

LANGUAGE ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

UNIT- 2

Academic and Social Language

Language: Meaning, concept, definition, aims and objectives, Functions and importance - Proficiency of Home language and School language - Strategies for enhancing Language Proficiency: Drama, Essay, Story telling, Group discussion, Peer tutoring - Nature of Expository text vs Narrative text - Transactional vs Reflective text, Reading Comprehension skills, Language skills & Literacy skills - Linguistic education: Academic language & Social Language, CALP skills, BICS skills, Conceptual literacy

Introduction

Language is a form and means of communication. It is intimately related to human beings since it is the universal and exclusive characteristic of man alone. It is the product of the human mind and the vocal apparatus which the human being possesses. It is the most important tool he has ever devised. It is the tool which enables him to make his living, build his home, and fashion his life. It is the instrument which gives order and organization to his thinking

This unit deals with the definition, nature, concept, meaning, functions of language. It also consists of teaching language as skill rather than knowledge subject- the role of language across the curriculum etc.,

Language: Meaning

- Language learning is basically a habit formation process during which the learner acquires new habits.
- Man uses his brain for thinking, classifying and naming objects and his organs of speech for making sounds, sound groups words and sentences.
- Language helps him to express his feelings and emotions towards others and make him maintain relationships.
- The power of language helps man to influence others and forges social contacts, a part from enabling him to build suitable mechanisms for the governance of a country.

- Man, wherever he lives, whatever he does whether he is ploughing his field, whether he is in office, or sitting and enjoying a cup of tea or coffee ,in a cafeteria or at his home, whether he is flying, walking, running swimming or lying in his bedroom with a book in his hand for reading in all these activities he uses the language.

Definition of Language

- According to Bloch and Tager “Language is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols by means of which a social group communicates”
- As Jespersen points out Language is the set of human habits, the purpose of which is to give expression to human thoughts and feelings especially to impart them to other
- In the words of **Edward Sapier**, -Language is a purely human and no instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntary produced symbols.

CONCEPT OF LANGUAGE

1. Language is a System

Language is a system. It is an organized way of behaviour, which can be described in an orderly way, just as various systems of our body (eg. Heart, lungs, hands, eyes etc.) Though different yet work in coordination, similarly the system of language functions through sounds, words and structures. These are integrated and form the language. Each language is a unique system with the help of which meaning is conveyed. This system consists of sounds, structures and items of vocabulary. That is why when a person wants to learn a new language; he has to learn new sounds, structures and new items of vocabulary.

2. Language is Arbitrary

It is not essential to have any relationship between the word and the

object for which it is spoken. One can use different words for the same object in different languages e.g. **Book in English, Pustagam or Nool in Tamil** etc.

3. **The Symbols of Language are Vocal:** The word language has its origin in the Latin word *lingual*, which means, which is produced with tongue. Language is basically speech. Writing is the graphical representation of speech. Many languages exist only in the spoken form; they do not have the written form.
4. **Language is a System of Symbols:** Symbols of a language are its words. For better functioning of a Language it is essential that both speaker and listener know the words. Each word has a definite sound and a definite meaning. For communication of ideas, it is essential to attach a meaning to its sound.
5. **Language is Always Changing:** Every language is a living language. The language is constantly changing and developing according to the needs of the speaker. New words are borrowed and absorbed in a language from time to time.
6. **Language is made up of Habits:** A person's language reflects the habits of the community to which the person belongs. Language is essentially a habit-forming process. One can communicate one's thoughts only when one has made use of the language the instrument of thought, a matter of automatic habit with him. Thus, language is made up of habits and this requires practice in the use of language.
7. **Language is Learnt:** Language is a skill. It is a form of behaviour, which is learnt. A new born child knows no language except crying and weeping. As time passes by the child's crying and babbling sounds develop into meaningful speech sounds of his group. He learns the language by listening to the elders spoken at home around him. He learns the language by imitation and practice.
8. **Language is based on Common Cultural Experience:** Every language is a product of a particular society and culture. Human language is transmitted from one particular individual to another not by physical inheritance, but by learning It has meaning only in a particular culture and society. We do not find exactly same words in two different

languages. This is because cultures are different.

9. Language is for Communication: Communication of thoughts from one person to another is the main function of language. Correct communication involves correct use of language.

10. Every language is Unique: Every language is unique in itself. No two languages in the world have the same set of words, phonetic symbols and grammatical patterns. There are geographical and cultural diversities and because of that reason, every language is unique in its own way.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF LANGUAGE

- To develop their intellectual, personal and professional abilities
- To acquire basic language skills (Listening, Speaking, reading and writing) in order to communicate with others
- To acquire the linguistic competence required in different professions
- To develop their awareness of the importance of abroad language as a means of international communication
- To develop positive attitude towards learning language
- To enable the linguistic competence that enables them to be aware of the cultural, economical and social issues of their society in order to contribute in giving solution
- To benefit from International language speaking nations, in order to enhance the concept of International cooperation that develops understanding and respect of cultural differences among nations
- To enable the student to recognize and use language as a vehicle of thought, reflection, self-expression and learning in other subjects and as a tool for enhancing literacy
- To offer insight into the cultural characteristics of the communities where the language is spoken
- To foster curiosity, inquiry and a lifelong interest in and enjoyment of language learning.

FUNCTIONS OF LANGUAGE:

There are three important functions of a language, **viz., the informative, the expressive and the directive.**

- The first is the **informative function**, that is, the purpose of language is to communicate information. The science teacher who is giving details of laws of gravitation to the class is communicating information.
- The second function of language is **expressive**, that is to express feelings, emotions or attitudes and evoke similar feelings in the reader.

W. H.Davies says:

"What is this life, if full of care?

We have no time to stand and stare."

Here, no information is conveyed; but the feelings of the individual are expressed.

- The third function of language is **directive**, that is, to cause or to prevent actions. When a Major in the army asks his soldiers to march ahead, or when a teacher asks a student to write something on the blackboard, the intention is not to communicate information or to evoke a particular emotion but to cause action of the kind indicated.

IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGE LEARNING

- Language exercises a great influence in making man good and noble.
- It lays the foundation for the progress of society. The language of people reflects on their collective behavior and culture.

- In the absence of language, most of the activities will stop and all teaching and learning will come to an end. The progress of mankind will cease.
- Language is a complex system with many sub-systems like the system of sound (Phonology), the system of words (Morphology), the system of structure (Syntax) and the system of meaning (Semantics).
- All these sub-systems form an integral system working in co-ordination with the other. Language lays down standards and functions by rules and conventions like any other system in life. It is through language that we learn to think, feel, judge and express.

HOME LANGUAGE VS SCHOOL LANGUAGE

Language is primarily a means of communication. Language is used by human beings to communicate ideas, to transmit messages and to express emotions, desires and feelings. It is the tool which enables to make living, build home, and fashion life etc. It is the instrument which gives order and organization to thinking.

In countries where only one language is spoken, there is no problem for the child, because he has to develop proficiency only in one language. But, in a country like India where there is multiplicity of languages, there is the problem of intercommunication. This is the reason why in India normally a child knows two or three languages, from here, it's comes home and school language. Home language is the language spoken in the home. School language is the language spoken in the school. A child who starts school knowing only a home language that is different from the school language. All parents want their children to learn foreign language like English country like India, even if they speak a different language at home. They know that speaking and reading foreign language (English) is key to success in school and at

work place.

Language Use and Academic Achievement:

Academic performance depends not only on a student's ability to learn the material, but on their ability to understand spoken and written language is their ability to convey their knowledge both verbally and written, as well as their literacy skills such as reading, writing, and spelling. Kids start developing the precursor skills needed to read, write, and spell. If those skills are later developing or do not develop, students' performance will suffer.

Academic language is defined in general as the language that is used in schools that helps students acquire many systematic form of rule on context to use in a formative knowledge

1.4 Differences between home and school language

	Home Language	School Language
1.	Begins with telegraphic speech	Can begin with full sentences
2.	Is a natural part of daily life	Is a new aspect in the learner's life
3.	It started no basis in grammar	It has a basis in grammar
4.	Doesn't require conscious effort	Requires conscious effort
5.	Is based on listening as a first resource	Involves technical knowledge of the language
6	Doesn't require instruction	It require instruction

First language acquisition is not dependent on intelligence or special ability for languages. Everyone acquires their native language fully and properly. What is true is that some people have a greater stylistic range and larger vocabulary in their native language but that is not connected with first language acquisition..

There are certain phases in first language acquisition: one-word, two-word and multi word stages. Furthermore, in early childhood children make maximally simpler generalizations about language.

Children learn better in their mother or Home language:

UNESCO has encouraged mother tongue (home language) instruction in primary education since 1953 and UNESCO highlights the advantages of mother tongue education right from the start children are more likely to enroll and succeed in school, parents are more likely to communicate with teachers and participate in their children's learning, and children in mother tongue education tend to develop better thinking skills.

Firstly, learning does not begin in school. Learning starts at home in the learners' home language. Although the start of school is a continuation of this learning, it also presents significant changes in the mode of education. But when learners start school in a language that is still new to them, it leads to a teacher approach and reinforces passiveness in classrooms. When learners speak or understand the language used to instruct them, they develop reading and writing skills faster meaningfully.

STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

- ❖ Drama
- ❖ Essay
- ❖ Story telling
- ❖ Group discussion
- ❖ Peer tutoring

What is Drama?

Drama is simply referred to as a form of fiction which is represented in a performance in at theatre, radio or TV, and in any of its performing arts such as plays, mime, ballet, musical, etc. The word drama is actually taken from the Greek word drama 'drao' which also refers to I do or action. Thus, acting or performing action comes in play through theatrical, radio, TV or lives performances of a fictional story.

Drama provides a space not only for performance before an audience, but also for honing communication skills. It allows children to practice, observe and communicate effectively.

Benefits of Drams

❖ Vocabulary

Unlike when he/she is reading books other material when child comes across a new word in the script of a play, he can easily grasp the meaning of the word by associating it with the situation which is being enacted. This

Will increase the number of words in his vocabulary. Also these words, phrases and expressions will be more meaningful to him as his fellow actors experience these within the scene.

❖ Listening

Effective communication cannot take place in the absence of good listening skills. When child doesn't listen carefully, he may misunderstand what he hears or make incorrect assumptions. Drams demands active listening. It is not the mere physical hearing of words, but child will have to respond to what he listens to. Theatre activities will help to actively listen, critically comment on performances and react.

❖ Speaking

Speaking forms an intrinsic part of drama and can help children to use the right facial expression to suit the meaning the words that speaks. Furthermore,

actors use rehearsal techniques that encourage them to think in the language they are going to perform in, this technique will help to think in a foreign language or a second language and then prepare and deliver dialogues.

❖ **Reading**

Reading aloud the script during rehearsals help to develop timing and rhythm can instill club words, pace his utterances, pronounce words correctly, focus on punctuation and communicate better.

❖ **Writing**

This is best practiced through script-writing. Script-writing poses challenges because topics are generally fixed and characters need to be brought to life. These writing sessions will enable to write no mistakes in no time.

Importance of Drama and Art in Education

Here are the key reasons about the importance of drama and arts in education:

- **Teaches Self-Expression:** Children learn about the importance of self-expression through the use of drama and arts in education and through creative-expression, their perception and world view are broader which equips them with the skills to face adversities late in life.
- **Life Skill Training:** It imparts students with various life skills like teamwork, compassion, cooperation and collaboration.
- **Contributes to Personality Development:** The use of drama and art in education also accelerates personality development in students.

Objectives of Drama and Art in Education:

Here are the key objectives of Drama and Art in Education:

- ❖ Students will learn about theatre and performing arts and transform simple stories into wonderful scripts.
- ❖ Students will be equipped with key critical thinking skills, performance skills, speaking and writing skills, public speaking skills and team work.
- ❖ Through drama and art in education, students can also be imparted with the knowledge of pronunciation, into nation as well as storytelling.
- ❖ Language learning skills are also strengthened through the use of drama and art in education.
- ❖ Storytelling is a powerful tool to facilitate learning in a meaningful manner. Since theatre itself is a potential driver of bringing impactful change in society, it can play a crucial role in utilizing drama and art in education.

Essay

Essay writing helps you learn a language quickly and more efficiently. It allows to discover new ways to express your emotions and feelings. Writing essays is one of the most effective ways to express your thoughts, ideas, and experiences. The practice of essay writing also plays an important role in ensuring maintain a logical and analytical way of learning and understanding exciting new language in everyday life.

Advantages:

- ❖ Helps to develop vocabulary
- ❖ We will be able to retain what we learned while writing

- ❖ Improves speaking skill

Story telling

Story telling is an excellent way to help students develop language skills. Story telling is a very old form of developing language. Story telling is a tool for language development, For students who know little vocabulary simple stories are used. New words are emphasised as the educator goes through the story.

Group Discussion

Group discussion is a type of discussion that involves people sharing ideas or activities. People in the group discussion are connected with one basic idea. Based on that idea, everyone in the group represents his/her perspective. Group discussion is a discussion that tests the candidates skills such as leadership skills, communication skills, social skills, listening ability, general awareness, confidence, problem-solving skills etc.,

Peer tutoring

Generally, peer tutoring is an instructional strategy that uses students to provide academic assistance to struggling peers. Peer tutoring may use students from the same classroom or pair older students with younger struggling students.

Expository

As the name implies, expository style of writing is meant for description. To give out as much as possible information is the motive behind this style of writing. If you find a lot of facts to help in explaining a concept in a piece of writing, you can be assured it is expository in nature. As it is factual in nature, expository style of writing is to the point and there is no fluff or filler content in the piece of writing.

A piece of writing in this style appears to be organized and meaningful. The writer avoids abstract language and tries to be as concrete as possible.

Narrative

Narrative style of writing is mostly used to tell stories. Novels are best examples of narrative style of writing although poems and essays are also written in this mode. Events and people affected by these events are described in detail using this style of writing to regale the readers. Historical pieces describing the same event or a personality are narrative in nature and can appear to be different depending upon the author's point of view. Thus, it is not always fiction that is written in narrative style of writing and even autobiographies can be written using this mode of writing. The style of writing can be much more flexible in this mode of writing, and can make use of abstract language when desiring to stir up emotional feelings in the readers. Though narrative writing is also chronological, the author can suddenly choose to go back into time or switch between characters, to move the readers.

What is the difference between Expository and Narrative?

S.No	Expository text	Narrative text
1.	Its aim is to give a knowledge explanation	The aim of narrative text is to personal experience
2.	Its meaning is to argue logically	Its meaning is to describe an incident or

	and to make something or some topic clear to others.	an imaginary thing to other.
3	There is no chronological description of happenings.	There are description of incidents in stories or historical happenings in a chronological order
4	The sentences are simple and the sentences series contain minimum number of words.	The sentences are generally long and the word may be difficult to pronounce.
5	The concepts are difficult to understand.	Ideas or concepts are easy to understand.
6	If the logic is understood, then we can guess the next thing in that logical sequence.	If we can understand the description of a story or a historical incident, we can guess easily the things to happen next in the series.
7	It explains the concepts that are related to a subject matter.	It describes personal experience only.

What is the difference between Transactional and Reflective text?

S.No	Expository text	Narrative text
1	The aim of these texts is to exchange ideas,opinions,thoughts,etc.With others.	The aims of these reflective texts are to induce cause-effect and logical thinking.
2	Depending upon the kind of ideas	It has meaningful concepts of

	exchanged its meaning differs.	general ideas.
3	It is easy to understand	It is not easy to understand
4	It does not have chronological order	It may or may not be in a chronological order
5	Depending on the interchange of ideas or thoughts we can guess the ideas that are yet to come	It is very difficult to predict a reflective idea before it comes out, since it requires a deep thinking
6	Ideas may be simple	Ideas can be explained only deep thinking
7	Transactional texts contain words that are simple	Difficult to understand words and it requires an elaborate knowledge in the subject matter

Reading comprehension skill

Comprehension is the understanding and interpretation of what is read. To enable to accurately understand written material, children need to be able to decode what they read and what they already know and to think deeply about what they have read.

Reading Language skills

When we learn language, there are four skills that we need for complete communication. When we learn our native language we usually learn to listen first, then to speak, then to read and finally to write. These are called four “language skills”.

These skills are Listening, Speaking, Reading and writing.

Reading literacy skills

Literacy skills are all the skills needed for reading and writing. They include such things as awareness of the sounds of language, awareness of print, and the relationship between letters and sounds. Other literacy skills include vocabulary, spelling and comprehension.

LINGUISTIC EDUCATION

Language is usually defined as a shared set of verbal codes, such as English, Spanish and French. Teachers and students use spoken and written language to communicate with each other to present task, engage in learning process, present academic content, assess learning, display knowledge and skill and build classroom life.

1. Academic Language

Academic language refers to the oral, written, auditory and visual language proficiency required to learn effectively in schools and academic programs. It is the language used in classroom lessons, books, tests and assignments and it is the language that students are expected to learn and achieve fluency. Academic language includes a variety of formal-language skills such as vocabulary, grammar and punctuation. It is a language needed by students to do the work in schools.

2. Social Language

Social language is the simple, informal language we use when talking face to face with family friends and members. It allows us to use contemporary or slang terms like “cool” “awesome” or “dude” we can also communicate feelings, needs and wants using symbolic hand gestures for drink, eat, hot, cold, hurt or tired.

Social language skills can be described as the way in which we communicate verbally and no-verbally with the world around us. These skills are important

because they form the basis of all human interaction and the foundation on which carrying relationships are built.

What are BICS and CALP?

The acronyms BICS and CALP refer to the length of time required by immigrant children to develop conversational skills in the target language and grade appropriate academic proficiency in that language. Understanding the difference between social language and academic language acquisition is an important concept for teachers working with non-native students. Learn more in our academic language resource section.

BICS=SOCIAL LANGUAGE

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) refer to linguistic skills needed in everyday, social face-to-face interactions. For instance, the language used in the playground, on the phone, or to interact socially with other people is part of BICS. The language used in these social interactions is context embedded. That is, it is meaningful, cognitively undemanding, and non-specialized. It takes the learner from six months to two years to develop BICS.

CALP=ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) focuses on proficiency in academic language or language used in the class room in the various content areas. Academic language is characterized by being abstract, context reduced, and specialized. In addition to acquiring the language, learners need to develop skills such as comparing, classifying, synthesizing, evaluating, and inferring when

developing academic competence. It takes learners at least five years to develop

CALP. Research from Collier and Thomas (1995) has shown that it may take children with no prior instruction or no support in native language development at least seven years to develop CALP.

CONCEPTUAL LITERACY

Conceptual literacy refers to the knowledge of or understanding of concepts, principles, theories, models etc., we learn conceptual knowledge through reading, viewing, listening, experiencing or thoughtful, reflective mental activity and also referred to as Declarative knowledge

Importance of conceptual literacy

- ❖ Conceptual literacy enables them to draw from what they have learned and use it grasp new topics
- ❖ It helps students and teachers alike to develop a deep understanding of how the concepts inter-relate with each other
- ❖ Conceptual learning encourages future learning. It built a strong foundation that nurture understanding between various ideas