

# CHALKING OUT STRATEGIES TO MINIMIZE MOTHER TONGUE INFLUENCES ON SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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## Abstract

Indians use English for expressing their ideas, thoughts, aspirations, desires and opinions. As a country full of diversity of languages and dialects, it becomes necessary for them to make use of English language in a Pan-Indian context. Teaching-learning English as a second language calls for Innovative strategies in the classroom. The mother tongue spectrum of syntax, spelling based pronunciation and stress on each and every word poses difficulties for the learners of a second language. Since mother tongue is naturally acquired, an environment resembling mother tongue acquisition has to be created in the classroom. Here the language learning strategies become crucial. The influence of mother tongue on learning a foreign language is a well-established fact because in English there is no direct correspondence between spellings and pronunciation: even there are divergences in syntax. Teaching English in the classroom is a challenging task for the teacher and he/she has to take recourse to different methodologies keeping in mind the background and the ability of the learners. This paper aims to find out the linguistic proficiency of the learners when they are taught through different teaching methodologies. The main objective here is to find out the mother tongue influence in their spoken aspect, the difficulties they experience while speaking English and the methods that can help them cope with these difficulties.

**Keywords:** Pan Indian, linguistic proficiency, pronunciation, mother tongue

## INTRODUCTION

It has always been the goal of linguists and second language teachers around the world to find new and fast ways teach second language. Second language learners often transfer everything from their mother tongue to the second language and most of the time they communicate in their mother tongue. The non-native speakers find it difficult to speak in target language, because of lack of practice in second language. English is a universally spoken language. It is the requirement of the day, so L2 must learn to speak English minimizing the influence of the mother tongue gradually. It has been observed that learners often refrain from speaking English because of the fear of MTI. Many people cannot even pronounce the simple words correctly. Some are „is“, „yes“, „wine“, „price“, „except“, „expect“, „tiffin“, „what“, „zero“, „comb“, „tomb“, „school“ etc.... As language teachers, it is our responsibility to provide them with enough opportunities to expose themselves in target language by making them speak in classroom which may help them minimize mother tongue influences. Learners can acquire language in a faster way by play-way methods rather than the traditional

narrative method. The use of audio and visual lingual method can be quite helpful to reduce mother tongue influences. It is a challenging task to teach English to non-native speakers, so it needs to be taught by well versed teachers of English. Audio Visual tools can be an effective method for the second language learners to practice the spoken aspect of English.

### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

Language learning is a social phenomenon and people in India encounter many difficulties while speaking English. They have enormous influence of their own mother language over English pronunciation. That is why we have got a new English named as Indian English. We Indians have many different ways of uttering the same speech sounds differently, and this depends upon the cultural backgrounds and the native language we speak. The main objective of this paper is to identify the areas where Indian speakers find it difficult to come out of the MTI and various methods through which MTI can be reduced. Language learners must listen to the word in its actual tone carefully and make a habit of speaking English words regularly and repeatedly.

### **LANGUAGE LEARNING WITH AUDIO- VIDEO AIDS**

The audio- video tools have to be designed carefully in order to get the desired results of reducing MTI. Senses are the gateway to knowledge as it act as a bridge between inner and the outer world. Audio video aids are not only effective in learning language but also help in acquiring right pronunciation and accent. Audio video tools create a natural learning environment. The aim of learning a language is not just to get marks. In order to acquire better speaking, students have to practice a lot. Most of the people I am acquainted with speak different vernacular languages because of which they can't speak clearly without MTI. So, I suggested them for using audio video helping material and results were visible after few months. They chose audio and video clips for learning purpose from the following T.V shows: - Bob the Canadian, Learn English with Mr. Duncan, BBC Learn English and Lingua Marina. The audio-video tools have to be designed carefully in order to attain the projected goal of reducing mother tongue influence among the second language learners.

Listening English language can help the native English speakers to imitate the accent and pronunciation. It has been observed that if the 12 learners improve their listening skills they may be able to identify the lingual difference between the native and non-native speakers. They will start listening and acquiring the tone, accent and accurate pronunciation of the words. It will help to limit the usage of their mother tongue leading to neutralized accent. It would be worthwhile to mention here that non-native speakers of a foreign language can never acquire the accent of the native speakers.

The aim here is to enable the learners to pronounce words in a correct manner and to maintain the tone and intonation peculiar to English language.

### **IMPORTANCE OF THE ANALYSIS**

Listening to correct pronunciation of words and verifying it through language software can help in reducing MTI as the subconscious mind will absorb it automatically resulting in refined pronunciation. The challenge of overcoming mother tongue influence can be achieved definitely with active student-teacher participation. The audio video tools benefits both the students and teachers. It acts like a bridge because students connect with media and life like examples leave imprints on their young minds. Moreover, there is an easy access to huge material where they can practice time and again, one such app is Duolingo. On the other hand, it helps teacher with updated and practical teaching material to improve classroom teaching. It is pertinent to the current scenario where use of technology has increased many folds and students are attracted towards it.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Audio Lingual method of teaching English emphasizes on listening and speaking. It encourages second language learners to actively participate in dialogues and class discussions where students express themselves in the same language. Teaching process is based on Skinner's associative theory of behaviorism and his representative experiment of operant conditioning. According to the theory a positive reinforcement helps in thinking and learning new things. Following this approach, the students are supposed to learn the language structures and vocabulary of everyday use rather than pressurizing students to understand the words only. The learners repeat patterns of communicative language followed by testing. This method of teaching and learning makes communication more effective, interesting and enhance the learning abilities of the non-native speakers.

To conclude, it can be argued that the audio-lingual method focuses on pronunciation and phrases which are used in daily communication. It doesn't emphasize the grammatical rules rather vocabulary is taught in a contextual manner using audio visual aids. Minimizing the usage of mother tongue can be rally helpful for the learners to speak fluently in the target language.

### **EXPECTED RESULTS**

The mother tongue is invaluable because it helps learners to connect with their culture and ensures their cognitive development: yet it has some negative impacts on the learners of a second language. The data concludes tentatively that audio-video aids with proper scaffolding are effective in reducing mother tongue influence. On the

whole, it can be stated that learners can be conditioned to learn different languages with less MTI through the process of proper conditioning and training. Some Negative Effects of MTI among the learners are listed below.

- There was Lack of confidence in the learners because of strong MTI.
- They were embarrassed while communicating with other speakers publicly.
- Because of the internalization of sounds from the mother tongue, they were unable to utter certain sounds and had poor vocabulary and pronunciation.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The collected data supports the use of audio- visual tools in learning a second language because learners are more inclined towards the media as it appeals to their senses a lot. It can be assumed that learners are able to locate a perfect 'Objective Co-relative' for their expressions through these sensory tools. Further innovative ideas can be generated through the discussions but being a mini project, it has various limitations. It may be noted that for effective communication it is very much important to reduce the MTI of speakers and it can be achieved by lot of practicing and introducing various learning tools.

## **CONCLUSION**

People throughout the world are keen and eager to master the communicative aspects of English which has come to acquire the status of an international language, a language that opens the vistas of opportunities. Teachers and researchers all over the world are devising new activity-based strategies to help non native speakers acquire linguistic as well as communicative competence. The activity-based model is the preferred one everywhere. learners can be taught English through different activities like guessing games, storytelling, singing English songs, telling jokes in the target language. All these activities have to be designed keeping in mind the linguistic and psychological background of the learners. The role of a teacher becomes important not only to motivate the learners but also providing them with activities suited to his / her background in an attempt to reduce the influence of mother tongue. At the same time a learner's interest in responding to the audio-visual material also becomes important in his / her growth to master the target language.

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