language so that learners become well versed with the process of learning the language. It helps them learning of the other/second/foreign languages as well.

Conclusion:

In terms of language that is a dynamic and ever changing entity nothing very rigid can be said, but the authors share their observation of their research work. There are multiple languages in every society though the number of speakers may vary; it indicates that human beings are enabled with ability to learn multiple languages as they acquire many skills in their lifetime. Speech community plays major role in acquisition of mother tongue and so in the learning of the first language as well. But when it comes to learning of the second language, the number of speakers around the learners is found to be limited; their exposure to the language becomes restricted. The only place of learning and getting exposed to the language is school or any other controlled group only. Hence the learner is not continuous to them rather it goes to them in bits and pieces. If we follow the approaches that enable them to get exposed to the leaning setup

in their day to day routine, they shall definitely learn faster and better compared to the limited controlled group learning situations. Right from the linguistic exposure from the print media to electronic media leaves an inevitable experience on the learners that get reinforcement because of their frequent appearance and that helps learning of new concepts, the similar approach applied to foreign language may enhance the pace of learning.

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