



Psychological Influences on English Language Acquisition in India: The Role of Anxiety and Attitude

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ABSTRACT - English is one of the most used languages in the world. It is used not only by the maximum number of people but also in so many different areas of the world. The poor status of English in India is a burning issue that paved the way for the researcher to conduct research on the factors of classroom learning environment and students' anxiety and attitude towards English. The authors have selected the group of students pursuing different under graduate courses after secondary examination in India. While the paper discusses learner's attitude it also highlights the teacher's approach and methodology to teach the pre-designed curriculum.

Keywords: Attitude, Anxiety, Predictable, Environment, Implications.

1. INTRODUCTION - In India, English as a subject and a medium of instruction is given maximum priority. The quality of English education is an essential and predictable agent for change as education is a process of civilization and development. The second and foreign language learning is a very complex experience. It goes on in many different contexts, under many vastly different conditions, involving much different kind of teachers and teaching, themselves using much various materials with many different learners. Learning environment has great impact on attitudes of students and it plays a more vital role in minimizing language anxiety when a teacher organizes and controls it. The students are facilitated in learning and attaining their goals with the flexible and interactive nature of classroom environment. The learning dimensions can make a difference in the learning styles of the students in the classroom. It is significant in increasing or decreasing anxiety in the classroom. While exploring the learning dimensions of classroom environments, the researchers have to keep many implications in mind which might exert great influence on future educational practice.

2.STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM- English has an important place in India curriculum as it is taught and learned as a compulsory subject from the primary level to graduation level. A few years have passed in English language teaching and the outcome is not up to satisfaction. The learners, at the end, crosses the graduation level getting pass marks and not fulfilling the aims and objectives that they

will be able to communicate naturally, unexpectedly in real life. Learning includes so many factors for its successful fulfillment. We do not know where the actual problems of the learners are and why they are failing to learn. A detail investigation of the total teaching and learning system has become crucial now for identifying the real problem.

3.OBJECTIVE OF STUDY - The objective of the online survey was to find out:

- (ii). Anxiety level
- (iii). Their involvement in a language learning class
- (iv) Their confidence level.
- (v). Their perception about the language classroom and language teacher.
- (vi). Their perception about the curriculum.

4.PROPOSED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY- The method of research opted for the research is quantitative. Both questionnaire and test will be used as research tool. Survey method will be used to collect data from the participants of this study. The learners under 17-20 years undergraduate students who have been intentionally selected for the study as they have reached to a certain level of psychological maturity as compared to the school going students and also that their learning objective at this stage is directly related to their future career. It has been observed that they are the highly motivated group of learners as their career needs are specified and their objective of learning is clear to them.

(a). Population of the Study- The population of this study comprised all the B.E.(CS/IT), B.C.A., B.B.A. students studying in different universities of India.

(b). Sample of the Study- An online questionnaire was administered to collect data from 350 students pursuing different professional courses in different English medium universities of India. The following number of students was randomly selected for the online survey as shown in Table 1.1:

Table 1.1

Course Name	Number of Students
B.E (CS/IT)	150
B.B.A	100
B.C.A	100
Total	350

(c). Data Collection- After administering the online questionnaires, data will be collected the researcher by registered e-mail. However where it became difficult to collect in e-mail, it will be collected through registered mobile number.

(b). Data Analysis- To address the research questions, the data will be statistically analyzed. Mean, standard deviation, and correlation coefficient will be obtained. Pearson Correlation will calculate to determine the relationship or the degree of relationship.

The online data collected was statistically analyzed and the following results were identified. 79% of B.E.(CS/IT) students think that they do not require much study to cover their syllabus of English. They gave preference to their engineering subjects. 97% wanted to excel in English, but they do not want to write an examination. 31% students think that giving an examination at this level is useless, but they want English should continue to be taught in all four years of engineering. 100% were aware that they need good English to appear and qualify in an interview. All of them want an informal class with formal real life activities, such as mock interviews and seminars.

They commonly expressed an opinion that teachers' behaviour should be empathetic to them. The teacher must understand their weaknesses and needs to improve. 7% of them did not show any inclination to the class, activities or teacher. They were indifferent to all situations except realizing that they need proficiency in English. In BBA, 93% students put communication skills on priority and they prefer to study communication strategies in business environment. 73% wants to improve their language skills. They give priority to spoken English as they need to carry out their business assignments with different people.

In BCA 97% students prefer technical knowledge over English language or communication skills. 5% were not able to give their specific opinion.

As compared to B.E. students BBA and BCA students are less keen to improve language proficiency immediately because they plan for MBA or MCA after graduation and think that they have ample time to develop proficiency in English.

5. Research results- The anxiety among the students in this study included statements with negative keys. Before the cooperative approach was adopted to teach, the scores of the negative statements were high. Using the scores gained from the pre-proficiency test were used to divide the students into three groups; namely, high level intermediate level. To find out whether there were any differences of students' learning anxiety among three proficiency groups at both times of the survey, the mean scores were compared. The results show that anxiety of the three groups was not significantly different. To find out whether cooperative learning had an impact on students' learning anxiety, the mean scores obtained from the learning anxiety scale questionnaires were compared. The results indicate that the post-questionnaire mean score was lower than that obtained from the pre-questionnaire. This means that the students' anxiety reduced after learning with cooperative learning. In order to find out, whether the students' anxiety decreased significantly in each group, the pre-and post-questionnaire mean scores were compared. The mean scores of the post-questionnaire in three groups were lower than that of the pre-questionnaire. It indicated that cooperative learning helped students to have lower anxiety.

6. Teacher's Attitude - Teachers' attitude plays an important role in the present context. In the professional and skillful courses, the teachers' have changed their role from being the controller of the class to the facilitator. They accept student's mistakes in the language use as a necessary part of the language learning. They help and motivate students use more and more language in their daily life. Learners learning outcomes are influenced by the interpretation of teachers' interpersonal behaviour. If they believe that the teacher is associated with them and their learning outcome, the teacher empathize with them, understands their problems, they react positively and this factor contributes to their motivation level in the classroom.

7. Teacher's Role - With the age of paradigm shift, the teacher has come a long way from being a strict disciplinarian to a facilitator. The teacher needs to make them realize that I am the one like you who also commits mistakes in the use of English and mistakes are a natural part of learning a language. A teacher needs to remember that a demotivated student cannot learn. In our classes, we need to keep an eye on

- i) What are my learners' problem in learning English?
- ii) How these can be removed?
- iii) Are they related to the grammar or to the student's perception about learning a language?
- iv) What does my learner want?
- v) Why he/she is learning English?

8. Student's Attitude towards Teachers - They want a teacher who can motivate them to speak more and more in the classroom and teach them how to use language outside the classroom. They want their teacher to be good at English and capable of correcting their mistakes without hurting their ego or without accusing them of not having knowledge of English. They want their teacher to create an informal environment in the class where they can learn with fun.

9. Conclusion - The practical implication of the study might involve the students to study English without being anxious and fearful, and develop a more positive attitude in language learning. The study might also guide the teachers to manage and control the learning environment in such a way that helps in reducing the anxiety. The study is likely to provide useful information on students' opinions and perceptions regarding learning environment foreign language anxiety and attitude that the teachers of English can apply to their classroom instructions. The methodological importance might include the reliability and validity of the instruments used to measure learning environment, foreign language anxiety and attitude towards the learning of English. The results of the instruments proved that they will be appropriate for the study for which they will be used to investigate. The study would open new vistas for enhancing classroom environment with regard to English language teaching with special focus on students' anxiety and attitudes towards the learning of English.

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