



ADOPTING TRANSLATION AS A TEACHING DEVICE TO STUDENTS FROM TELUGU MEDIUM/BACKGROUND:A STUDY

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The position of English in the educational system in India is influenced by two major factors. The first and foremost factor is based on the psycho-social point of view that declares that learning is facilitated through the medium of the learner's mother tongue, as he/she feels at home with it. The second factor is the requirement to learn English to have access to modern scientific and technological information. The application of English language is a political issue for some time after independence from British colonization. Recently, the compulsions of learning English in India are no longer political and national but scientific, technological and international.

The present paper presents a few factors responsible for the current position of English. It elicits awareness on acquisition of Second Language (SLA). It presents some of the problems in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). It concludes with the factors responsible for the influence of Mother Tongue on SLA.

It focuses on the difficulties in teaching English language to the learners with multi-lingual background. It is restricted to technical students in Andhra Pradesh, one of the Southern States of India. Their vernacular language is Telugu besides Urdu, Tamil, Kannada and several other languages basing on their nativity. A few of them prefer to pursue their complete education in their native languages. But, most of the students realize the significance of English and opt for it compelled by its socio-political prospects.

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English is termed as Second (L2), Foreign (FL) and Target Language (TL) in this paper. It presents a few factors responsible for the current position of English. It elicits awareness on acquisition of Second Language (SLA). It presents some of the problems in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). It concludes with the factors responsible for the influence of Mother Tongue on SLA.

According to Verghese, the position of English in the educational system in India is influenced by two major factors. The first and foremost factor is based on the psycho-social point of view that declares that learning is facilitated through the medium of the learner's mother tongue, as he/she feels at home with it. The second factor is the requirement to learn English to have access to modern scientific and technological information.

The application of English language is a political issue for sometime after independence from British colonization. Recently, the compulsions of learning English in India are no longer political and national but scientific, technological and international (14).

The reasons for the popularity and continued acceptance of English in India are its utility as the chief vehicle of scientific and technological knowledge, its nature as a dynamic and well-developed language with a vast literature, and its utility as a library language and international language. It is the medium of instruction at higher level of education. For an Indian, English is a link language. It is the common means of communication among the people of different nations. It cannot be replaced so easily because the knowledge generated by way of research in advanced countries is mostly disseminated through the medium of English.

Hence, Allen states that English is not considered as a foreign language in India. It has been given the status of a second language, as it is another tool of communication alongside the first language. English becomes a second language when it is used as "lingua franca between speakers of widely diverse languages as in India" (4).

It is stated in the prescribed textbooks at all levels in A.P that the main purpose of a course in English is to help the learner develop into a moderately efficient user of English. At the end of the course he/she should be able to use English accurately, fluently and appropriately for purposes of communication through the development of languages skills, the mastery of language elements, the development of communication skill, the inculcation of literary skills and the development of study skills.

Agnihotri and Khanna opines that the Indian students, "Need urgently to acquire the skills of reading, listening, writing and speaking in English in that order, to survive within the educational framework" (347).

FIRST LANGUAGE (L1)

According to Saville-Troike, the First language (L1) is nothing but the native, primary language and mother tongue of people belonging to a particular state. L1 used by majority of the students of A.P is Telugu apart from Urdu, Hindi, Kannada, Tamil languages basing on their creed. It is acquired normally during one's early childhood as part of growing up among people who speak it.

SECOND LANGUAGE (L2)

The second language is the target language learned in the process of education. L2 is also referred as foreign language. The Second language learned by the students under the present study belonging to three regions of A.P is English.

Second Language Acquisition(SLA)

The Engineering students belonging to A.P learn their subjects in English. Consequently, learning English is acquiring a second language to these students. Second Language Acquisition (SLA) refers to learning a language subsequent to learning their first one as young children and the process of learning that language. SLA is highly complex in nature. There is a vast difference in learning both L1 and L2. It is assumed that there are three phases in the development of languages.

INITIAL STATE

The initial state in learners' mind in learning L1 is an innate capacity compared to L2. Since L2 acquisition follows L1 achievement, a main module of the first position for L2 acquisition is prior knowledge of L1. L2 learners possess real world knowledge of means for accompanying severe interactional functions as requesting, commanding, promising and L2 apologizing. Thus, the initial state for learning is composed solely an innate capacity for language while L2 is piles up of world knowledge and interaction skills, an asset and impediment.

INTERMEDIATE STATES

Interestingly, both L1 and L2 learners go through intermediate states as they progress from their initial to their final state linguistic systems. The grammar is developed spontaneously and unconsciously in L1 learners. This is due to cognitive maturity. Hence, as children mature, so also their language abilities develop. On the other hand, as L2 learners already reach a level of maturity, they transfer their knowledge of L1 to L2. For an instance,



a word that has essentially the same form and meaning in both languages can transfer appropriately from L1 to L2 'Tea' is one such word used in both Telugu and English.

The present study concentrates on the similarities and differences between the two languages – English (L1) and Telugu (L2). The engineering students that are discussed under this study mostly speak Telugu as L1 and English as L2.

Thus, advanced learners like engineering field graduate students under the present study have a great access to the world knowledge that is acquired through cognitive development and experience they apply in the process of SLA during the intermediate state. For them, the basic concepts associated with previously acquired world knowledge are often too complex because their L2 vocabulary is limited. In such situations, they partially stimulate L2 vocabulary learning.

Learners with L1 background are compelled to learn their subjects in L2 in their higher studies. They possess prior knowledge of academic subject areas in L1. Unfortunately, they lack L2 proficiency to express their knowledge. These learners need not learn those basic concepts again. What they actually need is relative L2 vocabulary. A few of them transfer their L1 knowledge and skills to L2. Many others find it difficult.

Necessary Conditions:

The study observes that language input to the learners is absolutely necessary for either L1 or L2 learning. Several social and individual factors facilitates in SLA while L1 is acquired without any kind of instructions. L1 is learned naturally and requires no instructions.

FINAL STATE

In the final state of L1 development, learners acquire vocabulary and interaction skills in their vernacular language naturally. In SLA, the proficiency level of learners is enormously unpredictable.

The current study is concerned with learners hailing from a multilingual background continuing their education in engineering sector. The Technical colleges in Andhra Pradesh use English as the medium of instruction for imparting technical skills in diverse branches of engineering. Therefore, English is recognized as a tool of communication for engineers in the industry. The engineering students need to apply it in their academic venture initially and professional performance later. English is prescribed as a subject in engineering colleges to assist the students in the transition from regional medium to English.

Consequently, problems crop up in imbibing the second language. They have little opportunity to interact with members of the language community who speak L2 natively. They neither have opportunity to participate fully in the Foreign Language society. Their sole reason is to study the language as it is required to complete their graduation. They learn L2 in contexts demanding political or technological purposes. They also require proficiency in L2 for face to face interaction under diverse settings that compel them to make use of a common language code.

The present study focuses on grammar component in the process of learning a language because all languages have Grammar in common. The following cognitive processes are involved in SLA according to McLaughlin:

- Language transfer from L1 to L2.
- The process of teaching L2.
- Learners approach towards L2 materials and the task of L2 learning.
- Ways learners try to communicate with others in L2.
- Application of L2 rules by learners (41).

Languages	Subject	Verb	Object
L2	Ramu	Goes to	School
L2	?	?	?

Table: 1 (Source: Self)

The Telugu Grammar is called vyākaranam. The simplified pattern of Telugu grammar is as mentioned in the above table.

Further, Saville-Troike opines academic sentences in L2 are often grammatically complex compared to sentences used for interpersonal functions. Several grammatical structures common to interpersonal communication are quite different to those learned in the academic texts. As a result, the development of required fluency for daily interactive purposes hardly assists a learner to acquire the syntactic knowledge that is necessary for the advanced literacy that academic competence requires (149).

FUNCTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The expected unmarked SVO responses to the English conversations are different. For example, a conversation between two college friends is represented in the following situation:



L2	L1
Me: Hello, How are you?	Nenu: Namaskaram, ela unnaru? Hello, How feeling?
Friend: Fine	Mitru: Bagunnu Fine
Me: It's a long time we both met	Mitru: Manam chala rojulu ki kalusukunnamu We longtime it's met

Table: 1 (Source: Self)

The above illustration clearly depicts variation in the sentence formation in L1 and L2. Learners tend to use L2 in their own vernacular style and thereby fail to communicate with their peers and faculty. Thus, the learners should be encouraged to transfer the knowledge already possessed concerning the need for situational flexibility to the second language so as to become proficient by reflecting their L2 practice.

In addition the learner should be made aware of the possibility of being flexible even at early stages of language acquisition through such processes as simplification. In general, classroom treats language as unvarying and fails to encourage them to appreciate the varieties of language that make up the native speaker's expansive capability. The classroom needs to provide a greater range of language so that the learner's flexibility can be developed, relatively a single selection of classroom language.

Thus, the influence of the mother tongue on the acquisition process of second language is responsible for one of the intricacies in SLA. It has been established by researchers that in spite of all possible efforts made by the second language learners at the most only 5% of them can acquire native like competence in the target language. For the rest, learning of the language remains incomplete with varying degrees of approximation towards the target language. Although mother tongue influence is not the sole ingredient in constituting the so called 'affective filter' that hinders the acquisition of native like perfection in the target language, it is certainly a major factor to reckon with. Mother tongue pull manifests itself in many forms and can affect any

module of linguistic system: phonological, morphological, syntactic and even discourse.

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