USE OF NON-NATIVE LITERATURE IN IMPROVING INTRAPERSONAL SKILLS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Abstract:

The present study is an experimental study in which the researches hypothesize that Non-native literature can improve intrapersonal communication skills of language learners. The experimental group was given treatment through independent variable that is Non-native literature whereas the other group was taken as controlled group and was given a usual type of training. After six weeks training both of the groups were given post tests and it was found that experimental group out performed the control group. It was found that non-native literature does have a very positive effect on interpersonal communication skills of language learners, therefore it may be included as much as possible in curriculum and may be used during teaching.

Key words: Intra personal, Communication, native literature, Learners, English

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Introduction:

Man being a social animal lives in a society wherein communication plays an important role of connecting him to his fellow beings and society. It is not just an important skill, it is indeed a necessity. Importance of communication has been realized in all times because it is one of the most fundamental assets of humans. When we speak of communication, the most important thing that comes to mind is the crucial role that language plays in communication. Language is the basis of communication and for the communication to be effective, the language in use has to be clear, coherent, apt and most importantly expressive.

The commonly known types of communication are intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, focused interactions, non-focused interactions and mass communication. Intrapersonal communication is one-person communication. The communicator is performing dual roles of a sender and a receiver. It is the language use or thought internal to the communicator. It involves silent thinking, inner voice, and self talk that drives or prohibits our thoughts and actions. It is the way we reason out thoughts and emotions and the outcome of our Intrapersonal communication can be seen in our attitude, actions and self concept.

Daydreaming, fantasizing, working out a problem in your head, reading out loud to yourself can also be examples of intrapersonal communication. It includes conscious mental activities like thinking, analyzing, organizing, and recollecting as well as unconscious activities like dreaming. Intrapersonal communication occurs for the purpose of clarifying ideas or for analyzing a situation or to reflect upon or appreciate something. The three aspects of intrapersonal communication are self-concept, perception and expectation.

Each individual reacts and processes his thoughts according to his own self concept. Self-concept is how man views his self. Much of our self-perception depends on the way we think others perceive us, and we also develop ideas about ourselves from personal experience.

Self-concept is composed of two components: self-image and self-esteem, Self-esteem, according to Myers is "one's feelings of high and low self worth." Self-image is the foundation upon which is built a person's Intrapersonal communication. Self-concept is thus the basis for intrapersonal communication. It involves three factors namely beliefs, values and attitudes which

influence behavior. Other things that can affect self-concept are personal attributes, talents, social role, even birth order.

Whereas self-concept focuses internally, perception looks outward. Perception of the outside world also is rooted in beliefs, values and attitudes. It along with self-concept creates a harmonious understanding of both oneself and one's world.

Within each person reside his own cultural heritage, parental lineage, and a self-concept that is unique. As a person constantly debates and ponders life's every day questions, his thoughts and attitudes are influenced by many experiences and natural events. Intrapersonal communication, the self-talk that occurs within everyone, is influenced greatly through culture. The classical strings of culture play an important role within the inner feelings of mankind. The self-concept is how man perceives himself, and it also influences how people express their feelings.

Attitude and one's self-esteem play a huge role in how mankind intrapersonally and interpersonally relates to himself and others in the community. Positive intrapersonal communication with one's self will enable one to display a positive attitude in life and in the interpersonal relationships with others.

Language is clearly a method of classifying what we perceive. It has been observed that learners whose self-concept is not well-developed are unable to show good progress in language learning. It involves a number of mentalistic operations that are going on in our mind e.g. critical thinking, logical reasoning, outlining, map-making, inferring perception, self-evaluation, decision making, metacognition, self talk, dreaming, imaging, planning, etc. Self awareness gives way to motivation while self evaluation develops metacognition. Metacognition is the ability to reflect upon one's own learning processes. It is an ability to think about what one is thinking about. Literature has always been used as an important resource or tool for teaching and learning of language. The use of literary texts can develop students' character, help them build emotional maturity and equip the students with critical faculties.

Pakistani students are learning English as a second or foreign language" Pakistani students' need for learning English is basically for academic purposes and for communication in target areas of work.

Now days, most of the literary texts used in the EFL classrooms in Asia are "native" English literature that is hard for non native learners to grasp. But the works of local writers are more stimulating because the learners feel at home when they read about their own culture. Researches have shown that non-native texts can overcome "the cultural stumbling blocks" experienced by students. John Maxwell said, "It is your duty to find yourself." Hence, it is important for the language learners to develop Intrapersonal communication in order to acquire communicative competence and to have a successful learning experience.

Aim of the study:

Pakistani students are taught English through literature produced by the native speakers. They learn all the technicalities of language as far as structure is concerned however their intrapersonal skills are not developed properly. It is so because they cannot get native like intuition as they cannot study the language in their own ecology. So it is relatively a new idea to use literature produced in their own country to improve their intrapersonal skills.

Statement of Study:

 The use of non native literature in improving the intrapersonal communication skills of English language learners In Pakistan.

Research Question:

Does Non-native literature improve intrapersonal communication skills of language learners?

Objectives:

This research aimed at to

1. To find out the ways of improving Intrapersonal communication skills of language learners.

2. To find out that how the communicative competence of language learners can be improved.

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3. To investigate that how the thinking skills of language learners can be enhanced.

4. To discover that how the language learning process can be made more logical and coherent.

5. To find out that how the motivational factor of language learners can be improved.

Significance of the study:

The study provides a deep insight into the psychology of the language learners and helped in finding out the reasons behind the learner's inability to communicate in target language. The research will bring awareness in the language teachers about Metacognition and will provoke them to use different techniques to improve Intrapersonal communication skills of language learners.

Delimitation:

The research has been conducted at Siddeeq Public School Secondary branch (Girls' Wing) Satellite Town Rawalpindi. The researcher has delimited the research to the study of the Intrapersonal communication skills of the students of Class 09.

The researchers delimited the topic by selecting works of Pakistani writers of English language and in those works only the short stories and poems are taken. For that matter 40 students were randomly selected as participant of the present study. They were further divided into two equal groups with 20 participants in each. Group one was taken as experimental group and given treatment by manipulation of the independent variable whereas the other group was taken as controlled group and was given a usual type of training.

Research Methodology:

It was an experimental study. 40 students of class 9 were selected through simple random sampling. The participants were divided into two equal groups, experimental group and controlled group. The experimental group received the treatment that spanned over six weeks whereas the controlled group was given usual training during this period. As discussed before,

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the result is complied in the form of numerical data. Post test was given after treatment. Mean, SD and t-test were used as statistical tests.

Research Tools:

Pretest and post test were used as a research tool.

Rationale of Research Tools:

A same kind of pretest was given to the participants of both control and experimental groups consisted of 20 students in each to ensure that they had the same level of competence as far as their intrapersonal communication skills were concerned. The experimental group was given treatment for six weeks. After six weeks of treatment the participants from both the groups were given posttest. The result of the post tests of both the groups was compared.

Literature Review:

What is Communication?

Communication comes from the Latin word "communico," which means "to share". It is an active process of sharing information with other human beings. According to Dr. H. Norman Wright,

>"Communication is a process either verbal or non verbal
>
>of sharing information with other person in such a way
>
>that he understands what you are saying."1

So communication is not simply sending a message; it is creating meaning and understanding. The way we decide whether or not communication is occurring is not simply by reference to the outward behavior, but rather by the inward, cognitive behavior. According to Stanley Cunningham,

>"Communication between people, groups and institutions

typically involves an exchange of messages, that is, a

process in which movement, change and cognition

Come into play."2

This definition leads us to the view that language is a psychosocial action. So, communication involves a complex network of different neurophysiologic or mentalistic operations. It involves the process of assigning meaning to the internal stimuli, creative thinking and logical thinking. A multidimensional, functional model of communication provides us grounds for this theory.

The Functional Model of Communication

Ruesch and Bateson in 1951 presented the Functional Model of communication. This model presented communication as functioning simultaneously at four levels of analysis. One is the basic intrapersonal process (level 1).Level 2 is interpersonal and focuses on the overlapping fields of experience of two interact ants. Level 3 is group interaction and it comprises of many people. And finally a cultural level is level 4 which links large groups of people. Each level of activity consists of four communicative functions: evaluating, sending, receiving, and channeling. This model focuses less on the structural attributes of communication-source, message, receiver, etc. and more upon the actual determinants of the process. This model clearly shows that Intrapersonal communication is the foundation of all forms of communication.

What is Intrapersonal Communication?

Intrapersonal communication is the active internal involvement of the individual in the symbolic processing of messages. The individual becomes his or her own sender and receiver and he provides feedback to him or herself in an ongoing internal process. It involves a number of mental processes going on in our mind e.g. map-making, picture developing, outlining, indexing, brain storming, construction and organization of ideas. It is a source of personal development, self-discovery, self-understanding, of our view of us.

Intrapersonal communication involves different levels of communication activity: internal discourse, solo vocal communication, and solo written communication. Internal discourse

involves thinking, concentration and analysis. Psychologists include both daydreaming and nocturnal dreaming in this category. Prayer, contemplation and meditation are also included in this category, though from a theological point of view the argument may be made that this is not solely internal to one person.

According to M.J.Smith,

> "The process of actively thinking about an issue regarding
>
> the self or the environment usually results in a number
>
> of self-generated persuasive messages."3

The theory of persuasion leads us to the view that an individual plays an active participatory role in the modification of his attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Barker and Kibler discussing a conceptual overview of communication, define intrapersonal communication this way:

> "Intrapersonal communication is the basic level from which all other forms of human communication are derived. It is the communication which occurs within the individual... thinking is one form of intrapersonal communication."4

Although this definition is true yet it is misleading in a way that it suggests that we are talking to ourselves, as if we are both sender and receiver. It also fails to differentiate between the individual and the self. It tells something about the structure of the events, but tells nothing about the nature of events; the processes underlying the event. LaFleur defines Intrapersonal communication as:

> "… the way in which persons interpret (decode)
>
> the multiple potential meanings of both
>
> internally and externally originating sentences
>
> and sentence fragments."5

La Fleur argues that by responding to the internal or external stimuli, a person decodes the multiple potential meanings of the message. Leonard J. Shedletsky attempted to locate Intrapersonal communication within the cognitive domain. According to Shedletsky, meaning –

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making, either encoding or decoding or both, is a defining feature of communication, so the process of communication occurs whenever an individual makes meaning.

> "Intrapersonal communication concerns the processes
>
> of assigning meaning (e.g. , the mental structures and
>
> the retrieval processes of memory) and the products of
>
> assigned meaning (e.g., schemata, labels, and memories
>
> nor more generally, representations) 6."

So, Intrapersonal communication is an act involving conceptual thought while meaning is a central feature of this process. This view of communication places emphasis on the interpreter (the receiver) rather the intentions of the sender or the source of stimuli, the type of stimuli, the relationship between the stimuli and the idea. Moreover in this process meaning is invented, determined and assigned rather than received. Whether stimuli come from an external source or internal, the focus of Intrapersonal communication is on the ways in which the stimuli is processed, the ability to make sense out of experiences, to remember, to memorize and to create messages. Hence Intrapersonal communication is not merely talking to one's self. It is the interchange of meaning between the parts of the person, such as consciousness and the unconscious or between I; part of us that is personal and me; part of us that is social product.

Gardener's Theory of Multiple Intelligences:

Howard Gardener in his book "Frames of Mind" gave the theory of multiple intelligence. Gardener's theory proposed that Multiple Intelligences proposes that people use at least seven relatively autonomous capacities-to approach problems and create products. It suggests that each individual has a unique cognitive profile. Although they are not necessarily dependent on each other, these intelligences seldom operate in isolation. These seven intelligences are identified as: Linguistic, Logical-Mathematical, Musical, Spatial-Visual, Bodily-Kinesthetic, Interpersonal and Intrapersonal. Later he added two more: Naturalist Intelligence and Existential Intelligence. In his theory of Multiple Intelligences he differentiated between interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence. Interpersonal intelligence is concerned with the capacity to understand

the intentions, motivations and desires of other people while Intrapersonal intelligence entails the capacity to understand oneself, to appreciate one's feelings, fears and motivations. In Howard Gardner's view it involves having an effective working model of ourselves, and to be able to use such information to regulate our lives. Writing in "Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice" he defined Interpersonal intelligence as:

"Intrapersonal intelligence, a seventh kind of intelligence, is a correlative ability, turned inward. It is a capacity to form an accurate, veridical model of oneself and to be able to use that model to cooperate effectively."7

Gardener's Interpersonal intelligences closely related to Goleman's definition of emotional intelligence. Goleman defined self-awareness as:

"The ability to recognize and understand ones own moods, emotions, and drives as well as their effect on others."8

He stated that self-awareness gives way to self-confidence, realistic self-assessment and self-deprecating sense of humor. The person becomes aware of his own positive attributes, strengths, negative aspects and weaknesses. Self awareness also leads to an awareness and understanding of others that leads to more fruitful relationships. Group qualities are fostered and aids in the overall development of the individual as well as the group or institution.

Both Gardener and Goleman are of the view that students must be allowed to learn how to develop their intrapersonal abilities if they are to be adequately prepared with a basic emotional attitude to manage their lives and are to learn how to integrate both the emotional and cognitive centers of the brain. Human growth depends on this internal communication. Through it they know themselves and develop their self-concept, self determination, and self-motivation.

Gardener's theory met a strong positive effect by the educational theorists, teachers and policy makers because it laid the emphasis on the individual. It is an account of human cognition in its fullness. It proposes a major transformation in the way our schools are run. It suggests that teachers must be trained to present the lessons in a wide variety of ways using music, cooperative learning, art activities, role plays, multimedia, field trips, inner reflection, etc. With an understanding of Gardener's theory of multiple intelligences, teachers, schools administrators, and parents can better understand the learners in their midst. They can allow students to safely

explore and learn in many ways, and they can help students direct their own learning. Students will be better served by a broader vision of education, wherein teachers use different methodologies, exercises and activities to actively involve the students in the process of learning.

Processes Involved in Intrapersonal Communication

Intrapersonal communication involves a number of mentalistic operations going on in our mind. Some of the processes include: talking to oneself; the process of communicating with(in);data processing functions; thinking and understanding, inferring; problem solving, conflict resolution, critical thinking; analysis, evaluation, planning, decision making; feedback; memory; the assignment of meaning to perceptions, events and experiences; self-awareness, self-consciousness and self-knowledge; reflection; metacognition; day dreaming and imaging.

Intrapersonal Communication and Language Learning

Intrapersonal communication is at the heart of all learning. It is the basic level from which all communication spring. According to Applbaum and Anatol, intrapersonal communication or its knowledge "…adds to our knowledge of ourselves and to our understanding of communication with others."9

So, Intrapersonal communication is a source of personal development and self discovery. It involves all processes which affect learning e.g. critical thinking, outlining, inferring meanings, organization, planning, analysis, evaluation, reflection, memory, metacognition, etc. Teacher excellence and student success, goals in the educational context, are products of Intrapersonal communication. Every learner has his own peculiar learning style. Therefore, teachers should use learner centered activities.

Self-knowledge is the awareness of learner's own cognition and the capacity to use this knowledge to customize the learning context. Benjamin Bloom (1964) identified three domains of educational activities: Cognitive (mental skills), Affective (growth in feelings or emotional areas) and Psychomotor (manual or physical skills). Bloom divided cognitive domain into a hierarchy which began with the simplest form: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. If the cognitive domain knows "that" and the psychomotor domain

knows" how", the effective domain knows what you "ought" to do. The stages of learning in this domain are: receiving, responding, valuing, organization and characterization. The organization stage is the stage of emotional involvement with the work when the learners start rationalizing and judging their work by professional standards.

By developing self-concept, teachers can improve learners' linguistic ability. Self-concept gives way to self-awareness and self-esteem. Self-awareness is also termed as reflective consciousness. The learners' motivation level increases when esteem needs are satisfied while self-awareness develops the skills of self-evaluation and self-analysis.

Literature as Resource in Language Classrooms

Literature can serve as a very good resource as it provides them an opportunity to comment, justify and mirror themselves. Every student is an individual, with his own particular personality, abilities, problems and his own rate of development.

Widdowson, Brumfit and Long advocated the use of literature in class and methods for extending it into the L2 classroom were propounded. Carter and Long in 'Teaching Literature' (Longman, 1991) offered three models for teaching literature: the Cultural, the Language and the Personal Growth models. In the Personal Growth Model an EFL student is encouraged to express his personal opinions on a text, and relate any intellectual or emotional response to his or her own experiences. This technique follows the commonly held theory of reading which lays emphasis on the interaction of the reader with the text.

> "Text itself has no meaning; it only provides direction for the
>
> reader to construct meaning from the reader's own
>
> experience"10

Literature stimulates ideas. It helps to achieve self-identity and clarify their values. In literature drawing inferences is a common practice in that literature has "suggestive power" as Maley states:

> "Even in its simplest forms it (literature) invites us to go
>
> beyond what is implied. (1982:12)"11

Gillian Lazar suggests that literature in the Foreign Language classroom motivates, offers access to cultural background, encourages language acquisition, expands language awareness, develops students' interpretative abilities and educates the whole person in so far as it enhances our maginative and affective capacities. Literature of a language has to be understood in accordance with that part of the world where that language is spoken.

Seliger believes that a language is used in social exchanges so the feelings, attitudes and motivations of learners towards the target language itself, to the speakers of the language and to the culture affects how learners respond to the input to which they are exposed. These affective variables determine the rate and degree of second language learning. Langer (1997) also agrees to Seliger when he stated,

> "Second language learners use their knowledge of their first
>
> language and culture as well as their second to help them
>
> understand and communicate"12.

Buttjes also sees cultural content as a primary motivator for language learning.

> "Cultural content (because first of all, it creates the motivation to
>
> learn a foreign language) also indirectly promotes
>
> interlingual competence13."

English by now is the most widely taught learnt and spoken language in the world. It excels as a language of creativity in various literary genres around the world.

Yamuna Kachru and Cecil Nelson quoted Kachru in their book," Asian Englishes Today-World Englishes In Asian Contexts" where he said,

> "English literatures produced in Africa and Asia 'have both a National identity and a linguistic distinctiveness."14

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Findings of the study:

Table 1: Comparison between Pre-Tests of Controlled and Experimental Groups

	Controlled Group	Experimental Group	Difference
Mean	22.475	22.225	0.25
Standard deviation	1.499781	1.943105	0.4433
T-Value	0.2759		

According to table no 1 given above the means of controlled group and experimental group are 22.45 and   22.225 respectively. The difference is 0.25 as given in column four, row two, which is not considerable. Moreover, the calculated t-value that is 0.2759, does not fall in the rejection region, which is either more than 0.5 or less than -0.5. The result of pre-test of controlled and experimental group shows that both of the groups are same.

Table 2: Comparison between Post-Test of controlled and Experimental Groups

	Controlled Group	Experimental Group	Difference
Mean	24.2	41.6	17.4
Standard Deviation	3.991438205	3.447348	0.5441
T-Value	-14.71		

According to the table given above the mean of controlled group and experimental group is 24.2 and   41.6 respectively. The difference is 17.4 as given in row two, column four which is quite considerable. Moreover, the calculated t-value that is -14.71, falls in the critical region which is either more than 0.5 or less than -0.5. In other words the result of controlled group and experimental group in post test is not same. The result of the post test is better than the pretest.

Results of the study:

Result of the study showed that after treatment the performance of the experimental group which was taught through non- native literature was better than the controlled group which was taught through native literature.

Recommendation:

The non-native literature does have a very positive effect on interpersonal communication skills of language learners, therefore it may be included as much as possible in curriculum   and may be used excessively during teaching.

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