



THE USE OF ENGLISH IN TAMIL NADU

K. BALASUBRAMANIAN

Assistant Professor of English,
V.S.B. Engineering College, Karur,
(TN) INDIA

ABSTRACT

As English is considered a Global or Universal language, it is not used by people in the same manner all over the world. The reason is there are different countries which have different languages. English is used as the first, the second and the third language. For the people of England, America and some other countries, English is the mother tongue. They are called the native speakers of English. For some countries like China, Russia, Japan, etc., English is the third language. For their internal communication or correspondence, they use the mother tongue for their communication. But they also learn English for communicating with foreign countries. So for those countries English is used as a foreign or the third language. English is used as the second language in India. In India, as it is a multilingual country, there are many languages used by the people. So in that situation, the people of the country need one common language for their internal communication and as well as their international correspondence. Though Hindi is used by many people in our country and it is also considered as the official language, it is not possible for all the people of our country to learn and use Hindi for various reasons. So in that situation, English is also used as an official language of our country. Let us discuss the use of the language English in the state of Tamil Nadu.

K. BALASUBRAMANIAN

1P a g e



General Status in Offices

English has got the second language status in Tamil Nadu. Tamil is the mother tongue of the state and it is generally used by most of the people in the state. Sometimes, English is used among the educated people in the urban areas. But in the big cities like Chennai, Coimbatore, etc., English is used by many people in their day to day communication. The language commonly used in government offices is Tamil. English is also used along with Tamil in the offices of the big cities. But in big corporate companies, English is the main language of communication.

Uses in public places

In restaurants, located in the rural and urban areas, Tamil is commonly used. In some of the restaurants and star hotels in the cities both Tamil and English are used. At the railway booking counters, ration shops, post offices, etc., Tamil is normally used. English is used occasionally in these places. If it is necessary or there is a need to communicate with an outsider English is used. When the people of our state meet other state people, we use English based on the level of their knowledge either fluently or just convey the ideas or details in a few words.

A person in the street very rarely uses English and understands it with difficulty. When the people approach and ask him/her anything like address or enquire the details about some places, he/she will speak in English occasionally but not fluently. The auto drivers never use English. It is quite common in the cities also. The shopkeepers in the cities understand English but feel difficulty to communicate in English. At the same time, some educated auto drivers and shopkeepers who are able to answer in English with some words but not fluently.

Role of English in Medias

Nearly 60% of people read Tamil newspapers and 40% of people read English newspapers. Forty percent of people in the urban areas read the newspapers bilingual.

Advertisements in television both Tamil and English are used. For example, some products like soaps, shampoos and other beauty products which are advertised in English. Generally, English is used in advertisements about academic details, Multi-National business, etc., This is the case for the advertisements in Newspapers and Magazines also.

Most of the people prefer to watch Tamil programmes in television. Some people want to watch

K. BALASUBRAMANIAN

2P a g e



English movies, English web series and other programmes. Majority of the people want to watch the Tamil News but a very few and educated people are interested in watching English News. The English news in Doordharshan, BBC News and a few other private channels are very popular among people because of their authenticity and standardity. They do not have any difficulty in understanding the language English.

In Courts

As English is considered in the court language in the second language setting, Most of the cases are dealt with in Tamil language in Sub-Courts and Sessions Courts. Some of the lawyers are interested in dealing with the cases in English.

Importance of English in Education

English medium schools are very popular in Tamil Nadu. Most of the parents want to send their wards to a convent or matriculation schools. They feel that their children will have better opportunities in life, if they study in English medium schools. Even the poor people from rural areas spend a lot of amount for their children to study in English medium schools. But many people send their children to government or Tamil medium schools because of their poor financial condition. In these schools' fees are very minimum. But some of the Tamil medium schools are also giving importance to the language English.

English is widely used for educational purposes in Matriculation and public schools, colleges and institution providing higher education. There are some colleges and technical institutions in which they use both Tamil and English as a medium of institution and they are always emphasized to teach only in English in the class. Oratorical and Essay competitions are often conducted in most of the institutions in all over the state in order to improve the language skills of English. Students response to these activities is really good and appreciable. Some schools and colleges are establishing a communication lab also. Motivational speeches, special lectures, workshops in improving language skills are also often arranged. They have formed English club for promoting and exhibiting the hidden skills of the language of students to the world.

In Business and other Events

At conferences, meetings and private offices and big hotels English is normally used. English is used by educated people for communicating with other state/country people. Generally in most of

K. BALASUBRAMANIAN

3 Page



the public, political, social, cultural meetings and religious discourses, Tamil is highly preferable than English.

An overall view of the use of English in the state shows that it is good in the state. People are very much interested to know English. They take more effort to learn English. People feel proud and honour to speak in English in the society.

This is about the use of the language in the state of Tamil Nadu.

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