



English Language and Learning Approaches for Tribal Learners: A Study

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Abstract:

English is the language of amazing opportunities and is crucial for everyone who seeks to develop a good carrier. However, one should keep in mind that there is no easy method to learn excellent communication skills, just as there is no easy way to attain success in life. The process of developing and strengthening our English communication talents is continual and ongoing. Communication influences nearly every aspect of our everyday lives.

The instruction of the English effective communication abilities to tribal children is a struggle for many educators in a multilingual country like India. Moreover, English as a foreign or second language is a challenging subject for many students from tribal communities. Efficient communication in education is necessary to guarantee that youngsters elicit the greatest possible advantage from the teaching and learning process. In general, it is acknowledged that psychological and sociocultural limitations may result in a variety of communication issues. According to prior research, these hurdles are more prominent in disadvantaged and underprivileged groups than in affluent and wealthy communities. Students from tribes' areas make up a large part of this neglected and underprivileged population. The present article throws light on the significance of English language, teaching and learning of English language to tribal students, their problems in learning English language and approaches that can be implemented to strengthen their oral communication skills.

Keywords: *communication skills, obstacles, exposure, arduous task, listening, and speaking. reading, writing etc.,*

Introduction:

The English language is the repository of scientific knowledge. It is not only one of the world's richest languages, but also a gateway to contemporary knowledge in a variety of fields and faculties. In India, English holds a prominent and respectable position. It has been playing an essential part in our educational system for nearly two centuries. An individual is considered handicapped if he or she lacks English proficiency. Its importance as a link language, medium of teaching in public and central schools or colleges, commerce, and communication cannot be overstated. As India is committed to modernization, secularism, values of national

integration, international understanding, world peace, and advancement in all domains, oral communication skills are becoming increasingly important in our society.

Effective communication has evolved into the lifeblood of education, business, administration, and excellent management. For success in many aspects of life, the ability to speak and write English well is therefore vital. In an ever-changing world, it is only logical that communication is in great demand. Language has a crucial role in communication, and English is indisputably the most important and widely used language worldwide. Individually, each learner should work diligently to obtain effective communication skills, which are the most essential conditions for professional success. In India, language studies are introduced to students as early as the primary level. In India, English is only taught as a second language, and there is a significant disparity in the ability of city-born children and tribal, rural children to adjust to the language. Tribal students have fewer opportunities to study English. Language acquisition is a skill that can only be mastered through consistent practise and exposure to the target language. In India, English is taught as a second language despite the fact that students are exposed to language studies beginning in elementary school. There appears to be a significant difference between city children and rural and tribal children who are learning English. Since the majority of students in India are from rural and tribal backgrounds and are first-generation learners, their parents and others do not provide them with English language guidance.

Tribal isolation is a long-standing issue, so it takes time, but the educational institutions and teachers can reinforce and speed the acquisition of English language communication skills by employing effective methods and strategies. As India is a nation of villages, rural development is the first preoccupation of every Indian. To achieve development, there must be a shared obligation to enhance the well-being of the inhabitants. Generally, villages are placed far from cities and towns. The majority of teachers serving in tribal and rural areas leave their families in urban areas and are unsatisfied with their profession. Cities are endowed with a variety of teaching-learning materials and contemporary teaching equipment, whereas villages lack these resources. The majority of tribal students are unaware of these and feel fairly helpless. The likelihood of exposure to English in remote locations is extremely low. Children raised in the city are exposed to numerous modules and have the luxury of learning English through a variety of approaches.

In city schools, children can receive instruction to strengthen their Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing skills, which are essential for learning any language, but tribal children have fewer opportunities to study English. To a tribal student, every language other than his mother tongue is a foreign language. The instruction provided in schools is strictly academic and bookish, and English is exclusively taught from an examination perspective. Therefore, even after twelve years of studying English as a subject, students are reluctant to communicate in the language. This also applies to city-born children; many of them are proficient in English, but when it comes to communicating in English, students are more hesitant. It is essential to instil in students a sense of the significance of the English language from the moment they enter school. To provide their students with the essential skills, English teachers in tribal communities must be dedicated and have an honest attitude. To create a conducive environment for language acquisition and practise, all available resources should be utilised to their full potential. Teaching English with the use of such innovative ways encourages tribal and rural students to acquire the language, allowing them to fulfil the creative demands of today.

What can the Teachers do to improve Oral Communication Skills of Tribal Learners?

The first and most important aspect is the family's sociocultural and economic background. As the majority of parents are uneducated, they cannot guide their children as effectively as educated parents. Consequently, the students' performance lacks the essential parental monitoring and guidance for schooling. The illiterate parents are unable to recognise the significance of education, nor do they comprehend the significance of communication skills in their child's career. Children from tribal communities who attend the local school are not exposed to the same types of facilities and are not as motivated as their urban counterparts. In urban areas, children are motivated in two ways: instrumental motivation and integral motivation.

Instrumental motivation is learning a language solely for the sake of rewards, whereas integrative motivation involves a strong desire to be a member of the community that propels the child to acquire the language perfectly. Regarding the curriculum, the most essential element is that English is taught as any other subject in the majority of schools. Unrealized is the significance of English as a communication tool. Therefore, the current approaches used in rural schools are insufficient to train children to speak effectively in English.

Due to this, students from rural and tribal communities who enrol in professional programmes encounter several obstacles. Since they are unable to communicate effectively in English, they miss out on numerous opportunities.

Specific language skills are required to learn English language. The following are four fundamental language skills:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

Genuine learning is the process through which an individual begins to comprehend the world through reflection on his or her own experiences. Rather than simply reading, memorising, or learning by rote, it is essential to comprehend what has been learnt and apply it to our societal needs and challenges. Individualization and pluralization, as promoted by Howard Gardner, are two aspects of education that enable a teacher to reach every student throughout a classroom session. Individualized instruction is described as teaching each student individually and assessing them in ways that are acceptable and enjoyable for the student (individualization).

Concept of Pluralization

Pluralization refers to everything that is worth teaching and may be taught in numerous ways. However, teaching is a challenging endeavour to execute. Gardner's discovery requires teachers to be well-trained in the multi-step learning/teaching process and to make their students' education challenging. Teachers must awaken students' curiosity and passion and provide them with opportunities to learn from and interact with real-life situations and events if they are to have the greatest chance of surviving the process. This is designed to help students comprehend and value the importance of English in their life. Bodgan R.C. (1992) stated that naturally inquisitive learners frequently delve into questions and search for answers, which he believes is cognitively related. Their ideas continually race through their minds. Curiosity opens the door to new opportunities,

enabling students to achieve their goals and realise their aspirations. Students must be both determined and willing to exert the necessary effort in order to achieve their objectives. Getting learners to overcome their fear of speaking English is one of the most challenging tasks for teachers, but it is possible if the students put out the necessary effort in addition to the instructors' inspiration.

It is essential for teachers to understand the diverse learning styles of their students and to have the appropriate tools to implement this knowledge in the classroom. Language teachers generally notice a number of difficulties that English language learners face in their daily life. Through casual conversations and exchanges with the students, the teachers can collect their perspectives on the significance of receiving inspiration in order to develop their oral communication skills. These tribal students generally belong to different cultural and social backgrounds that would hinder their attempts to speak in English but the encouragement and motivation that would be offered by their teachers would definitely play an important role in their development toward language proficiency.

Need for developing Oral Skills of Tribal learners

As speaking is one of the active uses of language for comprehension, for young language learners, oral language proficiency is the medium for encountering, comprehending, practising, and acquiring a new language. Instead of being a component of language learning, the spoken form is the major source of language learning for young learners in the classroom. Conversely, speaking issues can provide major barriers to effective foreign language acquisition and communication. Students of English as a foreign language (EFL), regardless of their past mastery of the English language, face various barriers when speaking. Numerous studies imply that oral language development has been largely neglected in the classroom, with teachers employing oral language more frequently than students.

However, even when deployed by teachers, oral language is seldom used to aid learners in learning knowledge and exploring concepts. To develop the knowledge required to solve oral communication challenges in an EFL setting, the language teachers must first comprehend the true nature of these difficulties and the conditions under which they are formed. It appears that a lack of input-deficient environments for spoken English communication outside of class, as well as inadequate opportunities to speak English in lectures and tutorials, all contribute to a number of difficulties that are closely related to socio-cultural factors, which play a significant role in the academic development of ESL students.

When it comes to listening, teachers must understand the distinction between understanding and acquisition. In terms of classroom pedagogy, the two viewpoints on listening point in opposite directions (Richards, 2005). According to Rost (2001), there is a distinction between learning to listen (understanding spoken communications) and learning to learn (the syntax and lexis of the language through listening), especially for adult learners (p. 97). Improving one's cognitive capacities for the goal of grasping the verbal process is part of learning to listen. Hearing to learn, on the other hand, involves developing new meaning and building connections, then repeating them, which prepares learners to pay closer attention to the syntax and lexis of the language through listening. Thus, it is noteworthy that teachers see the development of listening skills as a crucial aspect of language acquisition.

Measures and Suggestions to Improve the Oral Communication of Tribal learners

The tribal students, who are the most affected by socio-psychological and linguistic communication hurdles, believe that the medium of instruction should be adaptable enough to satisfy their needs. This will likely increase the level of academic comprehension among tribal students in the classroom. Using English exclusively cannot accomplish the goal on its own. If not always, then at least occasionally, when a student raises a question, teachers can attempt to clarify it. The tribal pupils acknowledge that if they are attempting to adapt and effectively deal with instructors using a medium of instruction that is completely foreign to them, then they should also endeavour to do so throughout their challenges. In addition, kids need relevant attention from their lecturers, which could further motivate them to grow. It is vital to allow them time to improve before passing judgement on them.

The students must be sufficiently motivated to take part in classroom discussions and activities. This can be accomplished with the teachers' continued assistance. They must make the students feel comfortable and secure by approaching them on their level, resolving their challenges, analysing them, and adopting fresh approaches to solve them. Counselling can be advised as a significant step toward the personal development of tribal students, but it must also be administered by professionals and utilised as a productive instrument for their benefit. The actions made to address their concerns should not be unfriendly in any way, so as not to aggravate them instead of aiding them. Additionally, they should be encouraged to engage in extracurricular activities. This will undoubtedly add to their increased self-confidence.

Teachers should be adaptable in their instructional methods. The teachers should sometimes be permitted to utilise the state language Telugu to communicate with students who struggle with English. Whenever a student approaches a teacher with an academic question, the instructor must respond in a language that the student understands. This will improve the learners' comprehension of academic subjects. Teachers should not be overly rigid in their approach to students. They should be hospitable enough to comprehend the thinking of the students and resolve their issues as needed. It is suggested that teachers enrol in additional courses in order to exert additional effort on behalf of their tribal students. This will result in increased engagement between professors and students. This will allow students to communicate their difficulties more effectively. If teachers demonstrate an interest in teaching children with special needs, the students will instantly reciprocate. This will help students acquire confidence and improve their academic performance.

Conclusion:

Counselling, motivation, and support provided to tribal students will improve their performance. It is vital to convince the tribal students that they are not distinct from the general populace. It is essential for them to realise their full potential. In any case, their requirements increase as they enter the mainstream community, but they can be satisfied through increased motivation and effort. If they are driven in the correct way, they will succeed with flying colours.

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