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BARRIERS AND TEACHING STRATEGIES OF ENGLISH AS THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE FOR TRIBALS

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Abstract

English is widely recognized as a global language, and its importance in today's interconnected world cannot be overstated. The language teaching task is difficult one due to the diversity of the students, socio-cultural background, motivation, and interest, learning style, differing personalities and behaviour patterns. However, for many communities, particularly indigenous tribes, learning English as a foreign language presents unique challenges and barriers that must be addressed. This paper aims to explore these barriers and the teaching strategies that can be employed to overcome them. By understanding the experiences and perspectives of tribal communities in their journey to acquire English language skills, educators can design more effective and culturally responsive approaches to teaching English as a foreign language.

Key words: Indigenous tribes, Linguistic challenges, Interests, Socio-cultural background

Introduction

One significant barrier to English language learning for tribals is the lack of exposure and access to quality educational resources. Many tribal communities reside in remote rural areas where there are limited schools and resources available for language learning. The lack of schools and qualified English teachers further exacerbates the problem, as students are often left with self-study or rely on underqualified teachers. Additionally, the dearth of appropriate textbooks and educational materials in tribal languages further hampers the learning process. This lack of exposure and access to English language learning opportunities puts tribals at a disadvantage when it comes to acquiring proficiency

in the language. Without proper resources and support, it becomes challenging for tribals to develop their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in English. Therefore, addressing this barrier requires the implementation of targeted strategies to provide tribals with access to quality educational resources and qualified instructors.

Barriers to English Language Learning for Tribals

Another significant barrier faced when teaching English as a foreign language to tribal communities is the socio-cultural barriers that exist within these communities. Many tribal communities have distinct cultural norms and practices that may differ significantly from mainstream society. The

language and communication patterns used within these communities may also differ from standard English, making it challenging for tribal students to grasp and understand the foreign language. Additionally, these communities often have a strong attachment to their native language, which acts as a symbol of their cultural identity. This attachment to their mother tongue sometimes leads to a resistance or reluctance to learn English, as it may be seen as a threat to their cultural heritage. Therefore, it is crucial for teachers to approach language learning within tribal communities with sensitivity and respect for their cultural identity, while also providing the necessary support and resources to help bridge the gap between their native language and English.

I. Psychological Barriers

Low self-esteem and lack of confidence are two significant psychological barriers that tribals may face when learning English as a foreign language. Due to historical marginalization and discrimination, tribals may internalize negative stereotypes and develop a sense of inferiority. Consequently, their confidence in their language abilities, including English, can be severely compromised. This lack of belief in themselves and their abilities can hinder their motivation to learn and participate actively in language learning activities. Moreover, low self-esteem can contribute to anxiety and fear of making mistakes, further deteriorating their language acquisition process. Addressing these psychological barriers is essential to foster a positive learning environment that promotes self-confidence and self-efficacy among tribal learners. Implementing learner-centred approaches, providing individual feedback, and emphasizing a growth mindset can help tribals develop a sense of competence and agency in their language learning journey.

Low Self-esteem and Confidence

Another psychological barrier faced by tribals in learning English as a foreign language is the fear of making mistakes. Due to their limited exposure to English and lack of confidence in their language skills, tribals are often afraid of making errors while speaking or writing in English. This fear can be

attributed to factors such as the fear of judgment or embarrassment from others, as well as a desire to maintain their native language and culture. Consequently, the fear of making mistakes can hinder their progress in learning English, as they may avoid practicing or engaging in English conversations altogether. This fear of making mistakes can restrict their linguistic development and prevent them from fully embracing and mastering the English language. Therefore, it is essential for educators and language programs to create a supportive and non-judgmental learning environment that encourages tribals to overcome their fear of making mistakes and take risks in their language learning journey.

Fear of Making Mistakes

The psychological barriers faced by tribals in learning English as a foreign language are complex and ingrained in their cultural and educational backgrounds. Self-doubt, fear of failure, and lack of motivation are some of the main factors that hinder their progress in learning English. Additionally, the lack of resources and support from educational institutions further exacerbates these barriers. However, it is important to recognize that these barriers can be overcome with appropriate interventions and support systems. By providing tribals with access to quality education, tailored teaching methodologies, and encouraging their cultural identities, we can empower them to learn English successfully. Furthermore, promoting a positive learning environment that fosters a sense of belonging, acceptance, and self-confidence will go a long way in overcoming these psychological barriers. It is essential that government bodies, educational institutions, and communities work together to address these challenges and ensure equal opportunities for tribal communities in acquiring English language skills.

II. Socio-cultural Barriers

Another common barrier that often arises in teaching English as a foreign language for tribals is the linguistic barrier. Many tribal communities possess their own unique languages and dialects, which differ greatly from the English language. This poses a significant challenge for both the students and the teachers. Firstly, the students may struggle

with understanding and acquiring a new language that is completely different from their mother tongue. It can be overwhelming for them to comprehend the unfamiliar grammatical structures, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Additionally, the teachers may face difficulties in finding appropriate teaching materials and resources that cater to the specific needs of tribal students. Without adequate resources, it becomes arduous to effectively teach and explain English concepts to the students. Therefore, addressing the linguistic barriers requires innovative teaching strategies that can accommodate the diverse linguistic backgrounds of tribal students.

III. Linguistic Barriers

One of the major educational barriers faced by tribals in learning English as a foreign language is the lack of access to quality educational resources. Many tribal communities are located in remote areas with limited or no access to schools or educational institutions. This lack of infrastructure deprives them of the basic learning opportunities needed to develop their English language skills. Additionally, the availability and quality of textbooks, teaching materials, and technology are often inadequate or non-existent in these areas. Without access to modern learning resources, tribals encounter difficulties in acquiring a strong foundation in English. As a result, the language barrier becomes even more significant, impeding their progress in education and creating a wider educational disparity between tribal and non-tribal communities. To overcome this barrier, educators and policymakers must prioritize the provision of adequate educational resources, including well-trained teachers, textbooks, and technology, to ensure equal opportunities for tribals in mastering English as a foreign language.

IV. Educational Barriers

Teaching strategies for English language learning for tribals are critical in overcoming the barriers that they face in acquiring the language. One effective strategy is the use of context and real-life situations to enable authentic learning experiences. Tribals often have limited exposure to the English language outside the classroom, which

makes it challenging for them to understand and apply the language in their daily lives. By incorporating authentic materials and situational exercises, such as role-playing or field trips, educators can help bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world application. Additionally, employing a student-centred approach that incorporates their cultural background and interests can enhance their motivation to learn. Teachers can integrate tribal customs, traditions, and stories into their lessons, providing a sense of pride and relevance for the students. Furthermore, incorporating multimedia resources, such as videos or audio recordings, can cater to different learning styles and enhance comprehension. By utilizing these teaching strategies, educators can create an inclusive and engaging environment that supports tribals in their English language learning journey.

V. Teaching Strategies for English Language Learning for Tribals

Incorporating cultural context in teaching is crucial when it comes to effectively teaching English as a foreign language for tribals. Often, tribals have a unique cultural background and may possess different beliefs, practices, and values compared to the dominant culture. By incorporating their cultural context, educators can make learning more relatable, engaging, and meaningful for the tribal students. One way to achieve this is by integrating cultural elements, such as folktales, traditional songs, and indigenous knowledge, into the teaching materials and activities. This approach not only fosters a sense of pride and identity among the tribal students but also promotes a deeper understanding of the language and its cultural nuances. Additionally, teachers must be sensitive and respectful towards the cultural differences and ensure that their teaching strategies align with the students' cultural context. For instance, incorporating group discussions and collaborative learning, which are often valued in tribal communities, can enhance student participation and learning outcomes. Overall, by incorporating cultural context in teaching, educators can create a more inclusive and effective English language learning environment for tribals.

VI. Incorporating Cultural Context in Teaching

Promoting active learning and participation is crucial when teaching English as a foreign language to tribal students due to the unique challenges they face. One barrier that often hinders their learning is the lack of exposure to English outside the classroom. To overcome this obstacle, teachers can incorporate real-life situations and interactive activities into their lessons. For example, they can organize field trips to local markets or arrange for guest speakers who can engage the students in authentic English conversations. Additionally, creating a supportive and inclusive classroom environment is essential for promoting active learning and participation. Teachers should encourage students to voice their opinions, ask questions, and engage in group discussions. By doing so, students feel empowered and motivated to actively participate in their own learning, leading to a more effective language acquisition process.

VII. Promoting Active Learning and Participation

In addressing the linguistic challenges faced by tribal students in learning English as a foreign language, it is essential for teachers to adopt innovative strategies that cater to the specific needs of these learners. One such strategy is the use of bilingual materials and translanguaging techniques. By incorporating the students' native language into the classroom, teachers can provide a bridge between their familiar language and the target language, facilitating comprehension and retention of English vocabulary and grammar.

This approach not only acknowledges the value of the students' mother tongue but also empowers them to utilize their linguistic resources to enhance their English language skills. Additionally, teachers can encourage collaborative learning activities that promote peer-to-peer interaction. These activities can include group discussions, debates, and presentations, where students can support and learn from one another while improving their speaking and listening skills. Moreover, the integration of technology, such as language learning apps and interactive online platforms, can further engage and motivate tribal students in their English language acquisition journey. By equipping teachers

with the necessary tools and strategies, linguistic challenges can be effectively addressed, enabling tribal students to navigate the obstacles posed by learning English as a foreign language.

VIII. Addressing Linguistic Challenges

One of the strategies that can help overcome the barriers faced in teaching English as a foreign language for tribals is providing individualized support. Each learner has unique needs and learning styles, and it is essential to tailor instruction to meet these specific requirements. Individualized support can involve personalized attention, additional resources, and differentiated instruction. For instance, teachers can provide one-on-one tutoring sessions to address specific difficulties or offer extra practice materials that cater to the different learning preferences of students. Furthermore, teachers can adapt their teaching methods to accommodate the diverse backgrounds and abilities of the tribal students. By providing individualized support, teachers can ensure that every student receives the necessary assistance to overcome barriers and achieve success in learning English as a foreign language.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that there are several barriers to effective English language teaching among tribal communities. Lack of previous exposure to the language, limited resources, and cultural differences all contribute to the challenges faced by both teachers and students. However, with the implementation of appropriate teaching strategies, such as incorporating tribal languages and cultures into the curriculum and utilizing visual aids and technology, these barriers can be overcome. It is crucial for educators to understand the unique needs and backgrounds of tribal students and tailor their teaching practices accordingly. Additionally, ongoing support and professional development opportunities for teachers are essential to enhance their skills and knowledge in this specific context. By addressing these barriers and implementing effective teaching strategies, we can ensure that tribal students have equal opportunities to succeed in learning English as a foreign language.

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