

IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN TN STUDENTS

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Abstract

A concern for students' inability to adequate writing skills and their inability to communicate effectively even after long years of schooling, led to taking up of this study. The thesis was an attempt to find out reasons for learners' failure in becoming proficient in written communication. The primary intention of the study was to investigate into and analyze ways of teaching writing skills in the secondary level of the selected vernacular medium schools and devise strategies of improving writing skills among the learners. This was attempted by trying to generate awareness about the importance of writing skills in the learners. Perception on what writing process is, what are the difficulties involved in the process and what leads to ineffective teaching and learning conditions were concerns taken up for investigation in the study.

Keywords: *English language, higher education, internationalization, modern technology.*

INTRODUCTION:

The task of teaching writing lies mainly in the hands of teachers. The writing ability of students of the secondary level can be improved only if the right kind of curriculum and guidance in the form of tasks and teaching of skills is provided. While current research has not provided a specific formula, nevertheless it suggests important insights that can influence the teaching of writing at the secondary level. Language development can be promoted when writing is taught purposefully and communicatively.

There is a fall in the acquisition of the English language both at the secondary level (school) and Intermediate level (college), the root cause being the earlier school background of these students. The geographical and social background of the learners apart, the teachers is also handicapped by want of a methodology of teaching the language. The teachers of the government and the government aided schools do not have proper training and fail in teaching the language skills. These teachers fail in using the texts for the benefit of the students. And the result is that the learners of the conventional class rooms where the text book is the centre fail in participating in the learning process because they fail in coping with the process of learning the language.

Though ideology of language teaching has acquired a new orientation, where emphasis is given to the teaching of the language skills the tendency is found to be only theoretically evident in syllabi introduced by SEBT since 1986. But this awareness is not reflected in the actual teaching situation prevailing in the majority of the vernacular medium schools of Tamilnadu, under the jurisdiction of SEBA. In real classroom teaching, summarizing of the prescribed texts and teaching of the rules of the formal grammar take place.

Education received at each level has an impact on the next level. A strong foundation at the primary level would definitely help in the students' performances at the tertiary level.

The reason for poor performance has been attributed to lack of trained teachers, faulty teacher selection process leading to poor school management, ineffective language components in the texts etc. One of the major

objectives of teacher training programmes is to equip teachers with the necessary skills to identify some of the challenges in their classrooms, and also to find suitable solutions. With a view to offer quality education in the secondary schools of Tamilnadu, the Government of Tamilnadu has amended the Tamilnadu Secondary. The government by recently accepting the regulation set by National Council for Teachers Education and making Teachers' Eligibility Test mandatory in selection of primary and middle school teachers have taken a right step towards the empowering of the learners. It is hoped that the state government's recent decision of recruiting trained and competent teachers in the primary level will pave the way for the creation of a healthy learning environment in the vernacular medium schools run by the state board of Tamilnadu.

Another noticeable development is the move towards standardization of curriculum of all the subjects at the school level across the state. This has been happening ever since 'Education' has moved into concurrent list and NCERT has been taking special effort in this process of standardization. In Tamilnadu, SEB (Secondary Education Board of Tamilnadu) and Tamilnadu Higher Secondary Council have been initiating the work of systematic curriculum review. Here arises the need of discussing the challenges faced while helping the socially disadvantaged vernacular medium students in coping with this standardization. For these learners successes in learning English have been elusive in spite of many years of teaching the subject, which impacts upon their morale.

The role played and initiative taken by the State Government in formulating the educational policies and specifically in framing the English syllabi needs to be analysed and debated upon. Government has framed National Council of Education Research and Training (NCERT) to develop the curriculum framework for enhancing the English proficiency of the student to meet the global competition. NCERT helps the Government to take decisions on implementing new policies and major program in the field of education, especially in school education. The NCERT framework of English Language Learning is well arranged, well constructed, well designed and well thought out. It provides a holistic perspective on acquiring of English language. In spite of that investigations have revealed that inadequacies in the acquisition of the language skills specified by the NCERT syllabus exist among disadvantaged vernacular medium students in Tamilnadu. The factors leading to these inadequacies could be lack of implementation of effective tools and technologies inside classroom, socio-economic background of the students etc. So the mismatches that exist between the curriculum requirement and the student outcome at the end of the class needs to be well researched. The conclusion drawn is that haphazard introduction of the NCERT syllabi at different levels have left the teachers and students perplexed. Bell (1983) claims that teachers are, in the main, consumers of other people's syllabuses; in other words their role is to implement the plans of applied linguists, government agencies, and so on. It is hoped that the state government's decision of recruiting trained and competent teachers in the primary level will pave the way for the creation of a healthy learning environment in the vernacular medium schools run by the state board of Tamilnadu.

Change in the Education sector can be brought about only by paying attention to the 'teacher factor' and bringing about a curriculum review by keeping in mind the language capabilities of the concerned students. Efforts should be directed towards the improvement of teacher education which could be brought about through upgrading curricula, providing in-service education, utilizing modern educational technologies, encouraging experimentation, innovations and above all, improving service conditions of teachers as well as teacher educators at various levels. Teacher education institutions have to be provided with adequate and appropriate resources - human, physical and academic for meeting successfully the new challenges of the emerging society. Trained teachers will be able to help learners in the acquisition of language skills. Only then we will be able to come closer to Prabhu's (1987) dream of a good system of education which is not one in which all or most teachers carry out the same recommended classroom procedures but rather a system in which all, or most teachers operate with a sense of plausibility about whatever procedures they choose to adopt and each teacher's sense of plausibility is as 'alive' or active, and hence as open to further development or change as it can be.

In today's global world and with the help of modern technology, English has become the most common and dominant language spoken and used both at the national and international levels. It has been playing a major role in many sectors as medicine, engineering, politics, economics, international relations, and higher education in particular, the most important area where English is needed. It has also become a medium of instruction at universities in a large number of countries, a basic means of second language learning / teaching, an accessing source of modern knowledge and scientific research, and a means of global communication and earn living.

It is realized nowadays at the level of Higher Education in many countries around the world, in addition to EU countries as Germany, Turkey, China, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, Australian, India ..., the significance of providing education in English side by side with their natives. Hence, serious steps have taken to improve the quality of instruction in English at the administrative, academic, students', publications and

research levels. And in order to prove English language international power, it goes beyond its tertiary. Many English language proficiency, training and degree programs are managed not only inside but also abroad for internationalization of higher education to keep it up to date. However, this paper signifies the role of English in modern education, particularly in higher education sector and the role of modern technology in promoting English language learning / teaching quality to meet the standards, communication needs and cultural exchange across the world.

Conclusion

No matter being in which country, what medium of instruction is, or what subjects are studied, English is truly there as an integral part of the studies or education. For internationalization of higher education, English is not only locally but globally required as source of accessing students' major knowledge in all fields, communicating with the most reputed universities worldwide, pursuing a variety of degree programs and finding high-quality jobs and positions in educational institutions and foreign companies elsewhere.

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