TOWARDS 'CONTEXT – IDEA - CONNOTATIONS' (CIC) IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

The decolonizing process can be applied in the field of English language teaching as well. Most of the teaching pedagogies for the teaching of English are imported/borrowed from the classrooms that have been designed keeping English native speakers as subjects, and most of the time they were suitable for that very context . Borrowing the teaching methodologies, that are designed keeping the culture of a country having English as mother tongue, is not relatable for the English learners in India. An active participation for the understanding and teaching of English requires thinking over the perspective of 'Context-Idea-Connotations' (CIC) model. It is a kind of encompassing model that can produce best results when it is furnished with all other associated factors. The present paper primarily focuses on associating culture in language teaching, and discusses the 'Context-Idea-Connotations' (CIC) pattern in Teaching English in 'glocal' context.
Key Words: *'Context-Idea-Connotations' (CIC) pattern, Postcolonialism, Decolonizing, Culture, ELT*

INTRODUCTION

In the postcolonial times, it has been calculated that non-native users of English comprise almost 35-40% of the English population. In the twenty first century India, English has come up more as an Indian language as far as its association with the new generation is concerned. In different contexts and cultures, English is used in various forms, generally acclaimed as the national uses of English, more like an Indian language, though not in its original form (Received Pronunciation). The supporters of this trend find it as a postcolonial device worked

out as 'Prospero Syndrome'. In the decolonizing process, the native speakers find indigenous aspiration as a major catalyst to provide a decolonizing ontology and semantics of the language of the colonizers. Most of the educated population in India believes in the patterns of 'glocalization'. It comes out as "chutnification" of English if we use Salman Rushdie's popular term. Devyani Chaubal, an Indian journalist and columnist has used the expression "Hinglish" for the postcolonial English in India. The uses and standards of "The King's English", in the current Indian milieu, most of the time, observe a mocking pattern of Baudrillard's   term "simulation" . The politics of relating English to place and land as a decolonized context has almost been completed, and new metaphors and lexicographic issues are on the anvil.

The Decolonizing process can be applied in the field of English language teaching as well. Most of the teaching pedagogies for the teaching of English have been imported/borrowed from the classroom that have been designed keeping English native speakers as receivers , and most of the time they were suitable in the contexts of European countries. Borrowing the teaching methodologies that have been designed as per the requirements of the European countries in general and a country with English as native speakers in particular , is not relatable *a propos to* the requirements of the English learners in India. An active participation for the understanding and teaching of English requires thinking over the perspective of 'Context---Idea---Connotations' (CIC)- a three in one encompassing model that gives the utmost result when it is furnished with all other associated or required factors. Its structure can better be displayed as below:
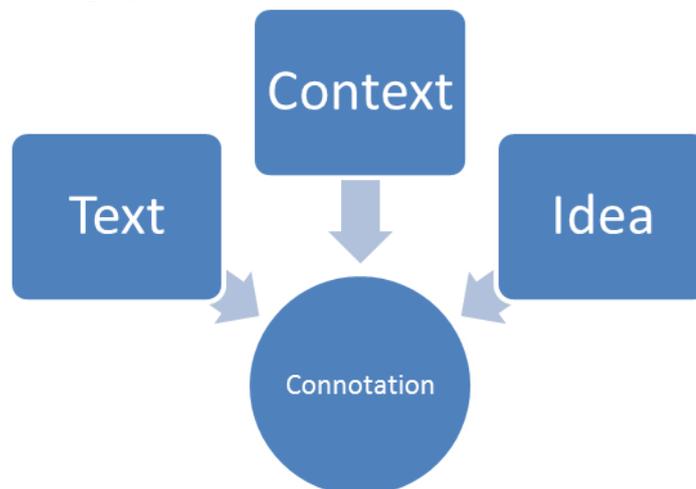
 It shows how the sustainable and comprehensive connotation comes up by the association of the text with the context and the idea. Most of the methods and techniques of teaching English have been drafted by the scholars in different ways for reaching   fruitful outcomes . If we compare the teaching methods with the patterns of democracy, like democracy, most of the times they prove blunt when 'Action part' is concerned. Thus methods have to be

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developed considering the contexts of the culture in which a student is to be taught. Developing a curriculum in English should not be the only concern of the educators and policy makers ,it should have proper logic and road map towards its application in the real context of our classrooms . In many cases we see that the aim of the language teaching in classroom is concerned to make the learners efficient enough to be able to comprehend, write and speak English. As a result , the students gain proficiency in language but in many cases the association lacks.

In the light of the above, the aim of the present paper is to discuss the patterns of associating culture in language teaching. To begin with, we can refer Brown when he states that, " a language is a part of a culture, and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture. In a word culture and language are inseparable."(Brown,165).The discussion in this paper focuses on dissociation of language and culture –In the process of 'deculturization' of language where many grey areas occur.

Culture	Religion
Identity	Geography
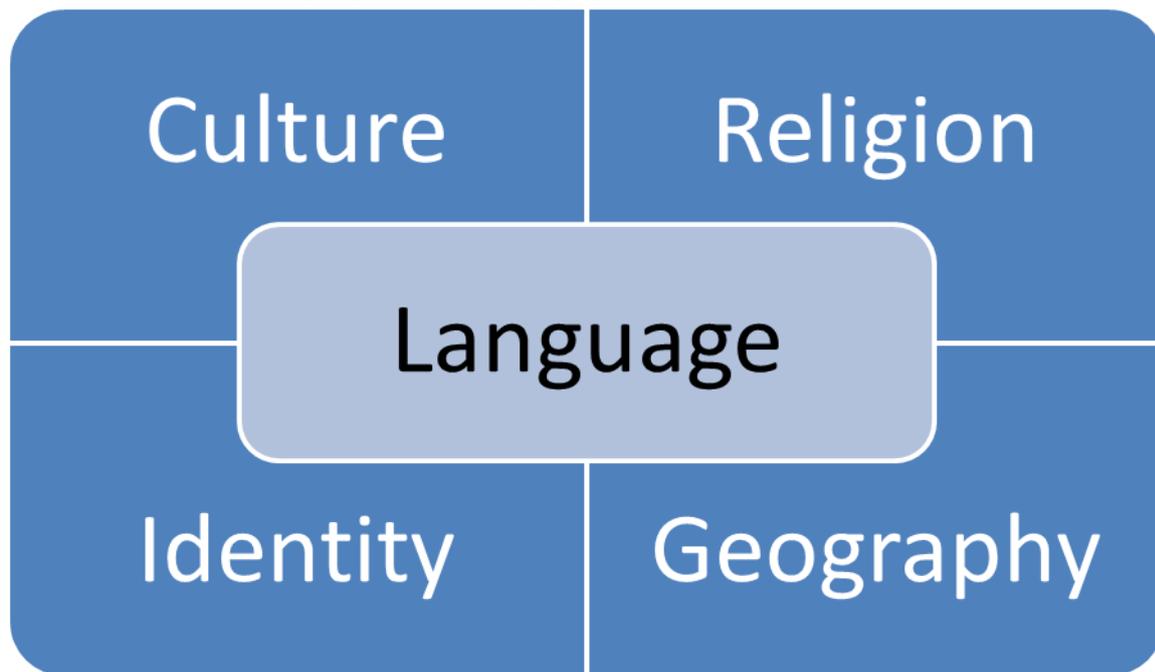
Language

As described in the above mentioned chart , language does not stand in isolation. It always carries forward the aspirations and urge of culture, identity, religion and geography of the region to which it belongs to . Every natural language of the world is associated with certain geographical, national and religious context. A language in its initial period of transfer always carries these issues with the culture of its native land ,although as it moves away in time and space , gradually it loses some of the initial features and traits , and simultaneously starts incorporating the traits of the speakers who employ and use it as a

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form of communication. Unfortunately when a language fades or dies, not only certain syntactic and semantic principles come to end, but the whole culture associated with that language comes to an end with it.

With the passage of time, day today aspirations and activities involved as part of classroom teaching open new vistas of observation for theory building in the area concerned. Many colonial and postcolonial critics and linguists ,to name a few, here, Edward Sapir, Raja Rao, Frantz Fanon, Samuel P. Huntington, Ngugi Wa Thing' O, Lord Macaulay, Mahatma Gandhi, Braj K. Kachru ,have defined the relationship between language and culture dexterously.

It has been realized that any system fails in the lack of an ideal situation .In such a scenario, it becomes a pandemonium. How does it become Pandemonium? In order to understand and answer I will talk about a relationship and theory building out of my own observation and interpretation on routine language communication. We have survived harsh times and have given birth to leading managers, and, therefore, technically I would incorporate the term MANAGEMENT FACTOR. That is TEACHER AS A MANAGER.

It has been a part of my observation and researches . I have surveyed more than a hundred trained English Language teachers during interactive sessions, as part of seminars and workshops, and also those who have been trained in various methods and device of teaching, as discussed above. I have realized that they have authentic command over pedagogical issues and pattern, but when it comes for the "contexts' call" for a different praxis, their trajectories squint out the idealism.

In the light of the above, the following questions have been often found as problem areas:

1. Do we need to decolonize the Pedagogy, and look for an Indigenous Approach?
2. If an Indigenous Approach , how far the Indigenous approach will work?
3. How far is it justified to teach language without the inclusion of the culture of the native speakers?
4. What should be done to maintain a balance between the international standards of the language and local aspirations?
5. Are we teaching Language to the Learner or the Learners are made for the Language?
6. Language is a means or an end?
7. Is the sole purpose of language is just Communication?

Continuing the above mentioned issues in discussion , it is always important to establish the teaching of English as per the requirement of the learner. For this purpose, if the students of two different understanding backgrounds sit together in a classroom, then 'Teacher has to

play the role of a Manager rather than an instructor' . Accepting the patterns of 'Negative Capability' is a prerequisite. For a ready reference , the term 'Negative Capability' is used by English poet John Keats in 1817 with reference to poetry. Appropriating it with reference to language teaching gives me avowed value in balancing the equation of teaching-learning situations specifically for the case of English Language. Why to limit it with English Language, in fact, any second language can gain value out of it. The teacher has to manage the inputs the student are bringing from their different backgrounds , and instead of asking the students to unlearn their previous knowledge, the teacher has to design the pedagogy in such a manner that the culture of the student acts as a catalyst in the language learning scenario. In this connection, a little bit attention, I will stretch towards T.S. Eliot's concept of 'objective co-relative', which I would interpret as 'right equation for the right emotions'. Since for the time being, we are discussing some big litterateurs of their time, proving suitable and appropriate to the current teaching-learning situation. Therefore, it has become the need of the discussion to make a fine balance and a fine tune in the synchronization of 'text' 'context' and 'co-relation'. The teacher in the classroom is required to co-relate the background knowledge of the student with the subject to be taught . The background of the learner is the context. The syllabus becomes the 'text'. The teacher should create such an environment in the classroom that the previous knowledge of the student is not contradictory, it should rather be contributory. Here comes the role of a teacher as manager. If the new text is contradicting with the context from which the student has come then the learning process will become quite a cumbersome process.

Experiencing the new English teaching-learning environment, it would be more appropriate to adapt ourselves as the need be. The following issues come to my mind in this regard.

1. It is the need of the hour when the bonds of linguistic hegemony are being broken. The twenty-first century has witnessed major shifts in the geopolitical contours of the world. ' In demographic distribution and cultural configuration never has been such a shuffling of people and shifting of boundaries, inter-twining of histories and overlapping of cultures as that seen in the last fifty years. The causes are far too many to be enumerated. These range from the Cultural Revolution in Europe, the dissolution of the USSR to the satellite networking and the world trade'. Consequently, all the cultures are intermixed, none single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous and specially blended.

2. Every culture retains something of its own identity, its own flavor, and distinctness. It is within this context that a rebuilding of cultural cartography has been at work ,of late. Nowhere is this phenomenon better articulated than in the language patterns and literatures of different people and regions.

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The association of language learning with culture and background knowledge of the society shall become a postcolonial approach. For the students of literature we have seen and referred *Panchdhatu Model* as proposed by Professor Harish Trivedi . It will lead towards a deconstructionist understanding. I am reminded of Pope's line that "style is the man." Going by Ngugi wa Thiong' O , we can say that a , "true national identity may be asserted only through the decolonization of minds which entails cultural and linguistic freedom." Thiang'O, further asserts that , "in my view language was the most important vehicle through which that power fascinated and held the soul prisoner .The bullet was the means of the physical subjugation. Language was the means of spiritual subjugation."(Thiang'O,265) . As mentioned by Ngugi, language plays a key role in subjugation of the mind but what subjugates is the culture which comes as an indispensable part of language. The role of a teacher, therefore, is to separate the two in a way that language does not get estranged from the culture of its origin but simultaneously does not subjugates its learner by imposing the culture of its origin.

Tracing the suitable pedagogical methods, as per the canonical patterns of teaching, is just like a situation in which translating a North Indian vernacular metaphor, I can point out to be a wooden cot getting wet and estranged in rains. And finally, I would infer that a successful teacher is to work as a Manager in the class with all the leadership skill tailored and appropriated.

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