

Need And Importance Of Learning In Schools Through English Medium

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Abstract

The medium of instruction refers to the specific language employed by the teacher to impart knowledge and educate the students within the confines of the classroom. Utilising the target language as the medium for teaching language or educational material enhances the learner's exposure to it and provides more opportunities for communication, hence facilitating the development of their proficiency in it. Furthermore, the medium of instruction refers to the language used for verbal instruction, as well as the language used in teaching materials and examinations. Generally, these categories indicate decreasing levels of flexibility and autonomy: within a classroom setting, teachers and students have the ability and often exercise the choice to utilise any speech registers that are accessible to them. These strategies may involve utilising different regional language variations, alternating between languages, using multiple languages simultaneously, and translating within the classroom. Nevertheless, the educational materials and assessments typically employ a standardised or intellectualised language. Moreover, in basic education, there is typically greater flexibility in terms of speech and assessment methods compared to secondary and tertiary levels of education.

Key Words: assessment, classroom, education, English, instruction, language, medium

Introduction

Today, English medium of instruction has been adopted by many institutions as the primary language in the classroom

from the beginning of the course. To support meaning, instructors modify their methods by incorporating a great deal of visual information and non-verbal communication. Therefore, the term "English medium" describes the use of the English language to teach academic courses (apart from English itself) in nations or states where the majority of the population do not speak English as their first language.

English-medium education

An English-medium education system is one that uses English as the major medium of teaching, especially when English is not the students' first language. English is becoming a worldwide language, and teaching it as a foreign language is becoming increasingly popular. According to Macaro et al. (2018), English as a medium of teaching is becoming increasingly popular around the world, particularly in higher education. More and more higher education institutions are eager to provide undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in English alone (Earls, 2016). Moreover, to make students more success in higher education, the school education (primary and secondary) adopts the English medium from the beginning. Thus, learning at English-medium schools enables children to interact with individuals from around the globe more effectively.

In India, English is among the most widely spoken languages. It is used across all walks of life like administration, business, entertainment, and media (Rukmini, 2022). As a result, the English language has become a language that opens up opportunities everywhere for children. In addition to developing their academic skills, students also learn essential life skills to help them succeed in the future. Children who learn English at an early age find it easier to learn other languages later. Therefore, English-medium education gives children not only exposure to the English language but also enabling them to pick up other languages quickly and easily.

Importance of English-medium

At present, there is a global surge in the use of English as the medium of instruction in primary schools, secondary schools, and universities; nevertheless, the implications of this expanding trend are inadequately investigated. The use of top-down measures to enforce English medium education is growing, sometimes with little consideration for the potential educational benefits of second language acquisition for the

millions of students affected. Therefore, the objective of this research group is to address the lack of knowledge by investigating the impact of English as the medium of instruction on various aspects of language learning, content learning, teaching methods, education quality, access disparities, language adaptability, and the skills required to be an effective English medium teacher.

Recognising the significance of the English language in the global phenomena, English has been incorporated as a mandatory topic in school curricula and is also used as a medium of instruction in many institutions. English has been part of our educational system for over a century. But the irony of the situation is that, even though the wide scope and growing importance of the language is known to everyone, a sorry state of affairs still exists in linguistic behavior of the students. English is beyond the reach of most of the students in India, especially the vernacular medium students, who face more difficulty in learning English than the students of English medium. Language teaching practice frequently assumes that the majority of the challenges that students have when studying English are caused by the degree to which their native language differs from English. This study provides insight into the practice of English language learning as a second language and the problems encountered by Telugu medium students in the Silchar sub division of Assam in learning the four skills of hearing, speaking, reading, and writing.

English and Telugu: Two different origins

Learning English as a second language is tough for Telugu medium students because their mother tongue, Telugu has certain linguistic features that differ from English. English and Telugu are languages with very distinct origins: English is classified as a member of the Indo-European language family, whereas Telugu is a descendant of the proto-language Proto-Dravidian (Dravidian Language, 2017). The two languages' segment counts and types are different from one another and therefore, Telugu students commit errors due to the influence of Telugu on English, as their mother tongue stands as a barrier in their learning.

Origin and History of English Language

The Indo-European family of languages includes English. The majority of the modern European languages are members of this large family. Latin and the modern Romance languages,

the Germanic languages, the Indo-Iranian languages, the Slavic languages, the Baltic languages (Latin and Lithuanian), the Celtic languages, and Greek are all significant branches of the Indo-European family. English is a member of the Germanic group of languages. Approximately 3,000 years ago, this group is thought to have originated as a common language in the Elbe river region. This Common Germanic language had fragmented into three distinct subgroups by the second century BC: The East Germanic language was utilised by emigrant groups returning to southeastern Europe. Gothic is the only written East Germanic language that has survived, and no East Germanic language is spoken now. The current Scandinavian languages of Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, and Icelandic are descended from North Germanic. The contemporary languages German, Dutch, Flemish, Frisian, and English are descended from West Germanic. Professor Jack Lynch's classification of the Indo-European language gives a clear idea about the origin of English:

Origin and History of Telugu

Proto-Dravidian, a proto-language, is the ancestor of Telugu, a Dravidian language. It has been suggested via linguistic reconstruction that Proto-Dravidian was spoken circa 4000 BCE (Subodh Kapoor, 2002). Telugu is native to the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, where it is the official language spoken by around 96 million people (Eberhard et al., 2002). Telugu has an uninterrupted, prolific, and diversified literary heritage of over a thousand years (Harder Hans, 2017), and some 10,000 pre-colonial inscriptions exist in Telugu (Morrison and Lycett, 1997).

The origins of prehistoric Telugu date back to approximately 600 BCE, if not earlier (Mari Will, 2021). On the basis of an analysis of its linguistic characteristics, this Telugu is appropriately categorised as "one of the most conservative Dravidian languages" (Linguistic Survey of India, 1906). While the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana are home to the majority of Telugu native speakers, neighbouring states such as Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, and the union territories of Puducherry and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands also contain native speakers. The 2011 Census of India reported that the overall Telugu-speaking population in India amounts to 96 million (Eberhard et al., 2023). Of this total, 49.6 million individuals reside in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Telugu is a language that has its roots in Proto-Dravidian. Between 1500 BCE and 1000 BCE, it broke from Proto-Dravidian, about at the same time as the Tamil language became independent in terms of literary activity. Telugu is a member of the Central Dravidian language family, which descended from Proto-Dravidian, which was spoken on the Deccan plateau's central region. The rustic Gondi, Konda, Kui and Kuvi languages are among the core group's languages, all of which are linguistically similar to Telugu. In ancient times, it was known as 'Tenugu' and in medieval times, it was known as 'Andhra.' Telugu is also said to have originated from 'Trilinga' - the three lingas. The mediaeval Telugu territory was commonly described as the area containing the three lingas of the three magnificent temples of Draksharamam (East Godavari district), Kaleshwaram (Karimnagar district), and Srisailem (Kurnool district). Inscriptions written in Telugu date back to 633 AD. The inception of Telugu literature can be traced back to an 11th-century translation of the Sanskrit epic Mahabharata. Many Arabic and Persian terms entered the Telugu language with the establishment of Muslim control. They were, however, limited to spoken language as well as the language of the courts and executive.

Status Telugu Language

Telugu is the largest member of the Dravidian language family. Spherical in distribution, it is the official language of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, two Indian states. Telugu had around 75 million speakers in the early twenty-first century. The Dravidian languages are thought to be among the world's oldest. Tamil, one of Telugu's "cousin" languages, is said to have originated roughly 5,000 years ago. Telugu has been utilized for poetry and literature since the 11th century, although the oldest recorded writings in this language originate from 575 CE.

The Telugu second phase began in the 4th century CE and ended in 1022 CE, following the Andhra Ikshvaku period. This is exemplified by the fact that the earliest completely Telugu inscription, discovered in the Rayalaseema region in 575 CE, is credited to the Renati Cholas, who deviated from the prevalent practice of penning royal proclamations in Sanskrit and instead started writing them in the native tongue. Over the next fifty years, Telugu inscriptions started to appear in Anantapur and the surrounding areas. The Balliya-Choda plates, which originate from the middle of the ninth century

CE, are the oldest copper plate grants in the Telugu language. This was the period when Telugu literature first emerged and when Sanskrit and Prakrit had a greater influence on Telugu. At the courts of the monarchs, Telugu literature first manifested itself as poetry and inscriptions. Later, it was documented in works such as Nannayya's Mahabharatam (1022 CE). During Nannayya's rule, the literary language diverged from the general language. Additionally, phonetic changes to spoken language occurred throughout this period.

Telugu is culturally related to its southern neighbours, Tamil and Kannada, but genetically more close to its northern counterparts, Gondi, Konda, Kui, Kuvi, Pengo and Manda. There is evidence that these languages readily borrowed from Telugu even in the prehistoric period, but borrowing between Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada occurred mostly during the historic period, which began after the fifth century B.C. Telangana's languages are heavily influenced by Persian and Arabic due to its historical history with Muslim domination. The substantial influence of English vocabulary in the Coastal Andhra language can be attributed to the nearly a century of direct British rule over these regions.

The official languages of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana at present are Telugu. Schedule 8 of the Indian constitution enumerates it as one of the 22 languages in full. It is one of the official languages of the union territories of Puducherry. The language Telugu is protected in South Africa. As per the South African Constitution, the Pan South African Language Board is responsible for advocating and ensuring the recognition of Telugu, along with other languages. The South African government has announced the reinstatement of Telugu as an official subject in South African schools, following its removal from the curriculum in public institutions. In addition, the Government of India granted classical languages legal status in October 2004 as a result of political action spearheaded by different Tamil groups. As a consequence of several campaigns, Telugu was also accorded classical language status shortly after, on August 8, 2008.

Acceptance of English Language

Presently, the significance of the English language cannot be denied. The educated people of Andhra Pradesh is well aware of the importance of English in the contemporary world, and they have a strong preference for acquiring the language. They

what their children to have communicative competence in the target language and send them to the best instructions for proper learning it. But they have a negative attitude towards the mother tongue medium school and therefore most of them send their children to English medium schools where they expect they will learn better English. Only the uneducated and the people of low social and financial background send their children to the mother tongue medium schools who have very little knowledge about English and its importance.

Attitude of the guardians of the Telugu medium schools

The process of imparting to a person the experiences that society has already gained is known as education. A child's education is not only the school's job; parents and schools as a whole must share collective responsibility for it. This idea also holds true for teaching and learning English. A prevalent misconception among parents is that the linguistic progress of their children is entirely the responsibility of the educators. The parents fabricate it so that their children appear to spend in excess of two-thirds of their time at home. Additionally, there is a misconception among students and instructors that the professors alone bear responsibility for English language acquisition. Even educators seem to place the burden on themselves, and the general public also seems to hold educators accountable for the low language proficiency of their students. The general public, educators, and parents alike are unaware of the crucial role that parents should play in their children's English learning.

Parents have an important part in their children's educational development. Their positive attitude, help and encouragement make their children's learning easy and efficient. Consequently, it is necessary to educate the public, pupils, parents, and educators regarding the significance of the parental role in language acquisition. But one pathetic fact is that most of the parents of Telugu medium schools of silchar subdivision are illiterate; they have little knowledge about the importance of English language learning. They don't take proper care towards their students learning and they believe that going to school is enough for the learners. They believe that whatever they need to learn they are learning within the school environment and parents have nothing to do with it. They are unable to understand the fact that language learning is not only confined to school environment. The lack of awareness on the part of the parents prevents the students

from comprehending that language acquisition occurs beyond the confines of the classroom. Due to the negligence of the parents, the students are unable to perceive enough knowledge regarding language learning and suffer from depression. The youngsters in the study reported that they are terrified of English, which may indicate sadness caused by incapacity to learn.

Attitude of the society

It is common knowledge that social factors significantly impact second-language acquisition. Social factors are those conditions within the social milieu of the language learner that have the potential to either encourage or discourage the learner's desire to obtain proficiency in the target language. It is crucial to emphasise that the student may or may not be aware of how these elements affect their language learning process. Although there may not be many opportunities for children to speak English outside of the classroom, society may still foster a friendly and encouraging environment where students can develop their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills.

But the pathetic fact with the Telugu students is that the society itself is not conscious enough to encourage their learners in developing their communicative competence. They don't even realize the fact that a society also has many responsibilities towards the future generation neglecting which the society itself will have to lag behind. It is in fact the peak time when the society should come forward to have an enlightened approach towards teaching and learning English. Individual differences among students should not be perceived as shortcomings; rather, each student should be valued for their own strengths and contributions.

Attitude of the teachers

Teachers play an important role in student's learning. Their attitude towards implementation of English medium in schools and learning English has a direct effect on the attitude of the students. However, the results of the questionnaire suggest that Telugu teachers were more favourable to the idea of using Telugu as an instructional medium rather than English, while they acknowledge that instruction in English can improve student learning more effectively. Teachers in this study favoured English-medium instruction due to the challenges pupils encounter when only English is used for instruction.

The government is also required to take necessary steps to support English education considering the participation and the atmosphere in the classrooms, where Telugu is a medium of instruction. Given the advantages and potential advantages of learning English, as well as the insufficient quality of English instruction in secondary schools, and the diverse requirements of students, it is necessary to initiate a discussion on implementing English-medium instruction. This discussion should involve not only instructors, but also the government and other stakeholders.

While it is indisputable that English is presently the prevailing language used in business and academic settings, alternative approaches such as Telugu and English electives or requirements, as well as Telugu-language assignments, should be duly considered. We cannot simply assert, "English-medium instruction is the only one that works at this time, and no other alternatives have been proposed," in the absence of evidence.

Attitude of the students

Telugu students are unable to leave their mother tongue when learning English because they are deeply connected to their own Telugu culture, family, and sense of belonging. Even though most students find it difficult to become fluent in English, they are more drawn to Telugu, which is their mother tongue. Despite their appreciation for English, Telugu is still highly valued. The majority of learners have no interest in learning English, as they have told the researcher that they dislike the language but must do so for future employment opportunities. Significant numbers of students assert that the English language of the examination queries prevents them from comprehending them. The Telugu medium learners exhibit a markedly negative attitude in comparison to the remaining learners. Additionally, the Telugu pupils expressed that they would earn significantly higher grades if they were permitted to complete the examination in Telugu. Certain learners associate English primarily with prospects for employment, upward social mobility, achievement, and authority, rather than with the preservation of their mother tongue and cultural identity. To them, English was only for formal communication, whereas Telugu was for more informal conversation and purposes. In this school, during break time, teachers speak with students in Telugu.

Anxiety, fear, sadness, anger, exasperation, and lack of focus were noted among the students as a result of their incapability to cooperate with and comprehend the instructors. Learners expressed experiencing anger due to their insufficient comprehension of the language used for instruction, leading to subsequent frustration. Parents interviewed students about their behaviour, and one feature they revealed was that students memorised reading lessons without understanding them, indicating that they didn't have the capacity to advance their knowledge as the school's syllabus intended.

Conclusion

Learning English is not just about career success; it is also about personal growth and development. English language skills can help child become more confident, articulate, and expressive. Fluency in English can also help a youngster engage with the world in a more meaningful way, broadening their perspectives. As a result, most parents today are interested in enrolling their children in English-medium schools. The top English medium school can give children with the skills and knowledge required to excel in English. A good English medium school will focus on developing various skills among the children. The best English medium schools focus on developing strong language skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. They use innovative teaching methods that keep students engaged and motivated. English medium schools provide students with exposure to English literature, culture, and history. This exposure helps students understand and appreciate the language and its cultural significance. The best English medium schools focus on developing conversational skills, which are essential for effective communication. They provide students with opportunities to practice their conversational skills through group discussions, debates, and other interactive activities. English medium schools often have a diverse student population, which provides students with exposure to different cultures and languages. This exposure helps students develop an appreciation for cultural diversity and become more tolerant and open-minded. Hence, most of the intellectuals today think that child should start their education in a best English medium school, where the teachers provide quality education and ensure the child's success as they learn and flourish in the English language.

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