

Significance of English as a Second Language

Dr. Sayeh.S.Abdullah
THE HIGHER INSTITUTE OF ELECTRONICS
BANI WALID

INTRODUCTION

Basic Sciences Department at The Higher Institute of Electronics, Bani Walid is rendering a tremendous service in preparing the newly recruited students for grasping the scientific knowledge in the later years . The staff comprises of competent members equipped with the capabilities of imparting successfully the required education and promoting the teaching activities in the institution where the medium of instruction is mainly English. Thus it boasts of its remarkable performance as the layer of the foundation stone of higher education.

This institution has not only in the past produced a good number of highly skilled electronics engineers and professionals but also at present is engaged in doing more valuable services in this field.

In the forthcoming pages an attempt is made to enlighten the reader with the *significance of English language* in the modern world.

WHAT IS A LANGUAGE

Before launching on the discussion about the importance of English as a second language, it seems necessary to determine what actually a language is. Language, as usually



considered, is the system of human expression by means of words.

The language, first of all, is an instrument through which we find out about our surroundings. It is a means of getting what we want.

DEFINITION OF A SECOND LANGUAGE

Any alive language learnt besides the mother tongue can be called as a second language. Mother tongue or the first language is learnt without any particular effort on part of the learner. Its learning starts from the very lap of the mother and continues through out one's life, whereas any second language is learnt deliberately, intentionally and purposely.

At the earlier stage, during the process of learning any first language, though there is no particular stress on grammatical rules, but at a developed stage they acquire due importance.

On the contrary while learning any second language, particular attention, special deliberation and specific dedication is demanded to gain its accurate comprehension and achieve its fair command.

WHY ANY SECOND LANGUAGE IS LEARNT

Today's world has emerged as a global village where from every tiny to titanic development not only on our planet but also very often on some other stars finds its way to the screen, therefore to comprehend most of the latest happenings, one can hardly depend solely on one's mother tongue or the first language that is why in every country around our planet, including the most advanced one like Italy, France and Germany, people resort to the learning of second languages.



In the following lines we enumerate some of the major factors which compel every nation of the world to grasp more about the languages other than their own ones.

1. To develop communication and cooperation with the wider world.
2. To comprehend more about the people around the globe.
3. To enhance the mental abilities in order to understand the latest happenings.
4. To explore the treasures of knowledge and wisdom in the other languages.
5. To equip the minds with openness and awareness.
6. To know about the cultural level and the literary activities of the other nations.
7. To learn about the attitudes and attributes of scholars around the planet.
8. To learn the means of keeping pace with the advancing world.
9. To play a competitive role in the comity of nations.
10. To let the others know what one has and what one needs.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

There are numerous factors which helped English language in achieving its distinguished status in the modern world, though other major languages such as Latin, French and German also exist on this globe.

We describe some of these key factors in the following lines:



1. UNIVERSALITY

English has secured this status of a cosmopolitan language as it is understood widely or narrowly in almost every corner of the world. Every development in research work and every arena of knowledge discovered on this planet, has been to some extent, transmitted into this language.

2. ADAPTABILITY

English has to its credit the characteristic of adaptability as it easily adapts and absorbs the required words, phrases, abbreviations, symbols and terms from other languages and its own words are found scattered in almost every other language, so it has got the status of an alive and efficient language in the world.

3. COMPATIBILITY

English, as compared with other languages, can verily boast of its compatibility for not having any scarcity of words or phrases, terms or symbols necessary for putting one's mind to paper, therefore, most of the existing knowledge in every field of life is present in it. It is due to this quality that the one who has good command over English, finds in it all what is to be found in other language.

4. COMPOSITION

As compared with other languages like Arabic, French or German, English is simple in structure and thus easy to be understood. Its grammatical rules are not too complicated to be grasped, its sentence formation is not so tough and its alphabets are concise. These qualities has made it an attractive language.

5. CUSTODIAN OF KNOWLEDGE

English has in its store a rich treasure of almost every sort of knowledge belonging to almost every field of life; from science to fiction, from art to architecture, from astrology to astronomy etc. Most of the literary or scientific work has either been done in it or translated into it from other languages, Thus it has a valuable accumulation of knowledge to its credit which can be utilized by the reader or researcher who knows this language.

FACTORS ENHANCING THE LEARNING PROCESS OF A SECOND LANGUAGE.

1. INTENTION

Intention plays a vital role in the learning process of any second language. Without intention or inclination nothing can be achieved in any field of learning. On intention is the fort of success built. Intention is sometimes natural and sometimes created; created by one's own self or by the external factors. Howsoever it is shaped, without intention successful process of learning can not be conceived.

Churchill, a former Prime Minister of The Great Britain, while at Harrow, could not learn languages like Latin or Greek as he had no intention to learn them. Instead he got a mastery over English as he was inclined to that.

2. ATTENTION

Attention is the second major factor that has its own key role in the learning process. Only intention without attention is like a soil without any seeds. As in the absence of proper seeding there can be no concept of any crop, nothing can be

learnt so far intention and attention do not work together. Better the attention paid to learning, better the result would be.

3. ATTRACTION

When any learner of the second language embarks on the learning process, attraction, whether natural or artificial, has its own role to play. If the second language is dull or dead the learner will soon be fed up and show distraction towards learning. But in case of the language of a versatile nature it is contrary to that as the learner always finds something new and novel in that.

4. ENVIRONMENT.

Environment has its own importance in the learning process. A learner physically present in the land where the language to be learnt is spoken, can achieve much more and much better than the one who learns in the classroom atmosphere only, as former has full time opportunity to communicate and exchange in that language.

5. TEACHER'S DEXTERITY

Teachers dexterity and skill in teaching any language plays a major role as an expert teacher knows how to make even the dull learning process interesting and how to engage the learner's attention. Experienced teachers make most of the least as they skillfully manage to create an artificially attractive environment of learning for their students. It can be pertinently said that in the absence of properly trained and skilled teachers successful learning process can not be carried out.



ENGLISH AND THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Though in the past most of the research work was done in the languages other than English and these languages are not defunct even to day, but unexpectedly the research work and search for innovations has become either sorrowfully slow or come to an end in these languages, whereas English not only boasts of a huge treasure of research work already accumulated into it but also the struggle of finding always new is going on. More over any new development in every field of life wherever it takes place finds its deserved place on the relevant pages of the English publications, therefore to avail properly and to utilize adequately from this treasure , learning of English is gaining momentum in the developing countries.

It won't be out of place to mention here that none of the other major languages can boast of any distinguished research work as does English language, so not only in the developing world but also all around the globe there is a trend of resorting towards the learning of English as a second language.

CONCLUSION

This study about the need of learning any other language than one's mother tongue and the significance that English occupies as a second language, is though succinct but is enough and pertinent to enlighten the reader on this topic.

After having even a bird's eye view of the contents of this study, we can conclude that learning of the second languages by the ordinary students as well as the intellectuals of every nations, instead of fashion, has become a necessity.

The learning process is not solely dependent on any single factor, but intention, attention and attraction, whether natural or artificial, play their role simultaneously.

The learning of English as second language has its particular inevitability for the third world countries as they can not keep pace with the rapidly advancing world without properly availing of the treasure of the all the latest knowledge of the world accumulated in that language.

Learning of English is also preferred over other languages for its simple and easy structure.

In the end it won't be out of place to recommend the teaching of this language, in the countries on the road to development, more effectively and more vigilantly.

NOTE TO THE READER

This paper rather than being a sole creation of references, is based on author's own experiences and observations in the field of teaching English as a second language. Therefore, this paper as the field work production along with providing material for references to the researchers, will encourage them to be more creative than mere copier. Anyhow, the author is grateful to the following periodicals for their influence and inspiration;

1. Modern Language Forum, Los Angeles, U.S.A
2. The Modern Language Review, Cambridge, U.K
3. Language in Action, New York, Hercourt, 1939
4. Language and Culture, New York, Macmillan, 1940
5. Longman Dictionary of contemporary English.

ABSTRACT

The significance of English as a global language is established. It is understood almost in every corner of the world, though it is the mother tongue of a few nations.

Learning of English as a second language has achieved significance, as it boasts of a huge treasure of research work to its credit, whereas the other languages which in the past hoarded the pearls of knowledge and wisdom has gradually lost their prominence due to the absence of any notable research in them as compatible with that carried out in English during the last three or four centuries.

In many of the countries around the globe English is learnt as a second language to avail of the rich store of knowledge that has gathered into it.

Therefore, some factors that enhance the learning process of English as a second language are narrated in these pages for the enlightenment of the teachers.



الخلاصة

اكتسبت اللغة الانجليزية أهميتها كلغة عالمية رغم أنها اللغة الأم لعدد قليل من الأمم ، وتعليم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة ثانية له اهمية كبيرة حيث تعترف بكنزها الضخم من الأعمال البحثية كمفخرة لها ، وحيث إن اللغات الأخرى والتي كانت في الماضي تختزن جواهر المعرفة والحكمة قد أصبحت تفتقد تدريجياً شهرتها وتميزها نتيجة لغياب الأبحاث التي تتلاءم مع تلك التي تنشر باللغة الانجليزية خلال الثلاثة أو الأربعة قرون الماضية .

وفي كثير من البلدان في العالم تتم دراسة اللغة الانجليزية كلغة ثانية للاستفادة من المخزون الفني من المعرفة التي جمعت فيها ولذلك فإن بعض العوامل التي دعمت عملية تعليم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة ثانية قد وردت في هذه الصفحات لتتوير المعلمين بها .

