LANGUAGE ACROSS CURRICULUM

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ABSTRACT
Language is the most effective way of expressing one’s knowledge, feelings and thoughts to one another. It is the ground of sharing thoughts and knowledge within a community. It is also the most prized possession of human race. Language is the most effective way of expressing one’s knowledge, feelings and thoughts to one another. It is the ground of sharing thoughts and knowledge within a community. It is also the most prized possession of human race. Language is more than just a communication skill, therefore it is not just the development of Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), and rather it is also a means to “Conceptual Literacy” and of “Discourse Competence”. In our education system, language is paid the least attention and knowledge is paid more attention. Whereas, various research findings approve that though the knowledge can be learnt and taught at any point of time in life but language learning and acquisition is most adaptable in certain age group specifically.

Keywords: language; LAC; discourse competence; language acquisition

INTRODUCTION
Language is the most effective way of expressing one’s knowledge, feelings and thoughts to one another. It is the ground of sharing thoughts and knowledge within a community. It is also the most prized possession of human race. According to Brown “Language is the most sophisticated and versatile means available to human beings for the communication of meaning” According to Sapir “Language is primarily human and non- instinctive methods of communicating ideas, emotions, desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols.” LANGUAGE ACROSS CURRICULUM commonly known as LAC is a concept that acknowledges the fact that language education does not only take place in few subjects explicitly defined and reserved for it but in each and every subject that is taught in a school and in each and every academic and mental activity pursued throughout the curriculum. LAC is mainly the interlinking of language with the content. It is a broad concept and many new researches have been done in the same field. Its importance cannot be neglected in today’s education system.

Modes of Human Activities Involving Language
According to Corson, “we can distinguish eight modes of human activities involving language”. They are stated below:
1. Listening: comprehending oral input/intake.
2. Speaking: constructing meaningful utterances
3. Reading: understand written text
4. Writing: producing written text/coherent discourse
5. Viewing: attending to visual signs/information
6. Shaping: using visual means of expression
7. Watching: attending to physical movements
8. Moving: using the whole body, the whole person for self expression.

It is also fund in many researches that one’s language and thought are deeply connected. The concept of language across curriculum claims that language and learning is connected strongly. “Language plays a central role in learning. No matter what the subject area is, the students assimilate new concepts largely through language that is when they listen to and talk, read and write about what they are learning and relate this to what they already know. Through speaking and writing language is linked to the thinking process and is manifestation of the thinking that is taking place in mind. Therefore, by giving explanation expressing personal interpretations of new learning in the various subjects, students clarify and increase both their knowledge of the concept and their understanding of the ways in which language is used in each.” (Quoted in Corson 1990) Language is more than just a communication skill, therefore it is not just the development of Cognitive/Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), and rather it is also a means to “Conceptual Literacy” and of “Discourse Competence”. Prof. J. Cumin distinguished two types of language profiency- CALP and BICS. CALP stands for Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency and is the basis for a child’s ability to cope with the Academic Demands placed upon her in the various subjects. It is mainly developed when the child is of 5-7 year of age. BICS stands for Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills. They are the surface skills of listening, speaking; BICS is developed at a very young age when a child is within 2 years. It works on fluency and accuracy.

**Functions of Language**

According to Roman Jakobson, there are six main function of language:

All these aforementioned function is learnt and used throughout our educational process, for example – language in English subject is used to narrate or to describe an instance of the story is referential function. Language used to express emotions or any occurrence of happiness or sorrow is the expressive function. Language used to address someone or something directly or indirectly like we do
in History is conative function. The elevator talk or the talk for the sake of social interaction comes under phatic function of language. The reflexive or language used to discuss something in brief is called as metalingual function of language.

Language Diversity in Classroom

In our education system, language is paid the least attention and knowledge is paid more attention. Whereas, various research findings approve that though the knowledge can be learnt and taught at any point of time in life but language learning and acquisition is most adaptable in certain age group specifically. Thus, a teacher though may have lesser knowledge about the content in classroom but should have appropriate command over the language that he/she is using in front of students of all age groups. The classroom discourse plays a very important role in teaching-learning process of students. The type of communication medium selected by the teacher, the type of communication flow in classrooms and non-verbal efficacy of a teacher can direct the learning of a student. In classroom dialogue between teachers and students is the educational process, or, at least the major part of it. In other words, education extends into a form of transactional process in teacher-student dialogues. Through classroom talks, concepts are explained, tasks are demonstrated, questions are posed and ideas are discussed. Vygotsky, argued that thinking originates in social interaction- that discourse between people is internalized as individual cognition. Daniel’s (2001) argues that a classroom talk not only mediates teaching and learning but the wider culture. Teachers need to understand the importance of language mediated in classroom and should be sensitive to the ways in which conventional discourse and norms can be detrimental to pupil thinking and learning process.

CONCLUSION

LAC, as outlined so far, is extremely important for qualifying young or adolescent learners so that they can function well within the school as an academic setting, benefit from subject based offers of the school, developing basic thinking and communication skills which are absolutely necessary and vital for their personal development and their future career in workplace, in society, in trans-national encounters and in democratic actions. Introducing LAC requires a radical change in attitudes and mentality of the teachers involved, the ones already in service as much as ones still in teacher education system. Every teacher should be confronted with the issues of academic language use, oral and written, and be prepared and trained with fantasy for interpreting language into subject matter at school. Corson lists a number of difficulties involved in making LAC work in practice: on one hand, these have to do with the attitudes of the teacher, the objection or even resistance of many subject teachers to become language teachers. Secondly, neither the school nor the teachers are ready to take the responsibility to involve importance of language in their daily life thereby, giving the biggest challenge in practicality of Language across Curriculum (LAC).

REFERENCES

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