

Enhancing Oral Communicate Competence through Acquisition Model: A Study

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Abstract: Oral communicative competence is important for language learners. It is one of the most necessary language skills for displaying their language proficiency. It is especially so with L2 learners. The ultimate aim in oral English teaching should be the acquisition of oral communicative traits in English (i.e) making them acquire and not to learn. This paper is based on Stephen Krashen's acquisition / learning Hypothesis. Instead of learning the structure and form of the target language, acquisition of language enriches the L2 learners' oral communicative competence.

Keywords: Acquisition, Affective filter, conscious, competence, comprehensible input.

1. Introduction

A subfield of language learning / teaching research that fascinates the attention of an increasing number of language learner researchers is the area of "discourse analysis". Despite the fact that the learners of L2 are exposed to English for years together, learners often fail to produce the desired result when it comes to oral communication. How to improve their Discourse competence has been a million dollar question. Most of the methods and approaches in English language Teaching fail to provide remedy to address the development of oral communication among language learners. One of the students responded to the question regarding the speaking skill that is mentioned by Noonan: "We are like a blind being on the street. We (will) lose many precious opportunities to enjoy the beauty of this world. We are kept inside a dark box" (Noonan 4)

In a complex multilingual society like India, enhancing speaking skill in a second language is always very challenging. One of the main criticisms on the traditional grammar translation method is that it failed to place emphasize on oral communication. Natural approach highlights that learners can enhance their speaking skill through acquisition. The approach expresses that exposure (listening) to comprehensible input in the target language for a continuous period of time can pave the way to oral Language proficiency. Natural Approach focuses on teaching communicative abilities. Stephen Krashen beautifully portrays that learners can develop their speaking skill in the natural way, which means through acquisition. By acquisition, he refers to an unconscious process that involves the naturalistic development of language proficiency through

Understanding language and through using language for meaningful communication.

2. The Acquisition – Learning Hypothesis

Acquisition and Learning are to be viewed from different angles. Acquisition process in learning a language can be viewed as the apt way to enhance oral communicative competence. One first acquires his mother tongue (L1) but learn a second language (L2) later. Stephen Krashen an applied linguist at the University of Southern California combined with Tracy Terrell, a teacher of Spanish in California derived this concept out of their experiences in language teachers. "Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules and does not require tedious drill....Acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language – natural communication – in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances, but with the message they are conveying and understanding" (Krashen 27)

Among Language learners, acquisition is the product of a subconscious process similar to children's acquisition of their own L1. By teaching grammatical structure and form, learners felt passive and showed sign of disinterest. Instead, use of repeated conversation based on real life situation can unconsciously make the learner to be proficient in producing meaningful utterances "Memorizing the rules and forms are to be in couple of days, it does not lead to fluent, native like speech" (Gregg 81). Krashen claims that Browns research on first language acquisition, where children acquire the vernacular language very naturally, which means acquiring, just by listen to their parents is a universal phenomenon. Similarly, in second language if learners have to speak fluently and accurately they have to acquire the target language unconsciously rather than learning by forms. Learning, according to him, is the product of formal instruction and is a conscious process. The acquisition system imitates utterance, while the learning system monitors and edits. It appears that the role of conscious learning is rather limited in L2 performance. Learning systematic rules gives mental strain and causes boredom to the learners. Acquisition can be considered as a tool to enhance language learners' communicative competence.

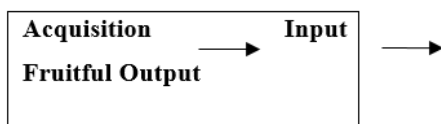
Low motivation, low self-esteem and anxiety can cause

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mental block to enhance speaking skill. “Acquisition is essential in classroom learning; so recreate a naturalistic environment suitable for acquisition, which means high motivation with stress free class room” (McLaughlin 2). The learners’ emotional state or attitudes as an adjustable filter that freely passes, impedes, or blocks input necessary to acquisition. A low affective filter is desirable, since it impedes or blocks less of necessary input. The hypothesis is built on research in second language acquisition.

- *Motivation*: Learners with high motivation generally do better.
- *Self – confidence*: learners with self- confidence and a good self – image tend to be more successful.
- *Anxiety*: Low personnel anxiety and low classroom anxiety are more conducive to second language acquisition” (Krashen 133)

Acquisition	Learning
Implicit, sub conscious	Explicit, conscious
Informal situation	Formal situation
Uses grammatical feel	Uses grammatical rules
Depends on attitude	Depends on aptitude



3. Factors Influencing Acquisition

Factors influencing languages acquisition can be portrayed broadly. In a classroom atmosphere where there is scope for comprehensible input language learning happens in a better pace. The importance of listening in acquiring other language proficiency goes without saying. If learners are open to continuous listening of the target language, enhancing his/ her speaking skill becomes easy. Moving from traditional teacher centered classroom atmosphere to learner centric classroom can facilitate the process of language learning. In learner centered language learning class room tasks that provide apt amnions for verbal discourse can be effectively carried out. Rather than intensively teaching grammatical rules through “rote learning” learners should be made to acquire the grammatical rules

contextually. Contextual learning makes the learner imbibe the grammatical rules without knowing that he is learning.

Teachers play a primary role in language learning because creating an atmosphere to facilitate unconscious way of language learning is a challenging task. Teachers have to be motivating and be free from threatening the learners. A classroom atmosphere that is interesting, friendly and in which there is low affective filter for learns should be created by teachers. The Affective filter hypothesis states that acquirers with a low affective filter seek and receive more input, interact with confidence and are more receptive to the input they receive. Motivation plays a prime role in making a language learners move towards perfection. Motivation can make them move from the stage of inter language to native like proficiency in L2.

Cultural shock towards on alien language, which develops, fear among L2 learners towards the target language and culture can be gradually removed by language teachers in promoting a conducive stress free classroom environment. To help language learners to learn effectively and efficiently, language teachers should provide learners with natural acquisition and lower their affective filter.

4. Conclusion

This paper presented an overview of Enhancing oral communicate competence through acquisition model: a study

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