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PAL AND FOE TONGUES OF ENGLISH IN FOREIGN LAND CLASSROOMS AT  
UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL IN SATAVAHANA UNIVERSITY

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**ABSTRACT**

Do teachers and students overuse their native tongue in English language classrooms? Most of the Indian English classrooms are especially government schools and colleges engaged with regional medium. The paper critically points out that English lecturers use their mother tongue in the English language classrooms at Undergraduate level in Satavahana University, Telangana State. If students employ native tongue, would it helpful to them to improve English or indirectly encourage them to use mother tongue rather than making the students to get excellence in the target language. It gives some uncomplicated and appropriate strategies and ways of enhancing English language use in the classroom. Some great research scholars claim that such use may guide to more dependence on their mother tongue. But some say that mother tongue is an essential language for second language learning. Mother tongue in English language classroom fills nativity feeling and brings interest in students.

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It is a thousand dollars question whether English teacher use mother tongue in foreign language classroom that is especially English classroom or not. We know that a child learns mother tongue or first language naturally. The learner picks it up from speakers and social environment around him. There is no doubt that the first language is an essential and very comfortable language for all. Should English lecturers who are teaching at Undergraduate level in Satavahana University, use native tongue in their classroom? Vernacular medium background students are not at all interested in English if there is no mother tongue. It saves teacher's and student's time. Butzkamm says that "Mother tongue will save learners from a feeling of frustration which will eventually lead them to avoid all topics of personal interest. The measured and well-calculated contribution of the mother tongue can allow pupils to tackle more difficult texts sooner" (49). It is not an easy task to teach English for the local students without using mother tongue. Perhaps that is why; Grammar Translation Method is still popular in India where we find more vernacular students. Of course, using mother tongue sometimes takes the learners far away from learning English because the mind of students is

always filled up with local language. Their ideas and feelings are being explained in the local language without hesitant. Butzkamm rightly says that "you can banish the mother tongue from the classroom, but you cannot banish it from the pupil's heads" (28). Indeed teachers try to prevent their students from using mother tongue in the classroom. The mother tongue usually gives the students confidence and security in English language classrooms. Most of the great literary works are being appeared in local languages rather than in English because writers are happy to write in their local languages as they have full command over the native language. They get security in using it. It is not to say the writings in regional languages are always great works and the writers expose the internal ideas clearly in their mother tongue whereas in English it is always problematic even for English preferences sometimes.

We know that local culture dominates even in English classrooms but English lecturers must be careful in using the local language. He can employ it but should not use it more times. The lecturers should not discontinue the students to apply mother tongue as it is their internal tongue, one can forget second language, but not the first language. The neighbourly environment always makes the students familiarize cultural language and informal language so it is impracticable to forget the childhood learnt language regional or local language. If the English lecturers stop them to use local language, most of the students won't be all set to learn English at Undergraduate level since they have been previously habituated to employ native language. Hopkins claims that "if the learner of a second language is encouraged to ignore his native language, he might well feel identity threatened. The issue of mother tongue use in EFL classroom was neglected and ignored in the past because it was readily accepted in second language learning contexts" (19). Telugu is the regional language in Satavahana University, Karimnagar and Telangana State. The teachers think that it is necessary to use Telugu in the English language classrooms to explain difficult concepts and words. There are a lot of advantages if the English lecturers use Telugu while teaching English for Degree college students. Some of the better advantages are:

1. Using native tongue provides a sense of security and helps learners to be stress free.
2. It motivates the Undergraduate level students to learn English.
3. The first language techniques allow teachers to use richer and more authentic texts which mean more comprehensible input and faster acquisition.
4. Native language saves great deal of time.
5. It helps clarify the meaning of difficult words.
6. Local language certainly helps to explain grammar rules.
7. It provides a sense of security and confidence.

The English language classroom must be student centric, not teacher centric. One can learn a new language through practice only. If English lecturers always use Telugu, students who already like Telugu start to love it very much. Students need to practice English by using simple English words and sentences. They use native tongue, no problem, but it must be limited. English lecturers from Satavahana University too use Telugu too much in English language classroom like many English teachers. Most of the times regional medium background students translate from their mother tongue into English. Of course translation is sometimes referred to as the fifth language skill which is very familiar for rural students. Ross accurately says that "Translation holds a special importance at an intermediate and advanced level; in the advanced or final stage of language teaching, translation from L1 to L2 and L2 to L1 is recognized as the fifth skill and the most important social skill since it promotes communication and understanding between strangers" (63) so Grammar Translation method is always popular in India whereas Direct Method becomes a failure show even in the twenty first century. Regarding to this, Green says that "most teachers insist that some use of the native language, and usually the teaching of translation as well, are necessary features of any workable" (219).

For primary school students, it is better teach English through English but the tricky job is to teach English for regional medium background students especially for high school and college students. So automatically mother tongue enters their language. To escape from using local language, one can use gesture and posture which play important role in any language classrooms by giving some simple phrases such as 'come there' 'get down' 'bring it' or any other phrasal verbs which we use in our day to day lives so the teacher

has to introduce English slowly. If he gives difficult structures and hard-hitting words, the students are unable to learn it so he should ask them to repeat him. Many language critics say that the language used by the English teacher should be very simple as students respond very well to context and facial expression. The lecturers of Satavahana University generally use their native tongue when they come out side because his colleagues, students and neighbours chat with him in local language. May be English faculty members too like the local language and they are afraid of speaking in English as most of other colleagues and neighbours would not reply in the foreign language. In other way, we say that cunning, sociable human existence in local areas does not allow using English in the rural and urban areas, except cosmopolitan cities. Cultural bias is emerged in this issue. When the English teachers use English outside of the English classroom, the culture and traditions enter their language. Respecting local culture, tradition and native tongue, English lecturers should give preference to English and use English in the classroom and outside of the classroom especially they communicate in English in front of the students so that indirectly faculty's English help them to speak in English.

Teachers should encourage the students to use English in their communication but at Undergraduate level sometimes it may not be possible as irregularity of the students to English classes and not giving much importance to English as it is treated as subject, not as a language. Undergraduate level students try to speak something in their language. The teachers must ignore what students say in their mother tongue. They must encourage them to communicate and speak the same word or sentence in English. Indeed, it is very difficult to create English environment in the classrooms as most of the students come from their regional languages. It dominates on the target language. Teachers should make some rules that all the students should speak in English compulsory although it is with hundreds of mistakes. In addition, students should believe that the target language is important throughout their lives although the marks in General English they get are not counted at the end of the Degree course in Satavahana University, Karimnagar, Telangana State.

It is a highly controversial issue of using mother tongue in English language classroom. Some scholars think it is must in the classroom whereas some ponder over that it is not good to touch Telugu or any regional language in English so that students may attract to Telugu rather than English. The use of mother tongue in English classroom has some disadvantages.

1. It reduces learner nervousness and creates a more calming learning environment.
2. It makes the students depend on the first language.
3. It facilitates checking understanding and giving instructions.
4. It brings local and native culture so that indirectly does not create learning atmosphere.
5. It does not create reading atmosphere.
6. It, at any cost, does not improve the student's knowledge to understand between the lines.
7. The use of mother tongue always takes the students to the zone of the regional area, not the target language.

**Encouraging L2 Use:**

Even in the Undergraduate level English classrooms also, the students usually discuss all the things in the first language. Most of the English lecturers of Satavahana University Degree colleges generally encourage the learners to communicate in Telugu by using Telugu language with their students. In some of the rural degree colleges, English is not being taught because the students never ask the management to appoint a lecturer for them because marks in English are not counted at the end of the course. In directly the students are not encouraged to use English even in the English classrooms. The reason is that some of the English lecturers are not good at English. They have low proficiency in the foreign language. Here are some of the ways of deal to overcome from the obstacles in using English.

1. The English faculty should create learning atmosphere
2. They must explain the importance of English in the present days.
3. They should give more speaking tasks to students and practice rather giving exercises on grammatical items such as tenses and prepositions because all the Degree students might have already practiced in their previous education.

4. Syllabus of Undergraduate level of Satavahana University must be changed. Speaking activities such as group discussion and role plays should be incorporated.
5. The topics and tasks must focus on the proficiency of the learners.
6. Using mother tongue should be minimised.
7. The English lecturers including other faculty members also must use English in the classes and premises of the college.
8. Marks in English the students get should be calculated otherwise General English must be deleted from the syllabus to incorporate communicate in English.

**Conclusion**

Though the students like mother tongue very much, they should practice the target language otherwise they won't learn it. Of course the learners' awareness of mother tongue has a positive impact on the learning of English language grammar. It might give a good result in the writing examinations. That is why, more than ninety percent of the Degree college students from Satavahana University secure pass marks in General English. In a roundabout way we say that having a good and grand knowledge in mother tongue and wonderful knowledge in English do not help them to learn and speak in English. The English lecturers should create learning atmosphere in the colleges and students too practice the language in the classrooms and outside of the classrooms.

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