

SOCIO COGNITIVE FACTORS IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION – AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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Abstract

Teaching the culture of native language speakers is of less focus where the domination of both the local and international culture is high in English language classrooms. A change in the view of English teachers such as the quality of English teachers is identified by their linguistic teaching and inter cognitive competence. Emergence of new trends and methods in teaching clearly pinpoints the teachers as life-long learners. Professional learning from beginning to end will lead a way to innovation of new approaches in teaching. The development of modern technologies is affecting resources of the ELT through which the students are able to connect with different people but at the same time they remain confused while choosing the most appropriate material. English has occupied an important place in educational system as well as in day to day life. Online Corpora is used for enormous sources which is quite helpful for the teachers and students. The capability of communicating in online with unknown personalities may help students with learning things quickly. One of the great advantages of internet for language learners is the availability of wide spread authentic resources and the source of white board allows students to save and print notes written on the board. Teaching soft skills and critical thinking skills in classrooms will oil the wheels of communication in the world of tourism, trade, business and education. The purpose of this study is to investigate certain socio cognitive effects in the ELT classroom on first year engineering students of Kanyakumari district. This study analyzes that how such social and cognitive factor creates an impact on first year engineering students.

Key Words: Cognitive Factors, Second Language Acquisition, Analytical Study, Authentic Resources, Soft Skills and Critical Thinking Skills

Introduction

In the classroom, teachers have to evaluate the stage of a student. This allows the teacher to assist the students' performance and efforts easily. Teachers have to step backward and witness students level that they can easily implement the device of speaking easily in the mind of the students. One can say that it is the part of the educator to structure a classroom atmosphere. The atmosphere framed by teachers has to transcend the wall so that second language acquisition becomes possible. In order to become a confident user of language, it has to be functioned obviously without any traditional approaches. Acquisition permits meaningful interaction of language naturally in which language learners are more concerned with the form of their utterances and words. The words and sounds made by students as well as teachers are enlightening the process of second language acquisition. The second language has acquainted with the linguistic and psychological theories of acquisition.

Effects of Socio Cognitive Factors

While analyzing about the social system of language learning among students, a keen look can be had on how educators for managing cognitive contexts in classrooms. For certain prescribed appropriate social participation, teachers should be aware of child development, peer collaboration, the social event, patterns of exchange, collaboration, participation and ground rules. To be a skillful and successful language learner, one has to make use of all social and cognitive skills to be a master in that particular language. Development comes from social elements to an individual right from the childhood. Communication is human, social and interpersonal.

The child in the classroom learns how to use a language as a tool for communication. Learner's knowledge attitude and practices are influenced by social and cognitive factors. As every learner has different styles in language learning process, it is very difficult to accommodate those styles of learners especially while teaching to a large number of students. To overcome this situation, providing multiple learning activities and techniques that incorporates multiple content delivery styles and approaches can be adopted. Learners' cognitive background also creates a great impact on various aspects of their language learning process.

Students' environments such as the place and the time period they live also create a great impact on this learning process. Every society has its own uniqueness and developments in various fields in centuries. In this twenty first century, language learning is not a great deal. Various platforms has been created and through which one can connect with a person from another country throughout the world. Few learners may have the particular feeling that

the language they speak at home is not similar to the language that they learnt in classroom. Due to this, they do not have enough time to improve their skill on that particular language.

It is the role of the educators to provide opportunities for the students to share their cognitive background, which is more helpful in this whole process where the teachers can clearly see the similarities and differences among students. Through peer collaboration, learners can build on each other's development through turn taking, negotiating and collaboration, justifying and reasoning and so on. Supporting certain ground rules based on learning environment in classrooms constructs cognitive strategy. All these things are done at young age and through the second and foreign language learning.

Socio cognitive theories come with certain concepts such as interaction and feedback, private speech, self-efficiency and scaffolding. Learning a foreign or a second language is still considered to be a complicated and a long process. From this theory, language learning is a social practice which examines language learners as active participants during the whole construction of this language learning process. Some cognitive factors still have a great influence on the success of language learning. To claim the status of proficiency in a particular language, one should make use of one's cognitive skills to become a successful learner.

Socio Cognitive Theory

Socio cognitive theory is an evolving theory in the field of psychology which has a keen insight of an individual's development through the contribution of the society. It also strongly points out the link between the development of individuals and the culture they belong to. It also insists that the learning of human is widely a social process. The theory was developed by psychologist Lev Vygotsky who strongly believed that the development of an individual's higher order function is based on the culture, parents and caretakers. It has a universal point of view in language learning process. It also examines learners as active participants in the learning process in a social practice.

The theory pressures the communication between emerging people and the culture they live. It is cultivated from the work of seminal psychologist Lev Vygotsky who states that parents, peers, caretakers and the culture were responsible for the growth of an individual's higher order functions. It also emphasizes that how the impact is on an individual in learning and how that certain cognitive beliefs and attitudes disturb the learning process. In his views, each and every function which appeared in the child's cognitive improvement appears in two levels such as social and individual level.

The social level usually occurs among people, and the individual level occurs among the learners themselves. Socio cognitive theorists claim that an individual will not be considered in loneliness from their historical and social setting. Consequently, it is essential to have a keen look at the society and the growth occurring at a specified time. This is an emerging theory in psychology that looks at the important contributions that the society make a development of an individual. These factors create a boundless influence on the student's learning.

Socio cognitive theory is very popular in recent times particularly in the field of education. The main concept of this theory is how the mental abilities of a man are moulded with the help of cognitive background and the people they interact with. Vygotsky believed that society, relatives, parents and peers play a vital role in forming that higher level of functioning. Various skills learned by learners in the beginning stage are closely linked with the interactions they make with each other. 'The zone of proximal development' is an important concept in socio cognitive theory, it basically includes all the skills and knowledge that people cannot perform of their own without any proper guidance. This concept is mainly used for cognitive improvement that is formulated to bring the functions which are needed for the student's learning process of students. The way how a student learns can be easily analyzed through this process. Zone of proximal development is for each and every kid who is evolving cognitively.

'Scaffolding' is the term associated with socio cognitive theory. The concept was developed by Burner and it is the process by which an efficient person supports the learners to do a task according to the child's learning ability. It is related with Vygotsky's socio cognitive theory because it is strongly believed that the development of a child is affected by social interaction in learning process. The concept supports the development of mental processes of a child. When the students began to speak within themselves, private speech took place.

Vygotsky views this particular thing as the starting point of all those mental improvements and at this point, higher consciousness is raised. Thus, the concept of scaffolding is also an important one in the theory. Scaffolding is the concept that the learners are provided huge support in their language learning process and such a help is reduced to make the child feel more independent.

'Private speech' is one among these concepts of this theory. Through parents, relatives, siblings, caretakers and with more efficient people, learners gain more information and later they use that information in their private speech. Private speech clearly portrays the

usage of knowledge or support given to them to provoke their own path to think and act. Private speech clearly portrays the usage of knowledge or support given to them to provoke their own path to think and act. Private speech is the student's social contact and it develops the inner speech at the end of this process. Thus, the theory brings out numerous ideas which enable learners to practice private speech as it supports them to overcome certain obstacles to pursue in the field success and problem solving.

It can be distinguished into two types. These two speeches act as a key bearer in the process of second language acquisition. First speech is used to connect two or more persons, but the second one varies from the first one where the speech is assessed through communicating with oneself. Vygotsky's concept of 'make-believe play' in socio cognitive theory plays the very important portion in the development of a child. A child evaluates multiple skills and gains some cognitive abilities with the help of make-believe play. In this play, learners act themselves as grown up ones of their own social contact and they make practices as to how they will be in future. A learner is motivated with the help of the play, attitudes and abilities which are prior to the social participation and it also allows learners to practice how they would act in the real world. Moreover, playing this type of roles and practicing these skills are done with the help of others in their own culture.

Socio Cognitive Effects on Second Language Acquisition

Cognitive propensities impact the way learners participate in the field of education. To involve students efficiently in the language learning process, the duty of the teachers is to know their students and their academic abilities, rather than trusting on ethnic or prior experience with other students of parallel backgrounds. Second language acquisition is the process by which people acquire a language other than mother tongue. The inner link between social contexts and second language acquisition must be noted that the social contexts influence second language proficiency indirectly. The association between social factors and the learners' choice of target language is an inevitable one.

Various aspects connected to learners' first and second language mould their second language learning. All these factors also comprise the linguistic gap between the two languages learned by the students. The level of proficiency in their native language does not include oral and written language. Knowledge of second language learning also plays a vital role in current language learning process. Students are supposed to learn a dialect, and formal register at college level is different from their native dialect. This process also involves acquiring speech patterns that may differ from those they are very familiar with a member of a certain social group or community.

The language attitude in the learner, neighbourhood, peer group, the college and the society has an enormous effect on the second language learning process in both positive and negative ways. It is very important that educators and learners understand and examine these types of attitudes. In general, they have to understand that learning a second language does not mean to give up their first language or dialect. Learners from various backgrounds have various goals and needs.

Factors such as the occurrence of role models, peer pressure and the level of support from their family background affect their ability in second language learning process. Adult language learners are greatly influenced especially by peer group. In second language learning, the pressure in peer group frequently underestimates the goals of students which are set by their parents and teachers. The pressure in peer group reduces the interest of the students and their work towards their native language. While working with the students at first year engineering level, one may focus on this peer group influence to bring out a positive image of proficiency in the second language learning process.

Support from family background plays an important role for a successful second language acquisition, parents should show their interest in their child's learning process. Parents should value both the native and the second language the student learns. The educators of second language development have to remember that each and every learner has different social and cognitive background and they have different language learning styles.

In second language acquisition, students focus on different attitudes of a particular language, its speakers, its culture, its social value of learning the language and its use. The positive behavior towards the second language, its culture and the people can enhance language learning process. Moreover, solid reason for learning a second language can have a positive effect even with a negative attitude. Conflicts in attitudes are there when the learners wish to maintain their identity with the first language.

Language is the centre of whole process of education and it is the principal means of social transmissions. Students who cannot cope with the current educational system fail because they do not have adequate proficiency in language. They do not know to communicate and use the knowledge they gained. Through the knowledge of English, language learners can understand and communicate their ideas with students of various countries. Even though students belong to different social background, the common medium of communication can be done with the help of English language.

Countries with multilingual society such as India, the success gained in learning a second language like English can be affected with some socio cognitive factors. Motivation

plays a vital role in this process where an effective language speaker can be created with the motivation of people in surroundings. This language learning process needs both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. These socio cognitive factors also include the place and time where the learners live. The learners should have freedom to learn a language without any barriers, discouragement from the peer group or from families. With the help of frequent practice, the learners can gain fluency in a second language. Socio cognitive factors are nothing but lifestyles, customs and values that characterize the whole society. The foundation of learning process starts from home, the features of socio cognitive factors are superior scale forces within societies that touches the feelings, thoughts and behaviors of an individual member of such societies. Socio cognitive factors include religion, law, language, attitudes, values, family, social organizations and community.

The Present Study

A survey of college students on the basis of rural and urban areas was conducted among the students belonging to rural areas to find out the impact of socio cognitive factors in their second language acquisition process. A random survey of first year engineering students of Kanyakumari district based on rural and urban background had been conducted among students to find out various ways and means which have to be included in order to make the students speak the language effectively. The study has been made with notable criteria of "Evaluating". For evaluating criteria, the teachers evaluate the students' capability in learning. A total of 120 students from ten different colleges which have varied exposure were taken for survey in order to bring out a better result for the progression of students' cognitive skills and knowledge. The survey had been devised through a valuable questionnaire which contains 24 questions with four choice to answer such as strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree based on the basic skill of the learners and the involvement of the teachers to develop the cognitive skills. The students were asked to mark the option which states their assessment. The result of this study provides numerous insights for the future learners to make use of the second language appropriately.

Table No 1: Response Regarding Evaluating

Q. No	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
1	Speak fluently without	51	57	10	1	1	120

	grammatical error						
2	Confidence to interact in the group discussion	50	61	3	4	1	120
3	Identify difference between the mother tongue and second language	3	17	19	58	23	120
4	Parents are not motivating to acquire second language	1	3	5	71	40	120
5	College environment helps to improve second language	41	47	11	17	4	120
6	Imitate the word of teacher and can reproduce it	58	43	4	5	10	120

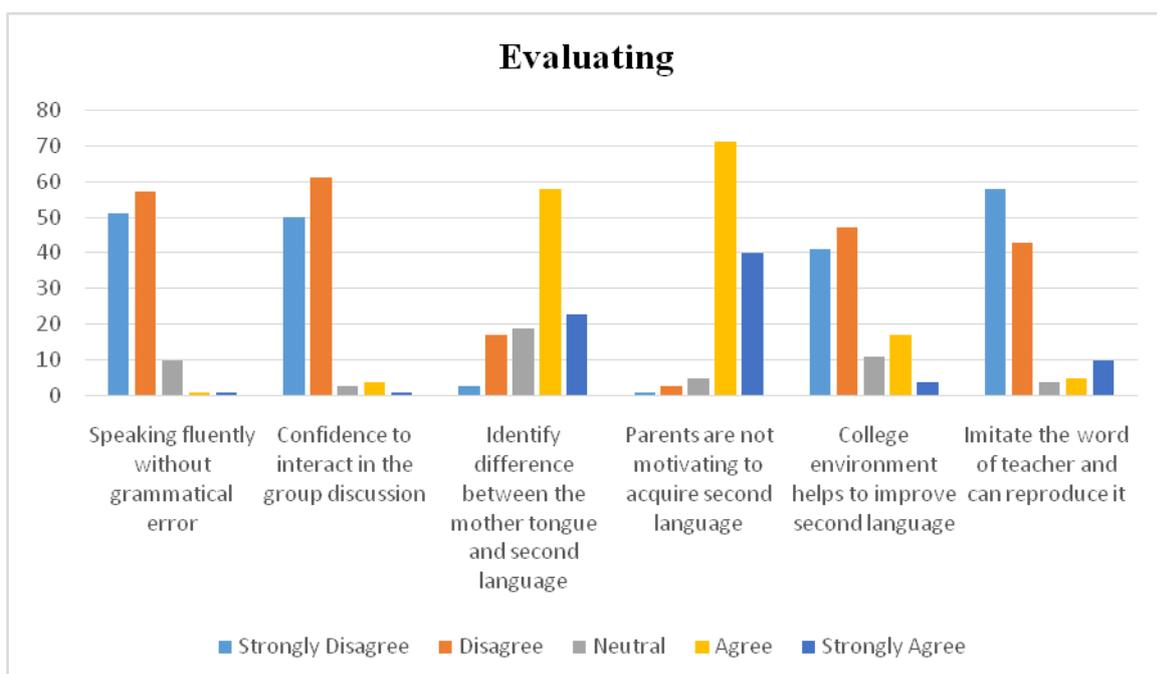


Fig. 1 Response Regarding Evaluating

Table 1, Response regarding evaluating shows the overall response of the students under evaluating criteria. Based on this criteria, six statements were given to the students. The first statement under this criteria was 'I am able to speak fluently in English language without grammatical errors'. To that, one student strongly agreed, one student agreed and 10 students remained neutral. 57 students disagreed and 51 students strongly disagreed. It shows that the learners do not know to speak in English without grammatical errors. The next statement was 'I have confidence to interact in the group discussion'. To this one student strongly agreed, 4 students agreed and 3 students remained neutral. 61 students disagreed and 50 students strongly disagreed. This shows the students do not have confidence to converse in group discussion. The next statement was 'I can identify the difference between the mother tongue and second language pattern'. To this, 23 students strongly agreed, 58 students agreed and 19 students remained neutral. 17 students disagreed and 3 students strongly disagreed. It reveals that the students have the ability to identify the difference between the mother tongue and target language pattern. The next statement was 'Parents are not motivating me to acquire the second language'. To this statement, 40 students strongly agreed, 71 students agreed and 5 students remained neutral. 3 students disagreed and one student strongly disagreed. The learner feels that they did not get motivation from their parents. The next statement was 'The college environment helps me a lot to improve the second language'. To this statement 4 students strongly agreed, 17 students agreed and 11 students remained neutral. 47 students disagreed and 41 students strongly disagreed. This shows that the college environment is not helping the students to develop the second language. The next statement was 'I can imitate the words of the teacher and reproduce it'. To this 10 students strongly agreed, 5 students agreed and 4 students remained neutral. 43 students disagreed and 58 students strongly disagreed. It shows that the learner finds difficult to imitate the words of the teacher.

Finding of the Problems

Cognitive factor is the bond between the brain, language and conduct. It assumes a huge job in language learning. It has both positive and negative impacts in planning, moving and advancing job in learning. Few factors are residential locality, parental education, family income and lack of support from family. All the factors play a vital role in the second language acquisition process. The first problem residential locality clearly portrays the importance of encouragement and support given by the learners' locality people while acquiring a second language. The inspiration given by these locality people will motivate the

learners to learn more about that target language. On the other hand, while the language learners are demotivated by their own society or environment it is hard to become a good speaker in that target language. While researching on these criteria, the researcher was able to identify the difficulties faced by the language learners owing the locality people in the second language acquisition process.

The second factor is parental education. A parent's role in their child's language learning process plays the major role. They play the role of the educators at home. Their interaction with their learners motivates them to attain fluency in the target language. Regular practice given by parents and interacting with their child in that particular target which their child learns will motivate the learners to learn more new things about their second language. This criterion points out that the impact of parental education in the learners' second language learning process.

The third factor is about the learners' family income, Through this study one can easily identify that how the family income of the learners motivates and demotivates them in the second language acquisition process. Participation of the learners in various communicative classes and gathering enough sources with the help of their family's economic status will enhance the learner's knowledge in the target language. Learners' family could provide language learning tool kits to support their learners' learning process. Poor family income could create an impact on their child's dual language learning process which is analyzed in this study.

The next is lack of support from the learners' family. Parents and families are the key to hold high expectations and the support for language development for dual language learners. Families and parents promote positive experiences for these language learners by emphasizing their strengths, which include their cognitive and linguistic strengths. Without the support of the family, it is impossible for a language learner to be an efficient speaker in their second language.

Activities to promote Learning Skills

Evaluating is a criteria in which the language skills are evaluated and use it in language classroom. Games are extraordinary devices to educate English to students. Students can practice such colossal quantities of things like Rules, motivation, self-confidants, peer learning, etc. They have to use their language aptitudes to mastermind, cooperate and produce associations in order to disregard the debilitating homeroom. The learners should have a nice study hall air among them in order to learn things. Anything is possible with concordance. So that, the language instructors can direct companion games like making tests, puzzles,

questions, understanding dramatization, play, and so forth. Debate is a proper contention or debate between two rival groups. The rival group proposes or assaults a given suggestion in a progression of discourse. Both the groups are permitted equivalent time for the introduction of the subject. It is a strategy for an officially introducing a contention in very much taught way. In a conventional discussion, there are sure guidelines to be trailed by the members. Discussion centers around a proposed answer for a specific issue. The principal point of the investigation of discussion as a strategy is to build up the capacity of the students to improve the skill. Discussion centres upon the human interests. Hot issues can be contended through the discussion. It additionally gives certain measure of roundabout conflict over the subject. It is one of best convincing procedures for convincing the understudies to impart openly in the class.

In this development, students start to consider the requests they are most likely going to hear at interviews. They get a chance to share their experiences and start to talk about what makes for shrewd reactions at a gathering. Extraordinary gathering capacities are dire for every auxiliary school understudy to learn. Any action they apply for will incorporate a kind of meeting process, so the students should be prepared.

Conversation strategies are a variety of social events for open-completed, network arranged exchange of considerations between an instructor and understudies or among students with the ultimate objective of encouraging understudies considering, learning, basic reasoning, understanding, or academic appreciation. Individuals present different points of view, respond to the contemplations of others, and consider their own specific musings with an ultimate objective to collect their understanding, appreciation, or explanation of the current issue.

Conclusion

Language learning implies the process of learning a language. Language can be learned through any mode of communication. Students learn language in classrooms, teachers teach English language to students with the help of text materials or any other sources. Teaching English language is essential in every college for the development and enhancement of student's academic phase of life. The acquisition of second language develops every student to acquire a new language. Second language can be easily gained by student's who use language skills effectively in education as well as any field of communication. Moreover, this study also analyses socio cognitive factors which have been experienced by first year engineering students. The objective of this study is to bring out the difficulties faced by the students regarding few socio cognitive factors in the ELT

classrooms. With the help of this analysis done on first year engineering students, possibilities are there to find a solution for the betterment of students especially in the ELT classrooms.

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