

Paradigms of English Language Learning as Literature in Arts and Communication Skills in Professional Courses.

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Abstract

English is the most commonly used language around the world. It is universally accepted as the international tongue and hence in the globalized and competitive world, it becomes essential to learn the language to establish the career and growth which in turn will hold the country's economy to grow. This is the language that can be easily learnt and comprehended. In India English learning happens in different levels. Different approaches and models are used for both learning-teaching processes. It is learnt as first language, second language, and as foreign language as well. Even in arts and professional courses in India we can find these differences in learning English. In this Article we are trying to explore such paradigms in the learning process of English language and the shift in its learning considering the arts and professional students.

Key Words: English language and Literature, Teaching-Learning Process, Communication Skills, Professionalism.

Introduction

English is universal language accepted all over the world. In various countries, including India, it is a sign of people's aspirations for quality education and knowledge. The usage of English language in our country has been a unique factor. Being an exotic language, it is considered as a subsequent language in India. The learners face many problems in the process of learning it. Regional mother tongue interference makes it very difficult for them to acquire the four skills of language at one time i.e., reading, writing, speaking and listening. In India, a nation with multiple language and multiple culture, English always plays the role of a connecting language. From elementary education, students are learning and practicing it. At present age, in our country, English language is widely taught as second language, practically at all levels of education. All Universities, Senior and Junior colleges have separate departments for teaching English language. The impact of English is much more rewarding in all the stages of life. Every person has a dream that he should study in English and learn to speak fluently. If you consider Indian society, speaking English is prestigious and will elevate your societal status. It always paved way for the emergence of English medium schools in large scale across the country.

Role of English learning as literature in Arts

English literature focuses on humanistic Ideology and liberal education. Studying literature helps Arts students to develop critical-thinking about different writings from a range of different theoretical perspectives. Literary works allow them to learn various historical events making them to understand wide range of cultures. This in turn makes them more open-minded and empathetic, broadening their horizons and allowing them to understand the world they live in at a higher level. It opens up a world of inspiration and creativity developing the skills that are essential for today's global world. It also sharpens once ability to read, write, analyse and persuade.

Literature evokes aesthetic sense among students. The purpose of literature itself is to entertain and arouse aesthetic pleasure. Reading of literary works is not a passive activity. It evokes our senses, imagination and transport us to another world. Literary work will be mostly fictional and author uses figurative or symbolic language to produce a pleasing or enriching effect. In literature studies, a student will be able to think in a wide perspective. They get opportunities to explore the writings of regional literature through which they can understand different cultures and intellectual traditions. Instead of a logical or reasonable thinking it evokes creative thinking among students. They will indulge in close reading which bring new meanings to the literary text. Discussing literature in classroom engages students in enquiry, interpretation, and argumentation, all together when executed regularly leads to an enhanced ability to elegantly articulate questions and stances. Hence learning literature is behavioural as well as perceptual.

Literature is the reflection of life where students can learn the culture of the society through different literary works. For instance, "*Vanity fair*" by William Makepeace Thackeray, is a Victorian domestic novel depicts the Victorian society and their life style. Close reading of the novel helps the students to make a comparative study of then society with their contemporary society. It helps them to learn the cultural differences, conventions of the society, Victorian hypocrisy and some real- life lessons.

English literature traces the roots of the evolution of English language as well as the historical events. It helps us to connect our past with present. Historical incidents are widely used to construct literary works and historical fiction is a genre in literature. In a historical text you can only analyse some particular incidents and its historicity. But literature will provide the students an overview of the society, culture, religion, social norms, beliefs and a great number of other things about the society. Historical incidents are widely used to construct literary works.

Studying literature helps students to learn vocabulary. It enables students to enhance their language proficiency through proverbs and idioms. Embellished words of literature will enrich their language than colloquial usages. George Martin in his novel, "*A Dance with Dragons*" stated that "A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies, said Jojen. The man who never reads lives only one" (p.495). It denotes the significance of reading in one's life and its impact. Thus, different characters depicted in the novel avails students to represent oneself in the character which can be really exciting and validating since we experience the thoughts and feelings of someone else also. This on the contrary encourages students to be more sensitive to the whole spectrum of human experience and helps while taking decisions in day-to-day life. Overall studying literature, refines our writing skills and enriches our

vocabulary. Hill has rightly said that the study of literature contributes both to the development of the student as an individual and to his or her command of the language.

Role of English Learning as Communication Skill in Professional Courses.

Learning English language in Professional Course is more behavioural. The students will be capable of reacting or responding to their environment. Students can execute the learned discourses in their work place effectively. More than the constructive or creative writing as in Literature, Professional Courses concentrating on the functional or utilitarian aspects of English language. In Many universities the syllabus itself is named as Professional Communication or Business Communication. They are learning it as 'soft skills' where focus is more on communication rather than linguistic or language aspects. Communication can be transmitted in two ways: written and verbal. As being in the professional world, one should not only master English verbal communication but also have good writing skills such as drafting emails, letters, applications. It creates a demand for courses like spoken English, business communication, technical writing etc.

A good knowledge of English is a huge asset for the ones who aspire to build their career. English with the knowledge of technology helps you to explore and do the research in various fields of discipline. English is the language of internet. In professional world it will help them to get information as well as update themselves with new ideas emerging in global market. Today world is witnessing drastic change in the field of information and technology. So it is essential to cope with this changes to sustain your career. English language will be one of the keys to open our doors. More than printed form, information is disseminated through online sources and it is readily available from anywhere in the world at any point of time.

Teaching English in professional courses help students to boost candidature to get better jobs and serves better. Companies demand effective communication than proficiency in language. Therefore, it is essential to learn English before entering the professional world. Further communicating with everyone in work place becomes easier with a good knowledge of English. If a person not having good English communication abilities will stand back from participating in office meetings and other formal conversations which will hamper their professional performance. Business is increasingly being conducted across borders with English often being used as an international language of communication. It also improves international relationships since knowledge of English helps to communicate easily with clients or colleagues abroad. During pandemic the world came to stand still. Technology was the only source of communication. Hence your virtual communication to any part of the world becomes easier with right knowledge of English.

In the twenty first century English Language communication skill is the most demanded employability skill or a survival skill. Today both the educationist and employers are emphasizing on the urgent need of improving the communication skills of technically competent students. Due to lack of proficiency in English many students fail to get required score on the test of English as foreign language (TOEFL International English Language System). This is evading the dream of pursuing higher studies abroad even in case of academically brilliant students. Narayanan, Vice Chairman of 'Cognizant Technology Solutions' and Chairman of the NASSCOM in an interview emphasized the need of soft skills and employability skills for successful career. Active participation and demonstration of good interpersonal skills are also essential to get selection in their interviews. Speaking

English will increase confidence and ensures respect and natural acceptance among people. Even Infosys in 2008 stated “Most of the students are not industry -ready because they lack communication skills”.

Conclusion

Research shows that bilingualism or multilingualism, that is learning a new language, changes your brain structure. It helps you to improve your memory, concentration, thoughts and other skills too. In short it helps to make the brain stronger and more versatile. The potential to speak and write English effectively enables people to excel in the professional world and also widens one’s horizon in communicating globally. Hence English is recognized by all. Today many websites are offering English lessons online and large number of people are opting this medium of learning everyday which itself is a proof of the necessity of learning English.

English is the language of entertainment. It is not only read by academicians, writers or critics but also by all sections of people in society including professionals. They are reading and enjoying the popular or mass literature. Even the classics of literature is cinematized by pop culture and available in other forms also. Hence learning English will enable the students to explore and enjoy the international type of entertainments.

Since English has occupied a large space and recognition in the entire world, the universities and institutions should develop a holistic integrated approach linking together different aspects and competencies of employability along with improving English Language skills and incorporate employability enhancement in curriculum. Hence it is a challenge for English teachers to transform young graduates into English language proficient, confident, skilled and competent professionals. At the end we can say that learning is an ongoing life-long process and one must embrace the constant change happening.

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