

# MULTILINGUAL A SIGN OF INTELLIGENCE

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## ABSTRACT

Learning a language is one of the best workouts we can give to our brain. The brain workout activities are memorization, pattern recognition, analytical thinking, and language learning. Language learning achieves the same, as we build our vocabulary, our memorization will evolve, our brain will also actively seek to recognize patterns for grammar structure, and analyse new language concepts. Our brain goes through powerful processing while we learn a language. It brings joy to the people those who love to learn a language. It gives us pleasure in all aspect and it is an awesome way of enriching our everyday life. Though the value of being a multilingual is inherent the person who got it can't get enough of it. Being multilingual also extends our points of view as we get into another culture. In India, according to the state everyone who goes to school is multi-lingual as government mandates three languages in school. We can understand anyone easily because we live in India and it has multilingual in its structure. This study highlights how and the ways of multilingualism istaken place as a sign of intelligence in English class.

**Key Words:** Multilingualism, Memorization, Regional Language, Jargon, Polygons, Polygots.

## INTRODUCTION

Multilingualism is defined as the use of two or more languages either by a speaker or a community of speakers. Now it's important that there are about 7000 languages spoken in the world and there are 195 countries in the world most of them have a different native language and all these countries do business among them. Multilingual offers a rare insight into the relationship between the various languages and emotions of people such as meeting new people, involving their culture and indulging into their tradition. It is assumed that multilingual children will have overall better analytical, social, and academic skills than their monolingual peers. Children may feel free in different environments when they know more than one language. It creates a natural flexibility and adaptability, and it increases self-confidence. Speaking more than one language has an enormous impact on cognitive abilities such as problem- solving, creativity, memory and determining the quality of a person. Being an international language English is used in doing business, international transactions and provides connections with culture, history and knowledge. Similarly being a classroom language English is most often used in foreign language teaching which makes the environment a lot of authentic.If a person chose correct classroom language then it would be easier to explain the basic concepts of any subjects.

## MULTILINGUALISM IN THE ENGLISH CLASS

### The Regional Language and Mother Tongue Influence Context

At present the mother tongue enters the English class as a secret intruder where teachers may simultaneously translate and explain texts before dictating answers. Mother Tongue can facilitate and given its due place when it is used for discussion and understanding for an engagement with English. It made the language comprehensible wherever necessary. According to Krashen (1958:94) while concurrent translation is not effective, the use of two languages can be done in such a way to provide understandable input in the target language most probably the first language should be used to provide background information. The genuine use of the mother tongue needs to be arrived at the involvement of the teacher in the framing of media for English teaching. The possibilities of the teacher to mix the two languages are:

- a) To remove barriers between languages, and between languages and subjects in primary education level.
  - At this level English can be used to push the learning activities designed to create awareness of the world.
  - To the natural use of more than one language and to promote the multilingual activity the materials need to be designed and clear methodological guidelines need to be worked out in co-operation with the teachers.
- b) Introducing similar texts in more than one language. Such parallel texts may not be precise translations of one another but may convey the same or that sensitise the child to language-sound structures similar meaning.
- c) Using the known language for the reconstruction of the meaning of the attempted expression through imperfect English, in consultation with the learner.
- d) There are more materials available on bilingual or mixed-code texts for teaching English which explore the pedagogic potential of the teacher.
- e) The production and availability of bilingual learners' dictionary at various level will encourage bi-literacy and bilingualism besides promoting comprehensibility of input and independent reading.
- f) Some bilingual educational models are having inputs in a foreign language with production in a familiar language. For example teaching of French in some colleges accompanied by writing answers in English.

The ultimate results of this kind of practice are diluting the English curriculum and language rather to develop it.

### The English Medium Context

English is the medium of education for the English Medium Schools. Learning English is not possible through reading books, but it can be learnt from a good speaker only. The urban elite children will be provided with a usable language other than English. But teaching a subject in a non-English language within the English medium class results in the development of second language rather than the first. In India, we can see that even English medium students

are not speaking good English. Because some school management or teaching are not good, and teachers are not fluent in English. They are not enforcing the students to speak in English. English has just considered as a language and hence have no interest. Those students who receive guidance in speaking, are excellent and they often develop an admirable accent; but those who don't, most often mistake, more so because they lack the confidence. Confidence is so essential while speaking a foreign language because it is a useful guidance than a great teacher can provide.

### **The Content Teaching Context**

The texts in teacher and learner controlled curriculum implies the multilingualism in its practice. Some innovative text book incorporating the idea that Language should be seen as a 'dynamic' text, i.e., exposure should be to a new occurrences of comparable language samples every day, rather than repeatedly to a single text that is mastered makes an analogy with the learning of a raga in Indian classical music. Preliminary research exists on the use of learner-chosen texts, i.e., articles, books or shorter items such as paragraphs, jokes or cartoons that learners bring to class to share. Moreover the guides bridge the gap between local competencies and centralised systemic expectations. It has to be motivated that there should be more creative textbooks to be emerged. There does exist a range of creative literature in India for children in the private as well as the public sectors, but much of it does not find entry into the classroom for a variety of reasons.

### **In the context of Teachers' Proficiency in Language**

Multilingualism is also based on the teachers' proficiency with the language, because teacher is often a role model to everyone. Proficiency in language should be inculcated with professional awareness or equally to be promoted. The latter to be imparted wherever necessary, through the teacher's own language. Curriculum is only as effective as its implementation by the teacher. The 1960s structural curriculum aimed at teacher-proof material, failed linguistically and pedagogically. The teacher needs to be the sole source of language and the success of any classroom activity or innovation stems from the teacher's capability in the language. Teacher's proficiency in English is linked to the teachers' sense of satisfaction, her willingness to teach English and other subjects in English. With English now having been extended to situations where the teacher and the classroom are the sole sources of input, teacher proficiency has to be addressed urgently. When teacher has sufficient, there is freedom to provide the ideational or development component of teacher preparation in the teacher's own language. Some states liberalized its educational policies to deliver academic content in the teacher's own language. There is a need for reflective teachers who have a deep Literacy understanding of language learning and the English-multilingual classroom. Literacy acquisition and current knowledge about the processes of language are the key areas that must be incorporated in teacher education programme itself.

### **Multi Language Interference, in the context of admitting different state students**

Our culture and our fluency in languages is more about us as a person, and not something that is looking for in diversity. Colleges not only like to see the students who show a variety of

talents and skills that set them apart from the average applicant, but also the language which they belong to the state. Most applicants from metropolitansof India only speak English, so knowing another language has a positive impact on them. Colleges care more about the language the students take. The open education policy of India declares the inter and intra state admission of students in colleges. As a multilingual country this leads to the multi-language interference in the classroom.

### ADVANTAGES OF MULTILINGUALISM

The benefits of being multilingual is enlisted by some of the research studies:

1. Ratte 1968 & Lapkin 1990 - It improves our listening ability and sharpens memories
2. Cummins 1981 - It helps our understanding in how language itself works. This can be further used in thinking and problem solving
3. Diaz 1983 - It increases our verbal and spatial abilities
4. Diaz 1985 - We have better measures of conceptual development, creativity and analogical reasoning
5. Hakuta 1986- It improves our cognitive flexibility which aids in problem solving and higher order thinking skills
6. Grosjean 1989 - We have extra skill in language use where we can mix and match for the purpose at the hand
7. Galambos and Goldin Meadow, 1990 & Ewert 2006 - Being multilingual helps us develop a keener sense of awareness
8. Bialystok 2001 - We will have a sharper perception of language which helps us detect anomalies easily.
9. Bialystok 2004 - We can delay onset of mental age related issues as it helps us avoid distractions
10. Many people respect the person who speaks many languages.
11. It becomes easy to expand our mind, as we have more languages to have resources.
12. It is a great conversation starter.
13. **It sharpens our brain:** A foreign language has a complete set of new rules and regulations. If we follow our brain gets the skills to adapt to new situations and we can get the solutions easily probably.
14. **We can get the skills to multitask:** A foreign language is completely new for us and when we get the experience of learning a foreign language we can easily switch over to a new language easily. When we get this skill we can get the skill to multi task easily in other fields also and we can directly switch over to a new task without wasting time and concentration.
15. **Our memory is improved:** When we learn a new language, we learn the rules of grammar, vocabulary and probably the script alphabets and characters. So we have to keep all of these things in mind which also improves our memory skills. This helps us to learn different things easily.
16. **Polygons tend to have better decision making ability:** Polygons are the people who can speak, write and understand 5 or more than 5 languages fluently. Basically

they will be very intelligent and tend to switch over to different languages very easily and their decision making power improved than the people who just know 1 or 2 languages. This improves their decision making power. Here decision making power means that how fast a person can take decisions.

17. **The first language gets improved:** Most of the people do not concentrate on learning the grammar of the first language. But when we learn a foreign language, the language is constantly compared to the language which we have kept as the base for learning the new language. This helps us learn the grammar and somewhat vocabulary of our first language or second language also.
18. **People in other countries would love us more:** We feel interested in the people who can speak their language and are interested to follow their culture. This is because in many countries people do not see foreigners to learn their language and culture often. But when they see them they are kind of more interested in them.
19. **After learning one new language it become 1000 times easier to learn another:** After we finish learning one language we get to know how to learn the vocabulary, grammar, language structure and their culture. When learning another language we need not to find how to learn the language. It becomes a lot easier to learn another foreign language when you have the experience of learning one.
20. **Being Multilingual has been linked to health benefits too.** Researchers recently found that there is growing indication to suggest that multilingualism can delay the onset of Dementia and Alzheimer's disease, faster stroke recovery, lower stress levels, and delay many effects of old.
21. **Speaking more than one language makes you more open-minded.** One of the benefits of being multilingual can suggest that we see the world in different ways. Some even say that speaking different languages can at times feel like having two separate personalities. They are usually less affected by changes in the environment and more open-minded to new information and new experiences because they have more than one view of the world already. Being able to communicate with people and immerse ourselves in the language and culture can make our travel experience so much more enjoyable.
22. **Multilingual can make friends in more language meaning many more opportunities to engage new people and experience different things.** The social life and socialization will be increased because of interacting with people from different cultures.

#### SETBACKS OF MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOM

- Communication is an utter delight if we knew the exact same languages as we do.
- The only disadvantage we can think of is sometimes literally translating idioms/phrases in one language to the other.
- Sometime we become the laughing stock in our group.
- People often scramble up all the languages and invent a language of their own.
- People have overconfident while they interact with people who speak all 4 languages.
- Multilingual persons will get special privileges around there place.

- Meaningful conversations with people from different parts of the country will create any chaos.
- People expect you to be as accurate and fast as a professional interpreter when they ask for translations.
- It can feel awkward that you can automatically say something in L2 but encounter tip-of-the-tongue phenomenon in L1.
- Some people reduce foreign language skills to dog tricks.
- We can encounter some friends who would brag to their friends that they speak another language, then would ask them to say something to show off.
- It can be frustrating to gradually forget things that we used to know well since we fail to use it every day.
- In rare situations, unconsciously accents will be mixed.
- When having a conversation with another multilingual with whom we share the same languages, there'll be plenty of Code-switching or mixing languages, which can result in:
  - a lot of confusion for other people in the conversation who are not similarly multilingual
  - a possible weakening of the ability to carry on a conversation completely in one language
- Watching TV or movies with audio in a language you understand, but which also has subtitles in another language you understand: this can be very distracting. I'm always glancing at the subs and finding fault with them.

## **STATUS OF ENGLISH**

While depicting the status of English in a multilingual Indian society we can say that it is used as a language of communication for many Indian and international companies, used as a principal language to connect the worldwide people through internet, language of higher education and for globalization. While depicting the status of English in multilingual classroom it is not possible to teach any language in isolation. Moreover there is a general opinion that using mother tongue in classroom will be considered as the hindrance to the acquisition of a foreign language. The recent researches recommended that more than one language can be used in classroom simultaneously. The term 'bilingualism' in the Indian context means there are a large number of languages in India apart from 22 official languages. The learners in the present Indian classroom knew more than one language when they enter into schools. This becomes a great resource for the learners in learning a new language. Moreover, this approach fulfils the major goals of education: Enculturation & acculturation.

## **CONCLUSION**

As we said at the beginning learning a language is one of the best workouts to our brain. If we look at some brain workout websites, we will see that they have a common theme - to

beef up our brain through memorization, pattern recognition, analytical thinking, etc. Language learning becomes a process to achieve to build our vocabulary, our memorization will evolve, our brain will also actively seek to recognize patterns for grammar structure, and analyse. Chris Barnhill is on the right track, He said, "for an individual, learning a second language is one of the best ways to inoculate our self against dementia not based on genetic factors. And if we use our new language to experience the different customs and lifestyles of its speakers, we'll gain two things that we could never have understood before. First, we'll experience a culture directly, with no need to learn it through the prism of your first language. Second, and perhaps more importantly, we'll have the chance to see our native language much more objectively. The personal benefits of learning a second language should be evident enough. The real social need for bilinguals is to be connected us with the rest of the world might not be quite so obvious. But if we take a quick inventory of what makes our life more comfortable, more enjoyable, more secure and more fulfilling, a large part of that inventory would simply not be available to us without a great many people who took the trouble to learn a second language.

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