



Factors affecting backwardness of students in english as perceived by the teachers at secondary level

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Abstract

English has been introduced as one of the languages in the secondary education curriculum and the students and teachers are struggling to find ways and means to achieve good performance among the students. The backwardness of students in English may be due to many factors and to identify such factors and to study the influence of these factors in relation to gender, type of management and locality the present study is taken up. The data was collected from 50 teachers using simple random sampling technic and the analysis revealed that non-introduction of English from the early classes, illiteracy of Parents, not having knowledge in basic skills(Listening, speaking, Reading and Writing), not having interest in poetry, rote learning method, using translation method, non-exposure of students to using English magazines and dictionary, non-conduct of comprehensive tests, lack of interest in non-mother tongue language are appeared to be major factors for the backwardness of students in English. The variables such as gender, type of institution, locality of the teachers didn't influence the factors responsible for the backwardness of the students at secondary level.

Keywords: backwardness, english, teachers' perception

Introduction

English language gained entry in India with the entry of East India Company. Christian schools (through their missionaries) started functioning in the early 1800s. Macaulay's Minutes of Indian Education (1835) advocated the use of English as it was felt that 'Indians cannot be educated by means of their mother tongue and all the correspondence during that time was done in English. It was the British Govt which wanted every citizen in India need to learn English for the better governance. Macaulay's minutes became the cornerstone of British India educational policy. English became a language of the affluent in the Indian sub-continent, as a result of this policy. The bureaucracy opened opportunities for those knowing English. It established itself as the language of the elite, intelligentsia and educated middle class.

Before Independence, the Education Act of 1835 saw many changes. William Adam's survey (1835) suggested English as medium of education. During World War-I mother tongue gained attention with Mahatma Gandhi and Gopal Krishna Gokhale advocating its importance. The Sadler Commission (1917) looked into problem of education and called for a policy of coordination between English and the Indian vernacular languages. There has been a significant change in public opinion in favour of English in the recent years resulting in revival of teaching of English as a language at the primary level due to the changes occurring in the area of science and technology. Globalisation and privatisation brought many changes in the present day curriculum of primary and secondary education.

Some of the factors behind the increasing use of English language in the recent years include growth of the middle class, rapid urbanization, changing employment trends, outsourcing of jobs to India in the IT sector, privatization of

higher education institutions, widespread use of internet in daily life, popularity of India as a tourism destination, growth of hospitality sector, popularity of English TV channels and films, resulting in increased pressure of admission of young children in English medium schools. It was only a library language in the past but it is now viewed as the language of opportunity, of acquiring jobs, quest for global identity and thus prompts efforts of all state Governments to make the language accessible to all.

As education has to play an important role in the development of India, a number of Commissions and Committees set up by the Government have recommended the teaching of English as one of the languages at secondary level. The Official Language Commission under B. G. Kher recommended seven years of English teaching in school (Kher, 1957). The report of the Education Commission (1964-1966) recommended teaching of English after the primary level. The Conference on Teaching of English in primary schools suggested changes in the thinking about the proper age and level for teaching of English in schools (Gokak, 1963). The Kunzru Committee (1959) recommended English as a second language. The Central Advisory Board for Education proposed the three-language formula, which was approved by the Conference of Chief Ministers held in 1961 and was accepted as a part of educational policy – English was to become one of the three languages to be taught at upper primary level- But later most states modified this policy and decided to introduce English at the primary level itself. Language learning is not just a matter of acquiring the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing but it consists of developing a communicative competence where these skills are often set in an integrated manner along with several other abilities that help in conducting a dialogue. The place of English is not merely an

educational issue, but it is also an issue of social change, personal advancement and national development. Considering the enormous benefits of learning English language, the Govt of India has come up with a three language formula and English has won the permanent place in the curriculum of secondary schools. For teaching English teacher require special skills and it should be the responsibility of the govt to position the suitable teachers at secondary level as it mould the behaviour of the students as far as the language skills are concerned and secondary education is the link between the higher education and school education.

Need of the study

English occupies an important place in educational system and life of our country. It is taught compulsorily subject in the most of the states in the country. English has been rightly described as the language of opportunity. Knowledge of English is a successful passport for employment. Kothari (1964) commission has said that no student should be considered as qualified for a degree, in particular a master's degree, unless he has acquired a reasonable proficiency in English. Although the English is introduced as one of the languages, the students are not able to acquire the speaking and writing skills in English which are most important in the global world. Children who complete schooling are not adequately proficient in English especially who come from rural areas. There would be many contributing and affecting the backwardness of the children in English. Is it the inefficiency of the teachers, students poor background or is it the parents fault for not providing supporting environment at home or curricular difficulties. All these questions are to be answered for studying the problem of learning English language. The answers for all these questions will serve better to overcome by taking appropriate interventions. The present study is intended to bring to the notice of teachers the various problems of the students of karimnagar district.

Objectives of the study

1. To study the factors affecting the Backwardness of students in English at Secondary school Level as perceived by the teachers.
2. To know whether there is any significant difference in the factors for backwardness of students in English at secondary level with respect to their Gender,

Management, and Locality. As perceived by the teachers.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the factors affecting backwardness of children in English language in relation to gender as perceived by the teachers
2. There is no significant difference in the factors affecting backwardness of children in English language of children in relation to the type of institution as perceived by the teachers
3. There is no significant difference between in the factors affecting backwardness of children in English language in relation to locality of the teachers as perceived by the teachers

Sampling Procedure

The sample for the investigation consisted of 50 teachers of karimnagar district of which 20 were from Government and 30 from local body managed teachers. Simple random sampling technique was applied for selecting the sample.

Development of the Tool

A tool was developed by the investigator which seeks to find out the reasons for backwardness of the students in English at secondary level in relation to gender, type of institution and locality of the teachers. While constructing the tool, the suggestions made by the experts in the field and senior English teachers were taken into consideration. Initially the tool consisting of 24 items after consultation of the experts the tool was finalised with 20 items. Each item is given 'Yes' or 'No' options for responding. The finalised tool was used to collect the data from the teachers

Analysis of the data

Obj-1

Factors responsible for the backwardness of students in English as perceived by the Teachers at secondary level

In order to identify the factors affecting the backwardness of the children in English the possible factors are listed out and a checklist was prepared and the same was administered to the teachers of secondary schools. The response for each item was calculated and the total responses of all the items were added and the respective percentages for each item was also calculated and given in table-1.

Table 1: showing the responses of the students against each factor

S. No	Factors	No. of responses saying 'Yes'	Percentage% of 'yes' responses	No. of Responses saying 'No'	Percentage% of 'No' responses
1	English Teachers are not getting proper in service training	34	68%	16	32%
2	Students were not taught English from the early stages	40	80%	10	20%
3	Parents illiteracy is the reason for the backwardness of students in English	43	86%	07	14%
4	Suitable teachers are not recruited to teach English	26	52%	24	48%
5	Students are not taught four basic skills(Listening, speaking, Reading and Writing)properly at the early stages	41	82%	09	18%
6	Teachers give meanings for new words in	29	58%	21	42%

	pupils mother tongue instead of giving English synonyms				
7	Translation method is used extensively in teaching from early stages	31	62%	19	38
8	Students are not interested in poetry because most of the poems are with foreign background and of foreign poets	43	86%	07	14
9	Rote learning method makes the students inaccurate in English	36	72%	14	28%
10	Students are taught grammar in deductive method rather than inductive method.	41	82%	09	18%
11	English medium students have no problem in English	28	56%	22	44%
12	Students are not exposed to reading English magazines and to use dictionary	37	74%	13	26%
13	Problem of locality(rural)	29	58%	21	42%
14	Bilingual Method is useful for Telugu medium students	28	56%	22	44%
15	Should all the lessons have the background of native country	29	58%	21	42%
16	Not conducting any comprehensive tests to your students	48	96%	02	04%
17	One can teach English teach effectively even without specific teaching aids	20	40%	30	60%
18	Not having English as an optional at graduation or P.G. level	46	92%	04	08%
19.	students read themselves the study skills, and you help them wherever necessary	16	32%	34	68%
20	It is helpful to explain the reading passage word to word rather than reading with proper pause, stress and pronunciation	19	38%	31	62%

From the above table it can be seen that non-introduction of English from the early stages (82%), illiteracy of Parents (86%), not having sound knowledge in four basic skills (Listening, speaking, Reading and Writing) (82%), not showing interest in poetry because most of the poems are with foreign background and of foreign poets (86%), Rote learning method (72%), using deductive method rather than inductive method for teaching grammar (82%), non encouragement of students to read English magazines and dictionary (74%), non conduct of comprehensive tests (96%) and not having English as an optional at graduation or P.G. level for the teachers (92%) are the major factors effecting the backwardness in the English.

Testing of hypotheses (Objective-2)

The following hypotheses are tested using appropriate statistical technics and the results are shown in the following tables.

Hypothesis-1

There is no significant difference in the factors affecting backwardness of children in English language in relation to the Gender of teachers

In order to test the above hypothesis, the t test is employed and the results are shown in table 2

Table 2: showing results of t test on the variable gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-Ratio	Level of Significance
Male	30	14.45	5.81	0.516	Not Significant
Female	20	13.98	4.22		

The above table data reveals that the mean score of Male and Female secondary level English teachers are 14.45 and 13.98; S.D’ are 5.81 and 4.22 respectively. The obtained “t” value is 0.516, which is less than the critical value 2.01 at 0.05 level. Hence, the proposed Hypothesis is accepted with respect to the Gender. This shows the male and female teachers have similar perception towards the factors responsible for the backwardness in English

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the factors affecting backwardness of children in English language in relation to the type of institution in which the teacher is working.

The hypothesis stated above is tested using the t test and the results are shown in table 3

Table 3: showing the results of the t test on the type of management

Type of Management	N	Mean	SD	t-Ratio	Level of Significance
Govt. Teachers	20	14.80	4.543	1.04	Not Significant
Local body teachers	30	14.05	6.147		

The data shown in the table-3 reveals that the mean score of Govt and local body secondary level English teachers are 14.8 and 14.05; S.D’ are 4.543 and 6.147 respectively. The obtained “t” value is 1.04, which is less than the critical value 2.01 at 0.05 level. Hence, the proposed Hypothesis is accepted with respect to the management. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the factors affecting the backwardness of children in English as perceived by the teachers irrespective

of the institution they belong to.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference in the factors affecting backwardness of children in English language in relation to locality of the teachers.

The above hypothesis is tested using t test and the results are shown in table 4

Table 4: showing the results of t test on variable 'locality'

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t-Ratio	Level of Significance
Urban	30	14.25	6.56	0.27	Not Significant
Rural	20	14.60	4.32		

The above table reveals that the mean score of Urban and Rural secondary level English teachers are 14.25 and 14.60; S.D' are 6.56 and 4.32 respectively. The obtained "t" value is 0.27, which is less than the critical value 2.01 at 0.05 level. Hence, the proposed Hypothesis is accepted with respect to the locality. Locality is not able to influence the factors affecting the backwardness of students in English. The factors listed are accepted by each and all teachers included in the study irrespective of the locality. The problems/factors are same for all the English teachers for the backwardness of the children in India.

Findings

1. Non-introduction of English from the early stages, illiteracy of Parents, not having sound knowledge in four basic skills(Listening, speaking, Reading and Writing, not showing interest in poetry because most of the poems are with foreign background and of foreign poets, Rote learning method, using deductive method rather than inductive method for teaching grammar, non encouragement of students to read English magazines and dictionary, non conduct of comprehensive tests and not having English as an optional subject at graduation are the major factors affecting the backwardness of students in the English subject and these factors are perceived by the teachers who are handling the English subject in secondary schools.
2. The gender, type of institution and the locality of the teachers have n't influenced the factors responsible for the backwardness of the students in the English subject.

Educational Implications

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following educational implicational are made:

- Proper in service training programmes are to be conducted for improving the teachers efficiency in handling English.
- Teachers with suitable qualifications need to be appointed and English should be studied as optional at graduation level.
- Sufficient written home work is required for developing writing skills
- Bilingual method may be useful for Telugu medium students but i should not be mandatory
- Pupils must be encouraged to speak simple English and

elocutions may be conducted every week for developing speaking skills

- Teachers must motivate pupils to read simple English magazines.
- Comprehensive tests should be conducted and it should also be given as assignments to the students.
- CCE would help immensely for promoting English learning skills
- English should be taught from early stages and ensure the basic skills are developed fully well at that stage.

Conclusion

On the basis of the results of the study, it is concluded that the teacher has to change his method of teaching and make use of sources in order to equip himself/herself to make his classroom transaction interesting and successful. He needs to use English in the class room and outside the classroom compulsory. Teacher should encourage the students to read the English daily news papers. It appears that majority of the teachers have post graduation qualification but English was not studied as a compulsory paper in their graduation and it may be preferred as a qualification to become teacher for English subject. All the teachers irrespective of management, gender and locality stated that the factors included in the study need to be addressed for overcoming the problem of backwardness of students in English of at secondary level and the primary level the four basic skills viz., listening, speaking, reading and writing need to be developed and it will be further reinforced at secondary level.

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