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DEVELOPMENT OF LINGUISTIC SKILLS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOLS STUDENTS



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ABSTRACT:

The poor performance of secondary school students in English language has been considered as a serious cause of decline in standard of academic achievement of students. Now a days the secondary schools do not help much in attaining the linguistic skills for the development of English language. Apart from socio financial, family and school environment, some psychological factors like personality, intelligence, aptitude attitude, motivation, self efficacy also play a vital role in learning English. The situation of English is more critical in the context of secondary school students. The present research paper highlights that the development of linguistic skills in English language with the guidance of teacher needs a lot of practice with patience in four basic aspects of language viz. listening, speaking, reading and writing among secondary school students. By clarifying the socio-psychological factors that influence students' English achievement, this study with identification of the four linguistic skills also suggests some ways to improve different linguistic skills in English among students of secondary schools. The qualitative descriptive research design in analytical style has been used to get the actual picture of students of English at the secondary level in their natural settings. To achieve good results, government and non-government organization, along with expert teachers should adopt systematic plan with actual action by considering existent condition of English language learning and psychology of students in secondary schools.

KEYWORDS: poor performance , academic achievement , school environment , socio financial.

DEVELOPMENT OF LINGUISTIC SKILLS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOLS STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION

English Language is considered the most effective media of communication in secondary schools. Learning a language is nothing but the development of certain skills. Linguistic Skill is an art or study of using language effectively and persuasively. In the modern society, correct speech cannot be over emphasized. When we learn a language, there are four linguistic skills that we need for sufficient communication in English. When we learn our native language, we usually learn to listen first, then to speak, then to read, and finally to write. These are called the four "linguistic skills". The power of expression is a matter of skill and not mere knowledge. This power grows by exercise of different skills and not by knowing meaning and rules also. The skill lies in the manipulation of speech habits. To speak correctly, one should listen carefully and then learn to make correct sound. Listening skill makes the learner able to recognize the sounds, stress and intonation of expressions in frequent use and understand the main idea in a narration or description. By training the ears of learner to listen to language the learner can recognize the sounds of language. Language is a skill subject, thus sensitive ears can be made more sensitive by training. Language learning is essentially a habit forming process. In the development of

any language, good deal of practice should be given. Basic and fundamental structures of the language should be drilled so that these should become automatic. Development of these skills in English language needs a lot of practice in four basic aspects of language viz. listening, speaking, reading and writing. As a result of thorough practice the learner acquires a mastery over these four skills.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The present paper is an attempt to highlight different linguistic skills and provide ways for the improvement of different linguistic skills in English among students of secondary schools. The secondary data has been collected from Internet, government documents, newspapers, published research papers and different books.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study attempted to provide answers to the following question:

1. What are linguistic skills?
2. What are the main causes of poor performance in English language among secondary school students?
3. What is the Role of Teacher in developing different linguistic skills among secondary school students?
4. What are the ways of improving learning of English language among secondary school students?

OVERALL OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are following:

- to identify the four linguistic skills
- to find out the reasons behind the causes of poor performance in English language among secondary school students
- to identify the Role of English Teachers in developing different linguistic skills among secondary school students?
- to find out the ways of improving learning of English language among senior secondary school students

JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The situation of English is more critical in the context of secondary school students. This research is aimed at making contributions towards the quality improvements of English learning. Development of linguistic skills in English language with the guidance of teacher needs a lot of practice with patience in four basic aspects of language viz. listening, speaking, reading and writing. By clarifying the socio-psychological factors that influence students' English achievement, this study with identification of the four linguistic skills also suggests some ways to improve different linguistic skills in English among students of secondary schools.

RESEARCH DESIGN

In this study, the qualitative descriptive research design in analytical style has been used to get the actual picture of students of English at the secondary level in their natural settings.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Moreover, as the study was conducted on the basis of experience, review of literature and also interaction with limited secondary schools students in Haryana only, the research cannot describe the entire picture of English education at higher level.

DEVELOPMENT OF LISTENING SKILL:

Linguists and language learners view listening as the first language skill of the four language skills. It precedes speaking, reading and writing and is used more than the other three together. "Listening" is receiving language through the ears. Listening involves identifying the sounds of speech. When we listen, we use our ears to receive individual sounds (letters, stress, rhythm and pauses) and we use our brain to convert these into

messages that mean something to us. Learning to listen in our first language requires considerable cognitive development and constant attention to social and linguistic inputs over a long span. During listening children receive a special kind of language input which helps them learn their language. In comparison, learning to listen in a second language may be relatively more difficult. The primary difficulty is developmental. It is less closely linked to cognitive and social development of the child. The first language or mother tongue already provides the vehicle through which the child can express himself/herself. This makes the task of the teacher of a second language more challenging.

More than just hearing, good listening involves active conscious efforts to understand, to evaluate and to appreciate what is heard. A powerful communication tool that puts us closer to being in charge of our lives by enabling us to make decisions based on evaluated information, insight and understanding. A vital mental capacity involves both social and cognitive processes. Reading and listening are the receptive language skills. Both are means of getting information second hand and both need active processes with required necessary efforts.

Listening to Non-verbal Sounds All sound creates some kind of conscious or sub-conscious response either with oneself or with another human being.

DEVELOPMENT OF SPEAKING SKILL:

Speaking is the second of the four language skills. By development of this skill, we aim at specific accuracy at which the spoken words are heard and understand the quality of speech, reading and writing. Mostly, people observe a person's language competence from his speaking skill rather than the other linguistic skills. "Speaking" may be considered as the delivery of language through the mouth. For speaking, we create sounds using many parts of our body, including the lungs, vocal chords, tongue, teeth, jaw, lip and nose etc. Although the ability to familiarized with sound plays an effective part in students' ability to acquire vocabulary and understanding different utterances, yet students learning environment both at home and in school, their own personality, attitude ,aptitude, motivation, intelligence, and also other psychological factors effect learning and teaching process of English language .

The classroom teacher of children whose native language is not English must recognize the deep significance of changing his teaching procedures in order to improve the oral language development of these children. It is useful if the teacher has knowledge of the language of the non-English speaking children he is teaching. The structural knowledge is an aid in understanding why the child has difficulty with English speech patterns. Unless this child can hear the English stress and rhythm system he will naturally connect the stress patterns of his first language to the pronunciation of English. To help the child it is useful if the teacher is able to analyze his own speech. The teacher must realize that the intonation of most English sentences has a distinct pattern, beginning on a middle- tone, rising to a higher tone on the last stressed syllable of the sentence and then falling to a lower tone as the sentence ends. Other sentences such as questions and requests have different intonations. Teachers also need to realize that the sounds, and grammar used in the child's native language are often different to the same structures used in English. The child needs ample opportunity with spoken English to internalize these. The initial learning involves listening with understanding followed by speaking in practical and natural situations. Games are a good way to start as they make the learning experience enjoyable and motivate children to explore the language further.

DEVELOPMENT OF READING SKILL:

Reading is the third of the four language skills. Reading is a receptive skill - through it we receive information. But the complex process of reading also requires the skill of speaking, so that we can pronounce the words that we read. In this sense, reading is also a productive skill in that we are both receiving information and transmitting it even if only to ourselves. There are four major ways in which reading is considered: as a skill, as a process; as comprehension and as development. Each view has its own chief characteristics which promotes a particular methodology. Reading helps the teacher to teach reading effectively by providing the base for assessing and interpreting children's reading performances.

All children contribute to change in their reading growth ,but the quality of such changes and the manner in which they are integrated into patterns depend very much on the quality of instruction given by the teacher. Thus primary and beginning reading instruction should be based on carefully selected skills and strategies to be directly taught by the teacher. In addition, a well designed classroom environment will give the children good opportunities to listen to reading and explore the use of books through their own reading. In the interim stage of reading development, most of the teacher-directed instruction should be on processing strategies for constructing meaning. This would help improve the child's use of word identification skills, predicting, confirming and sampling strategies. It also establishes consistent reading of sentences in phrase groups. Finally, It permits children to use their prior knowledge of the world actively to relate consistent structures in the text.

Reading is primarily a process of decoding a particular writing system into language. In the L2 situation, the learner has to initially master audio-lingual the oral counterpart of the material to be read. The teacher must give audio-lingual exercises as a prerequisite to the introduction of reading. The ability to distinguish the various sounds in L2 and produce them without causing any confusion will help students in learning to recognize the written forms. Students learning to read are learning to perform linguistically and it is necessary that they should produce accurate responses automatically to visual signs and in constructing meaning through previously established oral language. They need a great deal of organized and intensive oral practice to sharpen their visual perception and discrimination so that they can develop quick recognition of visual signs necessary for efficient reading. The first reading experience must be limited to the exercises and content materials which have been made familiar to the students aurally and orally. The teacher should help the learners to recognize, understand and respond quickly as they look at these visual symbols. Learners need intensive practice before they can transform print to speech patterns in L2.

The teacher must remember that in developing reading skills in the foreign language the students have not only to be taught reading but also the oral skills. The differences in sound and structure between the native and foreign language should be highlighted and adequate oral practice should be given to the Learners to make the sound symbol correspondences as well as the Word concept correlations familiar to them. The teacher of English as a foreign language should bear in mind the following points:

1. Reading in the foreign language should not be introduced until the students mastered all important sentence patterns and lexical items in an automatic form both aurally and orally according to the demand of subject matter;
2. Silent reading may be introduced as a sequel to oral practice, in the beginning stages of reading; and
3. Frequent tests in both oral and written forms help students as well as teacher to understand students' comprehension and oral production of the long reading passages.

DEVELOPMENT OF WRITING SKILL:

Writing is the fourth of the four language skills. "Writing" is the process of using symbols (letters of the alphabet, punctuation and spaces) to communicate thoughts and ideas in a readable form. To write clearly it is essential to understand the basic system of a language. In English this includes knowledge of grammar, punctuation and sentence structure etc. Vocabulary is also necessary, as is correct spelling and formatting. According to Bacon "Writing maketh an exact man" According to Bell "Writing is a tool used to enable us to express what is in our mind and for one people is almost as important as speech" Since writing is a thinking process ideas get refined, developing thinking and helping the individual to analyses, synthesize and evaluate the ideas. The process of writing is usually having three states: manipulation, structuring and communication, which roughly correspond to recognition, structuring and interpretation in reading respectively.

CAUSES OF POOR PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN LINGUISTIC SKILLS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Now a-days the secondary schools do not help much in attaining the linguistic skills for the development of English language. Apart from socio financial, family and school environment, some psychological factors like personality, intelligence, aptitude attitude, motivation, self efficacy also play a vital role in learning English. Along

with the psychological factors the main reason of poor performance of students in Linguistic Skills in Secondary Schools is that English language is taught by those teachers who are neither specialized nor trained in the language teaching. It is generally agreed that at the secondary level, students have poor linguistic skill due to many psychological factors also. The curriculum is prepared in mostly secondary schools only examination point of view, which prevent students from acquiring language competency. Lack of expert, honest and committed teachers, ineffective traditional teaching methods, large class size, negative attitude of students towards learning English lack of motivation for student's active participation, teachers ignorance towards ICT, are some of the main reasons why the students are lacking behind in English language in secondary schools. Perhaps, that is why a good number of English teachers, even after attending in-service courses fail to adopt modern strategies and techniques, in the English classroom.

ROLE OF TEACHERS IN DEVELOPING DIFFERENT LINGUISTIC SKILLS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

During recent years a body of evidence has grown which seems to indicate that the way in which the child learns to use language is dependent upon early experiences in the home. Differences in the way children use language, thus stem experiences in the social environment of their homes. Although the ability to imitate sound plays a tremendous part in the child's ability to acquire vocabulary and true for her utterances, learning to use language. The classroom teacher can play the most important part in enhancing different skills in his students. Even The classroom teacher of children whose native language is not English must recognize the deep significance of changing his teaching procedures in order to progress the oral language development of these children. It is useful if the teacher has knowledge of the language of the non-English speaking children he is teaching. This structural knowledge is an aid in understanding why the child has difficulty with English speech patterns. In teaching students in their own language, little time need be spent in clarifying concepts conveyed by words and phrases. Native speakers already know the oral language which they will learn to read. But in the case of L2, the teacher will have to ensure that the concepts in L2 are understood unambiguously by the readers. The teacher will have to provide linking sound and structure directly through the association between language and behavior, something similar to the experience of the learners in their mother tongue. Bonding between teacher & student will help the teacher to understand and teach his students according to the psychology of students. Committed honest approach of English teachers should be the most important priority.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Based on the findings of this study, the following are the recommendations
- Bonding between teacher & student will help the teacher to teach his students according to the psychology of students.
- Committed honest approach with action by the teacher should be considered as priority.
- There should be maximum use of language laboratory in each and every school.
- Recruitment of more English teacher in all schools is must.
- Maximum use of modern advance strategies to motivate students for improving their creativity will be help students to learn with more interest.
- Use of Information Communication Technology in class rooms will be helpful in improving student's interest.
- Arrangement of English learning game activities in schools will be helpful in developing students taste in language learning.
- Proper management of classroom by making lesson planning in advance is also good.
- From beginning to end, teacher's focus should be on the four skills of English.
- Encourage the students to become active participant in the class.

CONCLUSIONS

The poor performance of secondary school students in English language has been considered as a serious cause of decline in standard of academic achievement of students. Lack of expert, honest and committed teachers, ineffective traditional teaching methods, large class size, negative attitude of students towards

learning English lack of motivation and other psychological factors for student's active participation, teachers ignorance towards ICT, are some of the main reasons why the students are lacking behind in English language in secondary schools. If teachers become qualified and conscious to teach students, it will be helpful for students to learn English effectively. To achieve the curriculum goals and objectives, government and non-government organization, along with teachers should adopt systematic plan with actual action by considering existent condition of English language learning and psychology of students in secondary schools.

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