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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE PROBLEMS FACED BY THE SCHOOL STUDENTS OF TRIPURA DURING SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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Abstract

The study primarily examines the challenges encountered by pupils in Tripura schools when learning a second language. English is a globally dominant lingua franca, being the most widely spoken language worldwide. The issues arise when non-native speakers utilise English as their second language. The number of native speakers is smaller than the number of non-native speakers. Seventy percent of the population in Tripura consists of Bengalis, while the remaining thirty percent belong to the Tripuri ethnicity. Non-native English speakers encounter difficulties in acquiring the language due to factors such as inadequate instruction, cultural background, and limited access to educational resources. The study primarily emphasises the difficulties experienced during English language acquisition and offers suggestions for overcoming them.

Keywords: *Tripura, Second language, Acquisition, English*

Introduction

English serves as a global language of communication. It is regarded as the most extensively utilised language worldwide. The number of native speakers is smaller than the number of non-native speakers. Non-native individuals encounter challenges when it comes to writing and speaking English, as it is not their native language. Out of the four language skills, writing is considered to be one of the most challenging. The English language has numerous advantages. English serves as a universal language that fosters connections across other nations, countries, states, and locations. English is the official language in 53 countries and is spoken as a first language by 400 million people. Currently, numerous TV series, books, and music are authored and created in the English language. If one has a solid command of English, there should be no need to rely on translations and subtitles. Approximately 565 million individuals using the internet on a daily basis, with 80% of websites being presented in the English language. English is being used as a second language in about 118 nations. English facilitates the process of travelling. English translations are provided for airport announcements, train timetables, emergency information, and street signs. English enhances our cognitive and analytical capacities. Acquiring a new language is a complex process that engages brain architecture, memory, conscious effort, and creativity. Learning a foreign language enhances cognitive abilities and increases adaptability.

Second Language Acquisition

First language acquisition can occur through natural means or in an informal environment. Acquiring or grasping one's native tongue is far easier than learning a foreign language. In a broader context, the term 'second language' refers to the process of acquiring a language that is not one's original tongue,

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subsequent to acquiring the first language. The acquisition of a second language occurs when a youngster begins attending school for the first time. A significant amount of practice is necessary. Language learning can be achieved at any stage of life. The home serves as the initial establishment where individuals acquire their second language. For example, when a youngster whose native language is Bengali begins attending school, they commence their English language education. Acquiring, a second language aids in the acquisition of English. Children have the ability to learn English at a quicker rate compared to adults.

Second Language Versus Foreign language

A language, that is not the native tongue of the speaker but is often used by the broader public for purposes such as trade, higher education, and administration. It is widely acknowledged and approved for public communication in a country with multiple languages. A second language is acquired in addition to one's native language. English, French, German, and Spanish are among the examples of second languages. Furthermore, it is common for individuals to acquire a second language in addition to their original one.

However, the mass community, civilization, or nation does not extensively speak foreign languages. An indigenous language refers to any language spoken by the inhabitants of a particular region. Assume that for an individual residing in India, where English is not considered a foreign language but rather a second language, Germany is a foreign language. The primary distinction between a second language and a foreign language is in the official recognition and widespread usage of the former within a given region, whereas the latter is not regularly employed in a particular location.

Acquisition versus Learning

These two terms are exceedingly perplexing. The ability of humans to acquire language is an inherent trait that distinguishes them from animals. Language encompasses not only the expression of emotions, feelings, and intentions, but also the formation of meaningful words and phrases through the mixing of distinct sounds.

Acquisition refers to the subconscious process by which an individual organically learns their native language. While acquiring their native language, individuals do not commit grammatical errors while engaging in communication. One can readily learn and acquire their mother tongue via consistent practice. At home, the elders or parents do not explicitly elucidate the grammatical norms and regulations; rather, they acquire them organically.

Learning can be achieved through formal education, which provides structured guidance on grammatical norms and laws. The function of teachers is crucial in facilitating pupils' acquisition of new knowledge, necessitating strict adherence to rules and regulations.

Objectives of the Study

- To find out the problems faced during second language acquisition by the students of Tripura
- To evaluate the reasons of the problems.

Overview of the English language in Tripura

The instruction of the English language in the majority of Bengali medium schools in Tripura is carried out using the mother tongue. The instruction of the English language necessitates a significant and transformative shift in educational institutions, such as schools and universities, in order to enhance the learning experience for students. English serves as a second language for them, and in certain states, it even takes on the role of a third language. This occurs in regions where a regional language is spoken, followed by Hindi.

Acquisition System

Chomsky defines Universal Grammar as the language faculty, which can be thought of as a "mental organ" similar to the heart, visual system, or system of muscular coordination and planning.

- In order to acquire proficiency in the English language, students must possess a solid understanding of grammar and sentence structure in order to generate coherent and accurate phrases.
- He asserts that in order to understand languages, it is crucial to examine the inherent human nature that resides within the human mind.

The user's text is a bullet point. Typically, throughout around 14 years of schooling, L2 is taught solely as a subject-oriented approach rather than in a casual manner, with a focus on conditional-based learning. Consequently, it is likely to cause anxiety for learners.

Why Students are unable to acquire skills by learning all subjects through 9 English medium.

Problems faced by the students during acquisition

The English language instruction in Tripura schools presents issues that require attention and resolution. Teachers exhibit a lack of confidence when teaching English in classroom settings. The majority of schools in Tripura use the Bengali Medium of instruction, where pupils are only given one English paper. Unfortunately, this paper is administered in the students' mother tongue. Naturally, the students are suffering from lack of practice of Second language.

Here are some issues that students have when learning a second language:

Excessive use of Mother Tongue

Teachers and students employ the use of their native language in the classroom setting while teaching and learning the English language. The proficiency of the English language can be significantly improved via consistent and diligent practice by students. However, the students are observed utilising their native language while acquiring proficiency in the English language.

Lack of Self- Confidence and Motivation

Many students often experience demotivation when learning new vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and syntax associated with a new language. Individuals experience apprehension and discomfort when acquiring or rehearsing unfamiliar vocabulary or expressions in the presence of others or peers.

Different Proficiency Level

Within the classroom, pupils exhibit diverse categories and possess differing levels of proficiency. There are those who possess intellectual abilities, some who have intermediate levels of learning, and a few numbers who are skilled and fluent in speaking. Advanced learners experience a sense of mastery, while beginners experience uncertainty when learning the English language.

Limited Educational Support

The majority of Tripura's geographical boundaries are encompassed by agricultural environs. The parents primarily rely on agricultural activities, particularly in the rural areas of Tripura. The lack of parental and familial support in schooling significantly hinders learners' comprehension of vocabulary, grammar, and overall knowledge.

Suggestions and Conclusions

The ELL classroom should establish a congenial atmosphere that fosters a secure environment for every student. It offers assistance to learners in completing tasks and creates a welcoming atmosphere to ensure comfort in a multicultural community. The multimedia learning facility caters to learners who prefer visual, auditory, reading/writing, and tactile modes of expression. Incorporating scaffold learning into

English language instruction involves breaking down complex concepts into simpler, more accessible ones.

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