



EXPOSURE TO REAL SITUATION AND ITS ROLE IN ENGLISH LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Globalization has driven English into the throne of the most important and widely used languages all over the world. It became an essential tool for communication in all around the world. It has been the target for many learners in different parts of the universe. It is being studied and learnt for different purposes and through various methods. One of the best ways that teachers use while teaching English is exposure into either real situations or real-like English situations. The current paper concentrate on the significant role that exposure to English language situations play in the process of learning English. It will start by defining the meaning of exposure. Then it will highlight the importance of exposure and its benefits as a non-traditional way of acquiring English. Its role in arising the learners' motivation, in developing the skills and in acquiring the target language culture will be explained in this paper.

Key words: English learning, Exposure, Motivation, Culture

INTRODUCTION

Since the creation of the creatures and human beings in the earth, languages have been occupying a crucial role in the lives of such creatures. It is only through language (regardless of its type) that people came to know about each other and communicate with each other, and in the absence of languages, people wouldn't be able to live and cooperate properly. Languages in general and English in particular facilitated the life in this earth and connected the different nations in this universe with each other. It became the global language that is a common tool for communication all over the world. It is the language of business, International relations, education, politics..etc. It is the official language of many countries and the second one in most countries in the world. Furthermore, English is the language of many international organizations such as United Nations and the Security Council. In this regard Parl says



Because English is so widely spoken, it has often been referred to as a "world language", the lingua franca of the modern era and while it is not an official language in most countries, it is currently the language most often taught as a foreign language. It is, by international treaty, the official language for aeronautical and maritime communications. English is an official language of the United Nations and many other international organizations, including the International Olympic Committee. Many other international organizations, including the International Olympic Committee. (L.P.Gohil)

This essential position that English plays made it the favourite destination of many students and scholars all over the world. Thus, many curricula were designed to serve different purposes. And every day, new techniques and methods of teaching English are being introduced. Exposure into real or real like situations is one of the best ways for language learning and language skills development. It also plays a vital role in motivating, encouraging and facilitating the process of learning English. It creates environments in which the students will learn spontaneously. In the current paper, exposure into English language situations will be defined and explained. Then a brief explanation about its role in English learning will be given.

What is meant by Exposure?

Exposure into English language situations is a worth mentioning topic that was defined by many scholars and language institutions. It was defined by the British Council as "Exposure refers to the contact that the learner has with the language that they are trying to learn, either generally or with specific language points. Referring to the language in general, it often refers to contact outside the classroom." (Council)

It was also defined by MacLeod and Larsson as:-

“When we talk about English outside of the classroom we refer to all aspects of the English language that the students are exposed to outside of school. Watching TV or reading an English book before bedtime are examples of English picked up outside of the classroom. “ (MacLeod and Larsson)

Mengmei defines it as “a representative term referring to possible language exposure in learner’s everyday life, including activities learners do outside of their language class that can bring language input” (Mengmei Yin)



According to Dr. Dr. S.K. Sheela¹, K. Ravikumar, exposure was defined as :-

“Refers to the total amount of time in which an individual has contact with a language, may it be in verbal or written form, formal or informal ways of communications and in which the individual may have either an active or a passive role.” (Dr. S.K. Sheela and K.Ravikumar)

So , it is clear that exposure to English situations is the process in which the learners of English language are taken out of the traditional way of teaching and being exposed into situations in which they will learn and acquire English spontaneously.

The importance of Exposure to English Situations

Learning a language is a process that requires high and creative skills and techniques through which teachers deliver their message properly and effectively. Thus, they look for new ideas and methods that will take the learners from formal traditional learning into spontaneous informal learning. One of which is to expose the learners into English situations or English-like situations. It plays a major role in creating a better English environment and accordingly in developing the English skills of the learners.

Large exposure to a language plays a significant role in English learning and teaching. It helps a lot as in such case learners have a great opportunity to practice language outside the classroom. According to Council of Europe (2008) it is important to create a language-friendly living and learning environment, where different languages are heard and seen, where speakers of all languages feel welcome and language learning is encouraged (Tonoian)

It has a crucial role in the process of learning. Backer considers it as one of a three essential matters required for a successful learning of English. So he asserts that role wrote the following Three main factors for a successful L2 acquisition process can be identified: the motivation of the learner, the exposure to the second language and the learner's efficiency. (Becker) Shedding light on the importance of exposure Rajeev Ranjan..wrote:-

Exposure of certain language in suitable environment is the key point in the language teaching – learning process. Language is meant for communication. Merely knowing



the language is not sufficient, if it is not used in day to day life. Use of language for different purposes is another key point in learning a language. The systematic use of language develops at second stage of language learning i.e. appropriate/meaningful sentence, fluency, grammatical accuracy, word- power and punctuation. How much exposure does help in language learning?
(Ranjan)

Exposure and Motivation:

English language teaching is a process that involves the use of different ways of teaching that will lead to students' high motivation. Motivation plays a significant role in learning English. It pushes the students towards a good level of learning. Thus, researches, teachers and scholars assert the importance of motivation in learning English. One of the best ways to ascend the motivation of the learners that is to get the students out of the traditional way of teaching. In another words, exposure into English situations is the best way to the students' motivation. It motivates the students and arise their love and desire for learning English. Students will be more motivated to study English while they practice it outside the class. They will fell that they are practicing and enjoying rather than systematically studying. Thus, exposure plays a significant role in arising the motivation and thus leading into a successful learning. In this regard Fabjanović argues

Both educators and researchers agreed that motivation was one of the key factors in language learning, so 1990s finally brought a new interest in motivation – from an educational viewpoint. And this is where our interest into the subject of motivation in language learning starts. One of the pioneers in this area was definitely Robert C. Gardner (1982, 1985) who developed a much praised (and questioned) socio-educational model. Over the years, many scholars tried to make a contribution to this body of research, which resulted in numerous empirical studies and theories of motivation. As expected, all of them had a different view on the matter. Among these, we found the works of Zoltán Dörnyei and his associates most notable and relevant for this paper. (Fabjanović)



So, it is a greed that exposure plays a major role in the process of learning and studying English. It pushes the learners to learn the language with a desired and motivated way.

Exposure and the Learning Skills:

Developing the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing is the main concern of language teachers. They spend all their time looking for good ways through which they can develop and enhance the level of these skills among the learners. As a result many studies have been conducted and most of which proved that the exposure into English situations is one of the best ways that help in developing the skills of the learners. It creates a real or real-like environment where they can practice their English and thus acquire different skills. For listening, for example, a teacher can develop such skill among his/ student by exposing them into real situations where they can hear the English language and practice it easily instead of teaching them. Likewise, in the case of the other skills. Exposure provides the students situations in which they can develop their skills easily.

Exposure and Culture:

English language is looked at by sociolinguistics as part of the society. It is socially constructed. Thus it has to be studied with the other components of the society. It can't be isolated from other parts of the society such as culture and environment. And if so, the result will be a paralyzed way of learning. It is difficult to teach culture inside the classroom because culture is not a grammatical rule or a mathematical account that can be taught, rather, it is an abstract thing that has to be practiced and lived within. Thus the best way is to let the students live the cultural events and experience them. In this case, students will acquire the language with its culture. Separating one from the other can lead into unsuccessful learning. In this aspect, Ming-Mu Kuo and Cheng-Chieh La wrote.

According to the National Standards for Foreign Language Education project (1996), 6 Journal of Foreign Language Instruction students cannot truly master new language until they have mastered the cultural context in which the new language occurs. This means that understanding a new culture is an important element in achieving the success in second language acquisition. In fact, the learning of language and the learning of culture can be compared with a child's first experiences with the family into which he or she is born, the community to which he or she belongs and the environment in which he or she lives (Ming-Mu Kuo and Cheng-Chieh Lai)

Conclusion:



Teaching English language is a complex process that involves the use of new and modern techniques of teaching. One of these is the getting the learners exposed into a real situations where they can practice their English. Exposure get the students motivated and enhance their skills easily. It also helps the learners to experience the culture of the second language that is considered important ant to understand English language properly. It creates a real situation in which students can practice English. So teachers have to put into their consideration that the old and traditional method of teaching English has to be changed. And the best way is to get their students exposed into real or real-like situations where they can learn and practice the language easily.

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