

Impact of Socio-Economic Changes on Economically Weak Children in English Language Teaching

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Abstract

Children in schools are behaved on the basis of culture and economic status in which they are grown up. With the aim of exploring the impact of socio-cultural and economic aspects in schools on economically weak children in classroom teaching learning activities this study has been conducted based on the desktop study. This research designed title as Impact of Socio-Economic Changes on Economically Weak Children in English Language Teaching and collected data from the existing literature which are analyzed and reached in the conclusion that children from strong economic status and high cultural background will have better performance than the children who are from poor economic and low cultural background. Development of new technologies, social media highly help to mix up and transfer the culture as a result the direct impact of it is directly seen in the classroom. Change not only brings negative feelings it also tends to bring positive feelings. The change has challenged us (English language teachers) today so that to overcome this challenge we need to apply a balanced approach in the classroom so that we will be away from being boring teachers.

Key words: Socio-economic, pedagogy, impact, economically weak

Introduction

During the day of exam, some of the students cannot pay their tuition fee because of poor family background and the school's teachers make them stand on the school ground; scold them; ask several questions as well as threaten them that they will be kicked out of the school. This is what I frequently see being the vicarious experience. I feel it is a matter related to the parents but not the small school children. Other students appear in the exam hall; it becomes the time of exam and exam starts but poor children are threatened in the name of late paying of tuition fee making them stand on the school ground. This situation really pinches my heart being a vicarious person. How the school children feel about getting the live experience. I am also one of the teachers of that school and have been teaching since eight years. Not only during the exam but also in the other activities teachers treat them differently to them and provide fewer chances than others. The very situation is taken as a custom of the school and the teachers do not take it seriously. Perhaps, they do not know the psychological effect of the activity in the budding brain of the children.

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Similarly, children from poor economic or social backgrounds are seen differently in the society. Children from high profile or rich economic backgrounds are respected and get more opportunities in different activities. People care and love them but similar poor families or low class profile children do not get similar opportunities. Society is divided into poor and rich (Hümbelin, Hobi, & Fluder, 2022). Rich families send their children to institutionalized schools where schools teach in English medium but poor families send children in public schools where tuition fee is not asked from children. When small kids speak tit-bids of English, parents become happy. The craze of English speaking is increasing in Nepal. Parents enjoy when children call them as daddy-mummy in place of buba-aama. Therefore the objective of study is to explore the impact of socio-cultural and economic aspects in schools on economically weak children in classroom teaching learning activities.

Review of the Literature

Teaching and learning has crossed long history informally and formally in the process of evolution which is one of the important aspects of human life. In such a process of evolution of language, the socio-cultural aspect seems to be incorporated with language. Socio-cultural aspect in language is the micro layer of language which is not seen but felt interestingly; the mingled of two makes the means of communication more lively and realistic. Cultural aspect plays a crucial role in determining the semantic aspect from language. Likewise, the economic aspect also seems to be decisive in up-lifting quality education.

Impact of Socio-cultural Changes

English language teaching is affected due to the socio-cultural changes. Language teaching and socio-cultural aspects have a relationship with each other. Since the origin, the society and its culture have been changing and the change brings impact in English language teaching (Reuveni, 2022). In institutional schools, a child is kicked out from a school when s/he cannot pay the tuition fee in time. Schools' teachers behave with her/him as if they are a second child of the school.

Language emerges with the fertilizer of culture and the culture becomes meaningful due the language. The culture of the human beings goes on changing which affects language and the change in language brings impact on classroom teaching and learning. Language and culture are as if the water and fish; without water a fish cannot survive and without a fish there is no beauty of water. School is the representation form of a society (Orfan, 2021)-the culture found in society seen in school too. This study deals with these changes and the impacts brought by them.

Society, Culture and Economy

A child gets born in a society and grows up with its culture. He comes to school along with culture, economic status, and family identity. School teachers and staff behave according to his culture, language, and family identity. He is respected if he is from a high cultural background, and he is neglected if he is from a low cultural background. Though the teachers may not openly express themselves, their behavior shows such. The classmates in school neglect him and try to exclude from different activities. This established culture in school is common. Teaching is not just teaching linguistics forms, rather it is also the teaching culture associated with language. The relationship between language and culture is the matter of the Iceberg (Jiang, 2000). The visible part is language with a small culture; the greater part is hidden beneath the surface, is the invisible aspect of culture. She further argues that language and culture together make a living organism. It means without culture, language would be dead and without language culture would have no space. Ster (1992) says that foreign languages must be studied socio-linguistically. Knowing a language without knowing its culture is cooking curry without adding salt. The curry without salt may provide all sorts of vitamins and nutrients, it looks and smells good but curry is no more curry. The physical aspect of it has no more complaints but it tests no test. One cannot satisfy himself from it though he tries more and more. So teaching language without its culture is teaching dead language and teaching language with its culture is teaching live language.

Similar to culture, economic status is another element which affects teaching and learning English. Having enough property a family feels secure and strong in society. Such families send their children to reputed private schools and the children from low economic backgrounds are sent to a common government school. Reputed private or institutional schools provide more facilities and care; use different strategies and techniques to teach children. More exposures help to learn more and fewer exposures will have less learning (McGuire & Storch, 2019). Exposure determines the learning ability of children. This is a basic step from where children are categorized keeping into two different worlds.

Theoretical Framework: Socio-cultural Learning Theory

Social interaction between the people not only makes one know with others but helps to sharpen the mind of the individual. Socio-cultural learning theory provides the overarching framework for this study. It claims that learning occurs through social interaction between people from the various levels of skills and knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978). Similarly, professional development which includes both cognitive and social perspectives plays an influential role in teachers learning how to teach (Borko, 2004). Socio-cultural ground is a vague area in which teachers formally and informally participate and get cognitive as well as professional development. From a socio-cultural perspective the fundamental goal of teachers as learners of teaching, in the context of participating in formal or informal learning activities and experiences, is the development of intellectual and psychological tools which then lend to making profound

and meaningful changes to pedagogy and perspectives of teaching (Johnson, 2009).

Classroom is a group where children interact, collaborate, discuss, share and understand the matter culturally. Children interact with each other and construct knowledge culturally (Vygotsky, 1978). Teacher develops a cultural practice based on the variation of the learners. Teacher presents content using the established culture where children of a classroom think-pair-share based on the classroom culture. They learn with their active participation.

Methodology

With the aim of answering the research question, the current study has been conducted thoroughly depending up on the desktop analysis. Based on the fact information collected in the support of the literature have been used as evidence to support the argument. Descriptive-analytical approach helps to reach the goal and achieve finding (Alhazaymeh, & Al-zyadat, 2022). Based on this approach led me to achieve the goal and to summarize the idea and reach the conclusion. In order to gain better insight over the impact brought by socio-cultural and economic aspects over language teaching in the classroom, I thoroughly went gathering information and used a descriptive as well as analytical approach which led me in a perfect destination serving an important aspect that needs to be included in the English language teaching classroom.

Change in the Perspective of Society towards English Language

Many hotels and shops print their boards in English as well as Nepali language. Himalayan Peace Resort, Banganga, Kapilvastu ,Gautam Cycle Center, Banganga, Kapilvastuetc are some examples of business areas. Tickets and bills are printed in English, medicine's wrapper is printed in English; common old people mix some of the English terms while speaking ; important notices and information are given in English. Two third books of the world have been printed in English (Sweileh, 2022). People speaking English are taken as high class profiles and believed to be reputed people. It has become a language of bread and butter as well as a class. So, English is not only the language but also shows the class of people. People always adopt a dominant language for the sake of position and prestige. In Nepal and other countries so many languages are going to die because the native speakers of indigenous and minority as well as marginalized people encourage their children to speak Nepali but not their own language at their houses - not only that they become happy when their kids speak in English. It is a global language and people have been shifting towards English due to which the concept of Englishes has been emerging and emerging. That's why the perspective of language teaching has been changing (Sun, 2014).

Culture differs from society to society. Asian culture is different from European and American culture (Arun & KahramanGedik, 2022). Similarly, Asian English is different from European and American Englishes; it is because of differences in culture and society. The English which we teach here is different in various aspects. That's why differences in socio-

cultural system, communication systems have been determining the variety of English to be taught in our schools and colleges. Students develop specific communicative competence due to the specific socio-cultural context. Culture determines the way of thinking and the way of perception. The thing which is good in one culture may not be accepted in another culture. Some of the terms which are easily accepted in one culture but they are taken as taboo in another culture. Culture plays a major role in determining factors and in shaping how learning takes place.

Children speaking English are appreciated in schools and regarded that they are from high cultural society (Da Silva, 2022). Teachers behave differently between those who write in English and those who write in Nepali. From the early classes children are taught to speak in English not in Nepali. Children are categorized as better and poorer on the basis of speaking mod-dad, mummy-daddy, and *aamabuba*. Moreover, Nepali speakers are punished. Teachers praise children who make them listen to rhymes in English and dominate those who mummer with Nepalese rhymes.

New Faces of Economy

Along with the development of the society, the forms of the economy have been changing continuously. The local businesses of the past have been changed into global businesses (Charles, 2022). To sell the products merchants need to communicate in the foreign language, they can't communicate in their mother tongues. On the other hand, the packaging of medicine is printed in English; manufacture and expiry date is printed in English; biscuit, noodle, and so many other products are either wrapped in English or leveled in English. It is difficult to know about the products without English; similarly, to sell the products the sellers need to know English.

Tourism sector is also increasing highly across the world (Usmonova, 2022). In Nepal as well as in other counties of the world tourism has become a great source of income and it supports the national source of economy along with the local people. Mainly, tourists speak English rather than other languages so that without English a potter can't help them to pick up their luggage.

Financial Situation of the Parents

Family having good economic condition is seen differently in society. People always respect such families and such family members get a good reputation. Similarly, school is a part of society and in school the children of rich families are seen and treated differently than the children from low economic backgrounds. At first, the parents having good economic conditions send children to private school and children from low economic backgrounds are sent to public school (Boahen, 2022). Inside the school also, children from good economic backgrounds are treated differently than others; teachers mostly watch such students and

remain always aware towards them either in public or private schools; they get more facilities as far as possible. A polite language is used for them and normally, is not punished but such conditions are not applied on other students. Such children feel more secure in the society as well as in the school and never face scarcity of money.

But the children from weak economic backgrounds have to face many problems (Clark, Harper, & Weber, 2022). At first, they feel insecure in the society; they are neither lived nor respected in the society and similarly in the schools by the school teachers too. School teachers do not treat them well; such students are treated by low cultural words; even in the smallest matter they are punished. The school administration keeps them out during the examination in the name of delay in paying the tuition fee in private schools. Teachers and administration forget their humanity and weakness of parents are pouring over them. How do the children feel studying at secondary level when they are threatened by the administration at the assembly in front of the great masses in the name of tuition fee? When I see this situation, my heart melts and then I pray to God, "Why is this?" But nobody thinks about the hearts of those buds of the future. On the other hand, the basic need of such children related to education is hardly filled up (Clark, Harper, & Weber, 2022). I have seen students from such conditions drop their study at the middle path and start to support their family members in economic cases working in different sectors.

Demand of Nonnative English Speaker Teacher

In the past, there was a trend of high demand of native teachers to teach English. It was believed that native teachers are the best teachers to teach to the learners (Haque, & Sharmin, 2022). After the long practice people realized that language cannot be separated from culture and teaching language means teaching culture and the native teachers failed to mix the culture in language classes as a result it couldn't carry to the learners in the depth of the matter, therefore now a days the demand of nonnative teachers is increasing rather than native teachers. Contextualization makes it more natural and more effective to the class and nonnative teachers easily and effectively create contextualization than native teachers in the class. Along with the language, they possess the culture of the learners and the learners can learn the language in their own culture. Culture creates different impressions and interests (Jusik, 2022). Moreover, it creates new curiosity in learning which can be done by nonnative teachers than native teachers.

Development of ICT and its Impact on Society and English Language Teaching

In the 21st century, society has developed in all sectors. Communication and education are highly developed. Due to the development in technology and means of communication, the communication sector has become very wide and diverse. Kramsch (1998) says that

science and technological development has brought the global migration in culture and it has lost natural mooring.

The development of technology and ICT tools has changed the system of teaching and learning (Ayo, 2022). Technology speeds up the rate of learning but it is difficult to purchase having low economic status and low cultural background. Few decades ago, teachers were all in all. Multiple textbooks have widened the area of knowledge and way of learning. Face to face learning has become online learning, e-learning, distance learning, etc. It has been reducing the number of teachers and labor of teachers but the classroom teaching and learning has been made more effective and attractive and more lively as well as natural (Ayo, 2022). It has increased the depthless in learning and it seems to be applying the Synergy Theory in learning. Students can learn by bus, road, kitchen, park, library, classroom in the absence of a teacher too. On one hand, learning has become very easy and on the other hand, it has become very complex.

No Pedagogy is the Best Pedagogy

History tells us that no pedagogy works best for everyone. A balanced pedagogy is needed for corporate locally developed traditional practices with imported practices that are welcomed by the students and can meet the requirements of local institutions and actual needs of the students (Mangubhai, 2006).

Since the past multiple methods were practiced. Because of their drawbacks other new methods came into practice but no method or pedagogy seems the best and no method or pedagogy seems bad. According to the level, age, situation, sex, caste, culture, race, text, place the understanding may differ and the context may be different. Some pedagogies seem to be good at some of the levels and others seem to be good at other levels and for the next context but single pedagogy doesn't fit everywhere.

Conclusion

By nature human beings are changeable or mortal so that the socio-cultural and economic aspects also go on changing and their changes bring impact on ELT. School culture can play a vital role for the better performance of learners. Those who are neglected by the school's teachers cannot perform better and can perform better than those who are appreciated at school. Likewise, economically poor children feel inferior in front of peers so their economic condition may become a barrier in their performance. In the past, the form of economy was more or less fixed but now we can see multiple forms of economy and still it is going on changing and these all the changes bring impact on ELT so that ELT teachers need to be updated time and again. Understanding these changes, it is necessary to bring a balanced approach in the English Language Teaching classroom.

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