

# Language as A Strong Medium of Social Communication: A Perspective



**Sumant Kumar Jha**

Assistant Professor  
Deptt. of English,  
P.P.K. College,  
Bundu, Ranchi  
India

## Abstract

This article aims to understand the function of language as a profound medium of expression inherent in all human beings to share and express themselves in a particular socio-cultural panorama. As words are vital for sending and receiving messages similarly language is necessary to express the emotions. It is means of conveying ideas. Not only the verbal communication reflects the ideas and thoughts but the non-verbal mode of communication is equally significant to convey a message to the larger audience. This article further tries to explore the role of language in the academic sphere where the pupils learn the attributes and aspects of language to become a good communicator. The paper also emphasizes the importance of language and communication skills for grooming a personality and the effect it creates upon the social members. Language, a social phenomenon helps the speakers to communicate by virtue of their participation in the system of codified values. These values are learned by an individual in the process of language learning. Communication and language are complimentary to each other where the primary aims to connect and express effectively and the latter provides all necessary tools for the same. An effective communication is the backbone of all civilized society. It has also been highlighted in the article that the relationship between individuals in society is the dimension of communication which further establishes the link between language and thought in the individual's linguistic act which serves as the dimension of expression.

**Keywords:** Language Dynamics, Effective Communication, Non-Verbal expression, Social Influence.

## Introduction

Language is important to human's daily-life since they have to communicate with others. With globalizing economic environment, language is vital for any business or professional success. Some may analyze the notion of national identity through it, but it is somehow mistakenly overlooking the usage of language, which is closely linked with communication. The medium for people to communicate is, whether written or spoken, languages. The primary function of languages is undoubtedly to facilitate interaction among people who may or may not come from different cultural background.

The basic structure of Language allows the concepts to expand its horizon. It provides us the power to think and utilize it in our day to day cores. Since a man is dumb without a language hence language enhances the ideas and thoughts to such an extent that it is not possible to practice any event of affair in our lives. In the normal transaction of words we are unable to resist and reframe our ideas skillfully and strongly in the absence of language.

The more significant role of language is witnessed in our social and personal behavior. Man is a social animal and as such an intrinsic part of the social fabric. Therefore his direct engagement with various other subjects cannot be denied. In this context John Delamater remarks, "social psychology, including exchange, bargaining, justice, socialization, deviance, health, ethnic relations, and collective behavior, necessarily involve interactive speech processes, which makes language use perhaps the most basic of social psychological phenomena."<sup>1</sup>This idea takes the lead in all academic spheres because language is not only a mode of communication but it is also a storehouse of various other actions and activities. Performing daily activities includes numerous actions such as debating, scolding, quarrelling, demanding, thanking, greeting etc.

The dimension of language is dynamic. It connects, illustrates, expresses and proposes an individual's thoughts and ideas. It has a huge

capacity to influence, rectify and change the world. Communication is the very base of existence without which an individual cannot climb the ladder of perfection. Language is a medium of expression where sounds or signs convey objects, actions and ideas. Although language may change from region to region, country to countryside but the communication still persists. This happens due to the impact of mother-tongue.

Human beings are distinguished from other animals by the virtue of their language skills and communication. Language in primarily spoken not written. But the development of the writing medium and later the printing system went a long way is the dissipation of knowledge and without which humans would have remained in the dark about the ways of life and the thought processes of their ancestors. Language is the key to human life.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

This paper aims to improve both the insight of language learning and the communication skills for the researchers and readers. It highlights the significance of using language for all communications along with the personality development of an individual. From a theoretical perspective an integrated approach to language education reinforces the links between language and such general aims as education for active, responsible participatory citizenship and personal growth. Verbal and non-verbal communication is a crucial link between the people and represents the fundamental link in the formation and survival of the human community. It separates a man from other living beings and allows him to express his thoughts, feelings, desires, wishes and attitudes about the world around him. Although there are various ways of communication (facial expressions, writing, music etc.), speech is the most effective way of expressing the most complex ideas and concepts and the most resistant communication system to various types of interference and noise. Similarly non-verbal communication is a vital mode of communication which includes paralanguage, facial expression, eye contact and visual behavior, gesture and body movement, and space.

Language has a larger perspective and a wider canvas than merely communicating. It is centralized on all our social and personal behavior which marks a deeper influence on our cognitive and social development. Language creates our identity and gives recognition to one. It is rather a key to the prison. It can be traced right from the birth of a child that as he grows gradually, he starts attaining the language from the social surroundings without much trouble. He learns while playing with his friends or while shopping. He doesn't have to make much effort learning his language. Hence, his physical and mental growth goes parallel with language learning.

Along with the natural growth the child learn the basic etiquettes of life. Language in this concern is an important factor to teach openness, makes him socially adaptable with his fellow mates and also moulds his personality to better understand the other languages spoken at a few occasions in and around his social circle. As a result the develops a competence over other languages that may not be a

part of his regular domain. Moreover, this competence is also attained by him through literature as this provides an important gateway to further understanding and contemplation of human characters, situations and moral dilemmas. In the meanwhile, a child starts gaining a superiority of the common gestures used in day to day life which sharpens his skills of communication over a period of time.

#### **Review of Literature**

The Language research literature relates to the communication skills which eventually encompass the Verbal skills and Non-Verbal skills. It illustrates that the subject has received substantial interest in studying. It has been studied from the psychological aspect, sociological aspect and professional aspect by various researchers. The present study focuses on the empirical study that focus on the concepts of the development of verbal skills and the non-verbal skills which are helpful to understand the core concept of social communication and interaction. The research studies the concepts relevant to the present study.

The learning of language and its effective use in the social as well as professional sphere has not been a new idea but there have been various researches in this particular domain in the recent years. Communication skills not only depend on verbal communication but non-verbal as well. To many, non-verbal communication may take a back seat to verbal communication. It is often overlooked and may be deemed unimportant. However this aspect of communication speaks volumes. Non-verbal communication includes looking, smiling, touching, frowning or expressions of surprise.

Seiler & Beall has defined communication as sharing and giving meaning occurring at the same time through symbolic interactions. Communication has been said to start when a message or information is transferred from the sender (the speaker, writer) to the receiver (listener, reader) through an instrument or channel, and followed by the receiver giving feedback (coding and interpreting the information). Based on these definitions, elements of communication include the person giving the information, the information and feedback by the receiver, and the repetition of these processes creates knowledge development.<sup>2</sup> It was found that a positive communication environment provides opportunities to students to learn how to communicate, and thus, have better communication skills. Therefore, students need to be given opportunities to communicate in order to be better prepared for the job market after their studies. Communication is more effective if the receiver (of the information) can understand and practice the skills.

Further, communication will be more meaningful if the physical, spiritual and social factors are taken into account during the communication process. As a student who is getting ready to start on their chosen career, he or she should take the opportunity in any activities that developed communication skills in a wider and complete aspect so that communication skills can be fully developed. There are many types of communication skills, but generally it involves oral and written skills. There are essentially three types of communication, which are

## *Remarking An Analisation*

interpersonal communication, management communication (communication in a group), and public communication (speech making). The process of communication generally involves four elements, which are the speaker, the receiver, communication channel and feedback. A few researchers have defined communication as verbal communication, written communication, non-verbal communication, listening and giving feedback.

At the same time, Penbek, Yurdakul, & Cerit, in 2009, proposes that communication as a non-verbal skill, giving feedback, presenting ideas verbally and in written form, doing presentations and negotiating to achieve a goal and getting support/agreement. In our globalized world, university students need to master communication skills in different cultural contexts. They even propose that university students be exposed to activities that can develop their communication skills starting from their first year at university. Hence, universities must provide many more activities to develop the students' communication skills in order to meet the challenges of the globalized world.<sup>3</sup>

### **Main Thrust**

Language is an identity. It is the basic criteria to development. All the civilizations that have flourished in this world have taken the aid of this powerful weapon. Language made it possible to interact, express the ideas and thoughts and it helped human beings to exchange their ideas whenever it was necessary to express themselves. It is one of the most vital means of sharing concepts and plans in the normal intercourse. Language is an element of social interaction and is therefore social in nature. It is also inter-connected with the human beings so much so that it is nearly impossible to separate any one. Language refines and develops together with the growth of human. Stalin observes about language, "It arises and develops with the rise and development of a society. It dies when the society dies. Apart from society there is no language."<sup>4</sup>

Undoubtedly, language is considered as a strong means of conveying thoughts and ideas as verbal mode whereas gestures, postures and signs cover the non-verbal mode. For instance, the teacher staring a child in the examination hall, nodding the head instead of speaking word, keeping finger on the lips instead of saying 'keep quiet'. Although language is different from gestures and signs because it employs sound and is understood by both the speaker and the listener.

It is the sound which makes the language unique when uttered deliberately. There are occasions where it has the elements of strong emotions and is uttered intentionally to captivate the attention. Such sounds which are mechanically and intentionally uttered are under the influence of ecstasy, fear, rage or astonishment. Language has two basic aspects, the inner related to the meaning one wishes to express, and the outer one which is related to the expression of that meaning through the medium of speech. In the normal communication words are used which serve as outer symbols of the ideas in the minds. Therefore a spoken language system of arbitrary vocal symbols through which

human beings communicate and express their ideas to their social mates.

Language is dynamic and is considered as a significant means of communication. The sound

uttered by an individual gains importance only when it is clearly interpreted and understood by others. Thus an individual is solely responsible for the development of language for which reliance and dependence on the social members and cooperation from the society is sought. According to R.L. Varshney, "Language is the species-specific and species-uniform possession of man. It is God's special gift to mankind. Language is ubiquitous. It is present everywhere, in thoughts and dreams, prayers and meditations, relations and communications and rituals. Besides being a means of communication and store-house of knowledge, it is an instrument of thinking as well as a source of delight (e.g. singing). Language dissipates superfluous nervous energy, directs motion in others, both men and animals, set matter in motion as in charms and incantations, transfers knowledge from one person to another and from one generation to another. Language is also the maker or destroyer of human relationships. It is the use of language that makes a life bitter or sweet."<sup>5</sup>

Hence society serves the key element in developing the language and the individual. Man is social animal and by the virtue of his traits he imbibes social norms, tradition and culture. In establishing and maintaining relationships with other people, language is an essential element. Any communication is possible only when they have a language and they know how to interpret and understand. Communication between two individuals results in collecting information to both the speaker and the listener. Without the proper language conventions there would be no conversation or communication as language empowers them to express their sentiments and emotions, fear, anxiety and joy. In this context, Edward Sapir has defined language as "a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols."<sup>6</sup>

Undoubtedly, it is the power of speech which distinguishes human beings from other species. Although animals too have their own language which is produced to express rage, love, fear and happiness but they have not developed the speech so far. Furthermore, the animal communication is mechanical and stereotyped where there is no scope for creativity at all. On the contrary, human beings are the most creative beings on earth and therefore using a few basic principles of construction they create endless number of constructions. The language of human beings is referred to as an open-ended system where there is a large perspective of combining signals in multiple ways. In this regard, George Puttenham proposes that, "After a speech is fully fashioned to the common understanding and accepted by consent of a whole country and nation, it is called a language."<sup>7</sup>

Language is considered as an important tool of communication. At the same time language is multi-dimensional and thus every emotions and ideas of the social members can be attained

## Remarking An Analisation

through the mastery of language. It also serves multiple purposes. Language functions differently to serve the desired purpose of that particular field. In other words, language has various purposes to meet depending largely on the ways of its usage. For instance, the language of Science is different from the language of media and journalism, a political speech is entirely different from a prayer. An academic lecture is different from informal interaction. Thus, language functions differently on different occasions, serving various purposes.

As human beings progressed gradually the language developed. Without the development of language, humans would not have attained linguistic competence. Thus language is used for linguistic communication. Development of society and language goes hand in hand and in the absence of any the civilization would not have developed. Language is versatile and is used to inform and communicate various thoughts and ideas, aspirations and life experiences to the other social members. Language marks the identity of an individual and is also one of the vital basis of existence of human beings. It is through the use of language that an individual is distinguished from one another. As language is evolving similarly society is growing and getting refined day by day. In this context S. P. Corder aptly remarks, "Language is thus seen as a part of human psychology, a particular sort of behaviour, the behaviour which has as its principle function that of communication."<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, Language is not merely a tool of communication but it constitutes a world view by arranging and rearranging sense of social norms and its variance in humans into meaningful units. Through language culture is carried and culture is witnessed in every literature which teaches men to imbibe values in them. Language forms significant part of literature to impart culture and values to its greater audience. Literature reflects life of the past and present but without language it would not have reached the target audience. It is through literature that the human beings perceive various aspects of life – politics, economics, social growth and cultural development. David Crystal has said, "Language is the repository of the history of a people. It is their identity, such as oral testimony in the form of sagas, folktales, songs, rituals etc. Proverbs, and many other practices, provides us with a unique view of our world and a unique canon of literature."<sup>9</sup>

It is a quite evident fact that language unites and ties an individual to the other. It gives a sense of individuality, uniqueness, sense of nationalism and a carrier of culture. It enables an individual with a sense to observe and understand the world. It gives a vision and outlook to perceive reality. Thus language is a whole institution itself which shapes and redefines the society and in turn the society helps it groom day by day. In this context N. Fairclough remarks, "Language is a social institution, both shaping and shaped by society at large, or in particular the cultural niches in which it plays an important role. Language is not an autonomous construct but social practice both creating and created by the structures and forces of

the social institutions within which men live and function."<sup>10</sup>

### Conclusion

If language is not the creator of our society, it definitely is the developer of the society. Language is the means of growth and natural existence. It is responsible for spreading culture and dialect from one region to the other, from one society to the other. It is thus the flag-bearer of brotherhood and social unity, inspite of various dialects in the world.

It is witnessed that in every sphere of life where we encounter various persons with different professional backgrounds sharing their ideas with one another. There are doctors, political speakers, barbers, teachers and journalists who share their ideas with all other speakers of a particular dialect. As a result, men exchange and learn various other traditions, cultures, ethnicities and perpetuate this for the growth of the society. This in turn upgrade and redefine our lifestyles. Since the society is basis of human existence, it relies greatly in various modes of communication in the form of language.

Language not only constitutes the verbal medium of communication but non-verbal as well. Most of the time an individual uses the latter mode of communication which includes signs, symbols and gestures. There has been a great development in these signs as well along with the growth of human intelligence and learning. Even the societal relationships have strengthened a great deal with the exchange of common conversations and ideas in day to day life. Thus language plays an important role in building and developing the interpersonal relation and the intra-personal relationship in the society.

Language is therefore a key element for the development and growth of human beings. It can easily rule out the confusion and misunderstanding between two individuals. In this context A.S. Diamond remarks, language is "the necessary means of communion; it is the one indispensable instrument for creating the ties of the moment without which unified social action is impossible."<sup>11</sup>

Language is an inseparable part of human beings and thus said to be the core of human growth and development. It is the flesh and bone of human society. Just as it is not possible to survive without air and water similarly it is impossible to develop without language. Communication is very necessary for the growth and progress of the society which is a vital form of language.

Hence, language is beneficial for the society to prosper and bloom. It is therefore a vital organ of the society in the absence of which the social members can never be able to share their views, ideas and thoughts to other in order to help society evolve. Language is the backbone of any society and definitely the growth of human beings rely solely on it.

### References

- Cleland, J., Foster, K., & Moffat, M. (2005). *Undergraduate students' attitudes to communication skills learning differ depending on year of study and gender*. 2005 .pp.246-251.

## *Remarking An Analisation*

- Corder, S. P.: *Introducing Applied Linguistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 1985.p.22.
- Crystal, David.: *English as a Global Language*. Cambridge University Press.: Cambridge. Second edition, 2003, p. 20.
- Delamater, John.: *Handbook of Social Psychology*. New York: Springer Science+Business Media. 2006. Pp. 252.
- Diamond, A.S.: *The History and Origin of Language*. Methuen and Co. Ltd.: London. 1959. p.12
- Fairclough, N.: *Language and Power*. Longman: London. 1989.p.6.
- Penbek, S., Yurdakul, & D., Cerit, A. G.: *Intercultural communication competence: A study about the intercultural sensitivity of students based on their education and international experiences*. 2009. pp.37.

- Puttenham, George.: *The Arte of English Poesie*. (Ch 3-4), *Of Language*. Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Library.p. 120.
- Stalin, J.V.: *Marxism and Problems of Linguistics*. Foreign Language Press: Peking. 1976. p.20.
- Seiler, W. J., & Beall, M. L.: *Communication: Making connections* (6th. ed). Boston: Allyn & Bacon. *Medical Teacher* 27(3).2005. pp.114-117.
- Sapir, Edward.: *Language: An Introduction to the Study of Speech*. Harcourt, Brace and Company: New York. 1921. p.7.
- Varshney, Radhey L.: *An Introductory Textbook of Linguistics and Phonetics*. Student Store: Bareilly. 1998. p. 12.