

INFLUENCE OF TEACHER'S USE OF SECOND LANGUAGE ON STUDENT'S LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY: A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF TEACHER'S USE OF URDU AS CLASSROOM LANGUAGE ON PUNJABI SPEAKING CHILDREN

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to find out the influence of the use of second language by the teacher on the students. Urdu is the national language of Pakistan and is used as a medium of instruction in majority of the schools in Pakistan. But in some schools, some of the teachers don't use Urdu language as a medium of instruction due to their own lack of language proficiency due to which students also lack in the proficiency of Urdu language. For this purpose, a school from the remote area was selected. The native language of this area is pure Punjabi that doesn't share its vocabulary to the Urdu language. A class to which a teacher taught to the students in Punjabi and a class to which a teacher taught to the students in Urdu language were selected. It was observed that the teacher teaching in Urdu language influences positively on the language proficiency of the students while the teacher teaching in Punjabi language don't influence positively in their use of Urdu language.

Keywords: SL; language proficiency; Urdu language; medium of instruction; information transfer

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1. Introduction

Language is a system of communication. There are two channels of communication that are written and spoken. Speaking plays an important role in the communication of any language. Rivers and Temperley (1945), in their book *A Practical Guide to the Teaching of English*, opined that usually we spend more than 45% of our time on listening, 30% on speaking, 16% on reading and only 9% on writing. So, after listening, speaking is most important skill to learn. To become a proficient and fluent speaker, one needs to have good practice of this skill. Better classroom activities cannot be possible without effective communication. Communication issue is an important issue in the current world as Deans Kerry (2002) points out:

“Communication issues have achieved greater prominence in recent professional service developments (Deans Kerry: 2002).”

There may be communication apprehension that students have to face due to the lack of training that's why it can be specific or “may even be part of a general anxiety trait that arises in many facets of an individual's life” (Friedman, 1980). Students may have problem in speaking as well as in writing as it is a feeling of frustration and poor performance when faced with a writing task and fear of having one's writing read publically and evaluated (Dalay and Miller, 1975, Scott and Timmerman, 2005, Mabrito 1991 and 2000).

There are a lot researches conducted by the researchers and linguists in which attention has been paid on the use of second language in the classroom by the teachers that serves as a teaching goal accomplishment on the one hand and as a resource for the comprehensive second language acquisition for the learners on the other hand. Language teachers' classroom second language is one of the most significant methods for the learners to learn second language. Thus, the effective use of second language in classroom influences the learning enthusiasm of the students.

Urdu language is the second language that is being used by the majority of Pakistanis. It shares a lot of vocabulary with Punjabi. But at most of the places, it is a totally different language for the people of Pakistan. For example, for Pashtoon, Balooch, Sidhi and also for Punjabi student at some places where Punjabi is used in local accent and vocabulary, Urdu becomes second language to a greater extent. So, due to this reason, the learning of Urdu relies totally on use of Urdu language by the teacher in the classroom. Though it is taught as

subject but the use of Urdu language by the teacher influences language learning of students to a greater extent.

However, there are a large number of old teachers who don't use Urdu in the classroom. There are different reasons for this. One major reason is that they don't have proficiency of Urdu language. As a result, they don't use Urdu language in the classroom. The ultimate end of this lack of use of Urdu language is that the students also don't have competence to speak Urdu language.

The current study will try to find out how the lack of the use of Urdu as second language in classroom influences on learning of Urdu of the students in a community that don't shares it vocabulary with Urdu. Students of a school of remote area that is situated at the bank of Satluj river will be taken as a population of the study who don't shares vocabulary of Urdu language with their native language.

1.1. Research Questions:

1. What is influence of the use of Urdu as second language by teacher on the students?
2. What is influence of the use of Punjabi language in classroom by the teacher on the students' learning of Urdu?

2. Review of Related Literature

The latest history of the psychology of learning can be dated to the later part of nineteenth century and earlier part of twentieth century though the history of a philosophical interest in learning can be sketched back to Ancient Greece, William James, an American philosopher and physician is thought to have been at the very starting of the serious study of the processes of mind. Psychology was called as the science of mental life in 1980, by him. The study of learning started to grow from the study of the mind and of human behaviour,

Behaviour was the base of this early interest in learning or in other words. There were many followers of this area and the progress of this area of leaning psychology was known as 'behaviourism'. It was the start of twentieth century when behaviourism flourished rapidly and almost alongside this increasing interest in behaviour and the variation of behaviour came the increasing realisation that the mental processes that are unseen, involved in learning and there are different factors that enable us to learn more that are environment and also reward and punishment.

Regarding the psychology of learning there were two areas that developed in general terms and have made significant ways into the teaching practice over the last decades. Among these, there is behaviourism firstly and then comes 'constructivism' on second level, that is an area of a larger field of understanding and research which is cognitive psychology. There are a series of sub-branches of both of these branches, but to divide learning theory in this way, it is reasonably fair. So, behaviourism can be seen as what is happening – behaviour. Constructivism lies on the idea that knowledge and more significantly understanding are developed by individual learners and there is a mental process that is engaged which is related to a comprehension; the paramount importance that is believed to be as embedded is the knowledge and understanding of structure.

2.1 The Division of Second Language Teachers' Classroom

Normally, classroom second language can be classified into four kinds.

2.1.1. Use of Organizational type of Second Language in Classroom

The classroom second language that is referred to as Organizational target language utilized to keep language class in order, for the organization of the procedure of teaching , to develop the behaviour of students, to control the dicipline of classroom and for language teaching implementation in the process of teaching second language.

Usually the use of organizational language is "to elicit information and encourage participation, to check students' comprehension, to focus their attention and involve them in the lesson, and also to control and manage behavior" (Cao, 2010). Some repeatedly used patterns of organizational L2 by the instructors in language classes are of such type. "Let's begin our class", indicates that learners should pay their full attention on class and activities of other kinds ought to be ended. "Please read after me." says that learners are going to study some types of words or sentences as their teacher does. "Be quiet." denotes that students should be silent at that moment and teacher should be listened carefully.

2.1.2. Use of Second Language for Instruction

The type of second language that the teachers use to explain grammar is called Instructional second language for example, text, vocabulary, and so on. According to Cao (2010), one of the major way through which language teachers communicate information to the students is to talk to them.

Thus, the general knowledge that students can obtain related to the subject matter is the instructional English. For instance, if an educator explains a word as: "it's a noun, but it also can be used as a verb.", as a result of the information that the students will get about these two pieces of information are of two types.

It is important to mention that students' ability of communication has been paid much attention in recent years of this era, which indicates that the conventional spoon-feeding teaching of grammar couldn't be followed to this new trend. Though, no matter how the educators try to develop learners' ability of communication, vocabulary and grammar teaching is yet the foundation of learning target language. Thus, the talk of second language teacher is greatly necessary in classroom of that teacher is the best way to communicate to the students the knowledge of language.

2.1.3. Student-teacher Interactional Use of Second Language

The student-teacher interactional language indicates to the second language that is used in the classroom for discussions and conversations. It also incorporates the second language utilized to ask questions and to answer these questions. It is held that asking questions and answering these questions are the common ways of creating teacher-student interactional opportunities. "The classroom question and answer discourse serves the instructive and exploratory functions in addition to the communicative and interpersonal functions" (Fu, 2008).

2.1.4. Use of Target Language for Feedback

The use of second language by the teacher for feedback is the classroom language to assess the answers of the questions of students and to correct the errors of students. Target language used by the teacher for feedback can be classified into two kinds: positive and negative. Giving feedback is a significant skill for language teachers and can accomplish various functions for interaction in the classroom. Positive feedback contains approval of the answers of students and praise for students, like, "Good job.", "Wonderful.", "Yes, you are right.", "Excellent performance." etc. On the other hand, negative feedback is a type of direct error corrections of students. For instance, teachers ask the learners "Is he right?" in an interrogative type of mood when the teachers feel that answer is not correct.

"It's vital in classroom to communicate messages that are positive to increase students' self-esteem and confidence since their feelings about their capabilities strongly influence their

performance” (Arnold, 2000). Thus, language teachers must try to provide their students encouragement to arise learning enthusiasm of students.

2.2. Influence of the Use of Second Language by the Teachers in Classroom Target on Students' Learning Enthusiasm

Enthusiasm is a type of strong feeling of excitement, pleasure and interest in something and a wish to become involved in that activity. Students' second language learning enthusiasm is strongly related to some personal features which include attitude, motivation and self-esteem since learners' learning enthusiasm is a type of condition that is psychologically complex. In addition, the degree of students' participation and cooperation is also a type of reflection of their 2nd language learning enthusiasm.

2.2.1. Motivation

“If asked to identify the most powerful influences on learning, motivation would probably be high on most teachers' lists” (Williams & Burden, 2000). “Motivation is commonly thought of as an inner drive, impulse, emotion, or desire that moves one to a particular action” (Brown, 2001). Learners with a high level of motivation will be wishing to put more energy into second language learning, while learners with low level of motivation will not be geared up to show great desires in learning. Thus, school students will be in different types of state based on different types of information communicated by their teachers.

2.2.2. Attitude

Attitude means the way that one believes and feels about somebody or something. “The teacher needs to be aware that everyone has both positive and negative attitudes” (Brown, 2001). If second language teachers present their language classes in an attractive way, learners will adjust themselves to the attitudes that are positive; on the contrary, they will seize negative attitudes towards second language. “Second language learners benefit from positive attitudes and negative attitudes may lead to decreased motivation and in all likelihood, because of decreased input and interaction, to unsuccessful attainment of proficiency” (Brown, 2001).

2.2.3. Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is a type of individual judgment that is communicated in the attitude that a certain individual keeps towards himself. “Some children with low self-esteem may be

excessively fearful and timid, unable to make decisions, expecting failure and reluctant to express opinions; others may be bullying and bragging" (Arnold, 2000).

"Being one of the most important mirrors through which children discover who they are, English teachers are in a very strong position to create conditions that can be conducive or detrimental to their self-esteem"(Arnold, 2000).

Target language teachers' use of encouraging and inspiring words and sentences can communicate positive energy to their pupils so as to boost their self-esteem. Conversely, negative feedbacks will attack learners' self-confidence and even destroy their self-esteem. For example, some L2 teachers who are not properly qualified would make use humiliating and vulgar sentences and words to shame their pupils. They don't keep their pupils' feeling in mind, which will become the reason of serious detriment to the learners. Students' self-esteem is damaged as a result of that and they don't dare to express their ideas or feelings in future target language learning.

2.2.4. Cooperation and Participation

"The successful implementation of activities depends largely on the students' response, cooperation and participation" (Jiang, 2006). If second language teachers use effective and efficient classroom L2, it can create a good and conducive atmosphere for students'. Second language learning students will be wishing to take part in classroom activities. However, second language teachers' classroom target language is not always supportive to encourage students' participation and cooperation. Monotone second language in classroom can neither capture students' interests nor get learners involved in the activities in class, which will not be advantageous for their second language learning. For instance, some English teachers are in the habit of using the same praising and feedback words which they have used for many times before. As a result, students will feel bored with such classroom language learning soon and lose enthusiasm with the passage of time.

3. Research Methodology

The method adopted in this study is observational that leads to qualitative method. For the purpose to know the effects of the use of second language on student's proficiency in second language, two classes of a rural school were selected. In the section A of class 3, the teacher uses Urdu language which is not student's native language while in section B of the same class the

teacher doesn't use Urdu language to the students in everyday discussion or instruction. Both of the teachers were observed for a week with their permission (though they were not told in the beginning that the purpose of this observation to check the effects of the use of classroom language on the language of the students. However, the permission was sought later on for the purpose). Then the researcher conducted a discussion of the students of the both classes separately and asked them to try to use Urdu language during discussion and recorded their discussion.

3.1. Data Collection

A primary school was selected from the remote area of district Pakpattan which is situated at the end of central Punjab and start of South Punjab. The native language of the students of this area is Punjabi. Urdu is occasionally used in the classroom. As in this area, it was noted that the parents of all the students speak Punjabi. Recorded data of students was taken by having discussion to the students of both classes.

3.2. Data analysis

After the collection of data, it was analysed carefully by separating the words of Punjabi and Urdu language after listening the sentences spoken by the children. The separated words of Punjabi and Urdu were enlisted and crosschecked by Urdu language expert to avoid any mistake.

4. Discussion

While observing the both classes, it was noticed that both the teachers used different languages, one Punjabi while the other Urdu. As it was noticed that the teacher who was speaking Urdu, he used Urdu for all purposes especially for organization purposes. For example, when he directed the students to walk in lines, to sit in lines, to come one by one etc. he used Urdu language while the other teacher used Punjabi for organizational purposes. This effected/encouraged on the use of Urdu language in the organizational matter in daily routine of the students. The use of second language for organizational purposes is "to elicit information and encourage participation, to check students' comprehension, to focus their attention and involve them in the lesson, and also to control and manage behavior" (Cao, 2010).

One of the major purposes of education is to convey information to the students and for this purpose teachers use some language as according to Cao (2010), talk is one of the major ways that second language teachers convey information to their students in language classroom. The teacher who used Urdu to convey information to the students had healthy influence on the students. As they experienced that transfer of information in Urdu language, it also influenced their use of Urdu language in their information exchange with each other. On the other hand, the knowledge transferred by the teacher was in the native language, students also used that native language in their discussion and in their transfer of information. Communication plays an important role in the teaching of any language. To check the ideas communicated by the teacher whether they are conveyed effectively or not, asking questions is a good way. As Fu (2008) opined that the classroom question and answer discourse serves the instructive and exploratory functions in addition to the communicative and interpersonal functions. It was noticed that the teacher asked questions in Urdu contributed well in the learning of Urdu as second language while on the contrary, the students couldn't use Urdu language well in daily life because teacher never used answer question techniques in Urdu language, he used Punjabi instead. The result of this was observed when some of questions were asked to the students in Urdu, they were not able to respond properly.

The teacher who used Urdu in the classroom encouraged the students to speak Urdu too. He used the words well done, good, excellent etc. when a student responded using Urdu language. As a result, it increased their self-confidence and self-esteem because they feel they can perform well as Arnold (2000) recommended that it is vital to communicate positive messages and responses in the classroom to increase the self-esteem of the students since their beliefs regarding their abilities strongly influence their performance. "If asked to identify the most powerful influences on learning, motivation would probably be high on most teachers' lists" (Williams & Burden, (2000). Similarly according to Brown, motivation is commonly thought of as an inner drive, impulse, emotion, or desire that moves one to a particular action. So, the teacher who motivated the students to speak Urdu, made them good at the use of Urdu language while it was noticed that the teacher using Punjabi language never motivated his students to speak Urdu, he de-motivated instead some times when some students tried to use Urdu language with negative gestures. So, we can say that even if it was not negative attitude towards the use of Urdu language in the classroom it was not a positive too. As Brown (2001)

opined that the learners of second language benefit from positive attitudes while the negative attitudes may lead to diminished motivation and in all probability, because of reduced input and interaction to the proficiency of unsuccessful attainment.

This decreased motivation that leads to unsuccessful attainment of proficiency may lead to the fear of using second language in their daily lives that may also lead to the fear of other decisions of life. "Some children with low self-esteem may be excessively fearful and timid, unable to make decisions, expecting failure and reluctant to express opinions; others may be bullying and bragging" (Arnold, 2000). So, it was noticed that some of the students who never used Urdu felt hesitation in the use of Urdu to answer the questions asked due to the fear of making mistakes while on the other hand those whose teacher used Urdu fluently in the classroom and provided Urdu language as input for the students during his teaching and who encouraged the students to use Urdu language during classroom discussion, led the students to feel fearless while using Urdu language.

Teachers are in a very strong position to create such conditions for the students to use a particular language because the student feels inspiration by the teachers, they want to become like their teachers, they want to follow their footsteps that's why whatever the language they will use, the students will try to use the same as Arnold (2000), opined that being one of the most important mirrors through which children discover who they are, English teachers are in a very strong position to create conditions that can be conducive or detrimental to their self-esteem. So, the teacher who didn't use Urdu as language of instruction in the classroom, de-motivated the students to use Urdu in their daily discussion.

5. Conclusion

It is concluded from the above discussion that teacher's use of second language plays a vital role to influence the language proficiency of the students. Students usually feel inspiration from the teachers because they take them as a perfect model to be imitated. The more the teacher uses target language in the classroom, the more the students feel confident to use that language in their daily routine. The teachers, who use second language with their students in their classroom, enable them to become proficient user of target language while the teachers who don't use target language with their student marred their enthusiasm and de-motivate them.

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