



EFFECTIVENESS OF INTENSIVE TRAINING OF ENGLISH STRUCTURAL PATTERNS ON COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT:

The basic unit of any language is the sentence. Praninskar, Jean (1980) says every language has systematic structural constituents. Analysis and synthesis of the constituents of the structural patterns help for better communication. Without the background knowledge about the structural patterns, communication becomes incomplete; consequently comprehension does not happen among the learners. Adequate basic structures would enable learners to comprehend better. Hence an intensive training on tense and voice is necessary for better comprehension. In this present study, the investigator has adopted (pre - test and post - test) experimental research method. Using purposive sampling technique two hundred and forty students from eight elementary schools were included in the investigation. From the analyses and findings it could be decided that intensive training on tense and voice forms has positive effects on comprehension.

KEYWORDS: basic unit , background knowledge , better comprehension.

I. INTRODUCTION

The basic unit of any language is the sentence. Praninskar, Jean (1980) says every language has systematic structural constituents. Analysis and synthesis of the constituents of the structural patterns help for better communication. Language is acquired rather than learnt. Every language has a set of structures. The complete set of structures of a language is not actually used by the native speakers of the language. Only very few structures are used in daily life very few structures in the life time. The language which is used by a teacher in the classroom atmosphere should help the learners to immediate and apply them in the examination and in practical life. The language which is spoken outside the classroom should not be used as the classroom because they may be crude and unrefined. Hence, the language which is used inside the classroom should facilitate the learners to adopt them in their responses.

In the classroom atmospheres the teachers use some set of sentence structures which could not be repeated and used by the learners in the form of answers. This is because of indifferent attitude and ignorance of knowledge about the structural pattern of the language. Without the background knowledge about the structural patterns, communication becomes incomplete; consequently comprehension does not happen among the learners. Adequate basic structures would enable learners to comprehend better.

Most of the teachers at elementary level do not have adequate knowledge and skill to use some specific structures in English. During their studies they learn and forget them. Most of the teachers in India, specifically in the state of Tamil Nadu, study English for about 17 years starting from pre - primary classes. However, they are not able to teach English language classes and handle the classes of

medium of instruction of English. Perhaps, it may be due to the reason that they learn and forget. They learn for the purpose of appearing examination and scoring marks. The long duration of learning could not develop habit formation or behavioural change in attainment of language skills.

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

For Thomas, Sunila and Verhis Lizu (2016) reading comprehension is the act of thinking and constructing meaning before, during and after reading by integrating the information presented by the author with the reader's background knowledge. Reading is a planned purposeful, participative observation. During the process of observation, it scans, analyses, synthesis and interprets expresses message in spoken or written. Laing, Sandra, R and Kamni, Alan, G. (2002) say that average readers generated significantly more explanatory inferences and comprehension performance as measured by story recall was significantly better for both groups in the think - aloud condition than in the listen - through condition.

The study of O'Reilly, Robert P, and Caswell, Ruth (1992) have found out the existence of relationship between working memory and reading comprehension. In the study conducted by Fugate, Mark, H. (1997) it is learned that trained students demonstrated significantly faster letter - naming speed as compared to untrained peers. But the difference did not lead to a significant difference in overall measured reading skill. Papinaidu, M. and Prakash, K. (2014) suggest that learning grammar is also an important component to improve communicative skills. Nanda, Kamala (1982) has conducted an investigation to find out the causes of poor English comprehension. The research reveals that lack of semantic knowledge, expression, knowledge of word usage, phrases, and grammar, and careless and hurried reading are the significant causes. From the above studies it is learnt that for developing comprehension, structural patterns along with equivalent in mother tongue were not used for experimental treatment. Hence, the structures which are frequently used by learners were identified and adopted for the investigation.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Learners studying at elementary level are also unable to understand and comprehend the passages on their own. It is felt that it may be due to lack of knowledge about some specific structural patterns, which are very often they come across while reading the passages in English. In order to solve this problem the investigator decided to administer an intensive training programme on select English structural patterns. The effect of the programme on the level of comprehension was sought. Hence, this investigation is very significant.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Language plays an important role in the society, especially in school system. The scoring of marks significantly depends on the fluency of the language. In turn the fluency depends on the structural and functional knowledge of the language. In school system, it is suggested that language is learnt to get to get marks through the examination. Learners do not have the idea that competence and performance of the language are the operating system in the learning process. Usually learners learn the objectives of language and forget it. Secondly in the teaching of language, individual words become the focal point of teaching. But in contra structures provide meaningful communication. In actual written or oral communication everybody come across the use of tense and voice. It is obvious they occupy the pages of the text books. The learners have to thorough with them and remember them unto death. Adequate drill and practice could enable them to remember forever. They help the learners to comprehend a text. Hence an intensive training on tense and voice is necessary for better comprehension.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out level of comprehension scores among various groups of sub - variables in the pre - test.
2. To find out level of comprehension scores among various groups of sub - variables in the post - test.

3. To find out significant difference between various groups of sub – variables in the post – test mean scores of comprehension test.
4. To find out significant difference between the pre – test and post - test means scores of comprehension test with reference to various groups of sub – variables.
5. To find out significant difference between the pre-test and post – test means scores of comprehension test.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no equal level of comprehension scores among various groups of sub – variables in the pre – test.
2. There is no equal level of comprehension scores among various groups of sub – variables in the post – test.
3. There is no significant difference between various groups of sub – variables in the post – test mean scores of comprehension test.
4. There is no significant difference between various groups of sub – variables in the post – test mean scores of comprehension test.
5. There is no significant difference between the pre – test and post - test means scores of comprehension test with reference to various groups of sub – variables.
6. There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post – test means scores of comprehension test.

LIMITATION

The present investigation has the following limitations.

- ❖ The investigation is limited to eighth standards students only.
- ❖ The study is restricted to a few schools in Thiruvarur district, Tamil Nadu, India.
- ❖ The study is confined to the academic year 2018 – 2019.

METHODOLOGY

The selection of research method is not based on the wish of the researcher rather it is based upon the objectives and purpose of investigation. Experimental research method provides the highest degree of control over experimentation. It also enables the researcher to draw casual inference with high degree of confidence. In this present study, the investigator has adopted (pre – test and post – test) experimental research method.

Sampling

The population refers to the students of elementary schools in Thiruvarur district of Tamil Nadu, India. Using purposive sampling technique two hundred and forty students from eight elementary schools were included in the investigation. Appropriate statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, 't' and 'F' tests were utilized wherever necessary.

Tool

A teacher made test was prepared to test the level of comprehension comprising of tense forms, voice forms and modal auxiliaries. The same was administered before and after the treatment. The items of objective type were included. For every correct response one mark was awarded. Tests carried of 50 marks. The test was focused on bring out the ability of comprehension. The scores were listed and statistical analysis carried out using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data were tabulated and inference was made.

Execution of Procedure

During the execution of the experiment, the following procedures were adopted with care.

Step - 1 Introduction of sentence structure with special reference to form of tense and verbs. At first sentences were introduced as follows.

Types of sentence

Type - I	Sentence with 'be' verbs alone.	I am happy today. She is beautiful. Am, is, are, was, and were.
Type - II	Sentences with 'main' verbs alone.	Indians won the match. Srikanth hits the ball.
Type - III	Sentences with 'main' verb and 'auxiliary' verb.	He is playing now. He has been watching. She will come.

Step - 2

The subject part of sentences was taught by using power point presentation. The learners were made understand the subject part of the sentences is pronouns. The Tamil equivalent was presented to the pronouns. They were drilled orally. At last they were asked to memorise the pronouns (subjects).

Pronouns

Singular	Plural
I (நான்)	We (நாம்)
You (நீ)	You (நீங்கள்)
He (அவன்)	They (அவர்கள்)
She (அவள்)	(அவை)
It (அது/இது)	

Step - 2 Introduction of verbs

Following the step - 1, learners were introduced with the list of 'Helping verbs' and 'Main verbs'. First they learnt about 'auxiliary' or 'helping verbs'. Later they were introduced with the 'main verbs'. While introducing the verbs the Tamil equivalent was given beside.

(a) Be - verbs

Present tense (நிகழ்காலம்)	Past tense (இறந்த காலம்)	Past participle (இறந்த கால வினை எச்சம்)
am (இருக்கிறேன்)	was (இருந்தேன்)	been (இருந்த)
is (இருக்கிறான்/றார்/தது)	was (இருந்தான்/தாள்/தது)	been (இருந்த)
are (இருக்கிறார்கள் இருக்கின்றன)	were (இருந்தார்கள் இருந்தன)	been (இருந்த)

(b) Do - verbs

Present	Past	Past participle
do	did	done
does		

The verbs 'Do', 'Does', and 'Done' have the role of 'Do form verb' and main verbs. The position of 'Helping verb' and 'Do form verbs' were taught with the help of affirmative negative.

I teach you English / don't teach I do not teach you science.

She teaches you science / does not She does not teach you English

(c) Have - verb

Present	Past	Past participle
Have	Had	Had
Has	Had	

The verbs 'have', 'has', and 'had' act as 'helping verbs' (verbs have not complete meaning as well as 'main verbs'. The learners were asked to repeat and memorise them.

(d) Modal verbs

Can	Could
Shall	Should
Will	Would
May	Might

Must need, dare, used to, ought

(e) Main - verbs

Present	Past	Past participle
eat	ate	eaten
write	wrote	written
work	worked	worked
cut	cut	cut

The learners were asked to memorise a list of verbs.

Step - 3 Sentences with be - form verbs

I	am	late today.
Bill	is	an American.
Mr. Allen	is	an English Teacher.
They	are	foreign students.
He	wasn't	There.
They	were	in the bus.
I	will be	there soon.

The equivalent Tamil translation was provided. Learners were requested to practice them.

Step - 4 Sentences with main verbs alone.

I	get up	at seven O'clock.
Jack	lives	in an apartment.
They	sing	songs for amusement.
I	talked	for three minutes.
He	listened	to the Radio.
They	listened	to lectures about dancing.

Step - 5 Sentences with 'main verbs' and 'Auxiliaries'.

He studies every day.	—————>	அவன் படிக்கிறான்.
He studied last night.	—————>	அவன் படித்தான்.
He will study next week.	—————>	அவன் படிப்பான்.
He is studying now.	—————>	அவன் படித்துக் கொண்டிருக்கிறான்.
He was studying.	—————>	அவன் படித்துக் கொண்டிருந்தான்.
He will be studying.	—————>	அவன் படித்துக்கொண்டிருப்பான்.
He has studied.	—————>	அவன் படித்திருக்கிறான்.
He had studied.	—————>	அவன் படித்திருந்தான்.
He will have studied.	—————>	அவன் படித்திருப்பான்.
He has been studying.	—————>	அவன் படித்துக்கொண்டேயிருப்பான்.
He had been studying.	—————>	அவன் படித்துக்கொண்டேயிருந்தான்.
He will have been studying.	—————>	அவன் படித்துக்கொண்டேயிருப்பான்.

Learners were asked to learn by heart and say in the class. The passive forms were also introduced along with tense forms.

Step - 6 Sentences with Modals

Can, could, may, might, will, would, shall, should, need, ought, dare, and used to.

Step - 7 Passive forms

Shanthi teaches English.	—————>	English is taught by Shanthi. (கற்பிக்கப்படுகிறது)
Sheela taught Science.	—————>	Science was taught by Sheela. (கற்பிக்கப்பட்டது)
I am teaching Grammar now.	—————>	Grammar is being taught by me. (கற்பிக்கப்படுகின்றது)
He was teaching Mathematics.	—————>	Mathematics was being taught by him. (கற்பிக்கப்பட்டுக்கொண்டிருந்தது)
He has bought a pen.	—————>	A pen has been bought by him. (வாங்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது)
He had bought a pencil.	—————>	A pencil had been bought by him. (வாங்கப்பட்டிருந்தது)

I will give a praise. → A praise will be given by me.
(கொடுக்கப்படும்)

She will have given a book. → A book will have been given her.
(கொடுக்கப்பட்டிருக்கும்)

Repeated drill was given to the learners. They were asked to memorise them. They were practiced to translate some sentences.

Step - 8 Translation Practice

An unknown passage was supplied to the learners and they were asked to identify the structure of the sentences. They were asked to translate the sentences. This exercise was repeated for a week.

Analysis and Interpretation

Hypothesis - 1

There is no equal level of comprehension scores among various groups of sub - variables in the pre - test.

Table - 1

S. No.	Variables	Categories	Levels of Tense Achievement Scores			Total
			Low Level	Average Level	High Level	
1	Gender	Male	51	69	0	120
		Female	0	75	45	120
2	Locality	Rural	26	72	22	120
		Urban	25	72	23	120
3	School Types	Government	26	72	22	120
		Aided	12	36	12	60
		Self-Finance	13	36	11	60
4	Medium of Instruction	Tamil Medium	25	72	23	120
		English Medium	26	72	22	120

On observing the above table 1 the levels of comprehension scores vary between / among the sub variables. In the pre - test, the female sub - group performs better than male. The scores of comprehension is 'high' for the female group. Most of sub- variables have got 'average level' of comprehension in the pre - test. From the above data, inference is made that there is no equal level of comprehension scores among the sub - variables. The stated hypothesis is retained.

Hypothesis - 2

There is no equal level of comprehension scores among various groups of sub - variables in the post - test.

Table - 2

S. No.	Variables	Categories	Levels of Tense Achievement Scores			Total
			Low Level	Average Level	High Level	
1	Gender	Male	64	56	0	120
		Female	0	77	43	120
2	Locality	Rural	32	68	20	120
		Urban	32	65	23	120

3	School Types	Government	32	66	22	120
		Aided	16	32	12	60
		Self-Finance	16	35	9	60
4	Medium of Instruction	Tamil Medium	32	65	23	120
		English Medium	32	68	20	120

The data from the above table 2 reveal that the levels of scores of comprehension are unequal. Least amount of score found in 'high level' with respect to all the sub- variables. The levels of scores found in pre – test are similar to the post – test. Based on the above data the null hypothesis is retained and concluded the levels vary. However, the inferential statistics depicts that there is significant difference between pre – test and post – test as per the table 6.

Hypothesis - 3

There is no significant difference between various groups of sub – variables in the post – test mean score of the comprehension test.

Table - 3

Background Variables		N	Mean	SD	t – value	Level of Significance
Gender	Boys	120	11.516	3.383	26.748	Significant
	Girls	120	26.250	4.996		
Locality	Rural	120	18.725	8.481	0.287	Not Significant
	Urban	120	19.041	8.594		
School Type	Government	120	18.850	8.578	0.135	Not Significant
	Aided	60	19.033	8.562		
School Type	Government	120	18.850	8.578	0.037	Not Significant
	Self-finance	60	18.800	8.508		
School Type	Aided	60	19.033	8.562	0.150	Not Significant
	Self-finance	60	18.800	8.508		
Medium of Instruction	Tamil Medium	120	18.933	8.589	0.091	Not Significant
	English Medium	120	18.833	8.489		

It is evident from the above table 3 that the mean comprehension scores of boys and girls are 11.516 and 26.25 respectively. The computed 't' value is 26.748. The obtained 't' value is higher than the tabulated value 1.97 at 0.05 level. The stated null hypothesis is not retained. It is concluded that boys and girls vary in the comprehension scores. The reason may be that the gender plays a key role in the difference.

The next sub variable is locale. The mean score of rural students is 18.725 and an urban student is 19. 041. The 't' value 0.287. The obtained 't' value is less than the tabulated value 1.97 at 0.05 level. The stated null hypothesis is retained. The data proved that locale does not make difference in the comprehension scores.

With reference to types of school, the mean comprehension score of government school is 18.85 and government aided is 19.03 respectively. The computed 't' value is 0.135. The obtained 't' value is less than 1.97 at 0.05 level. There is no significant difference found. Hence, the null hypothesis is retained. The mean scores of the government school and self - financing school are 18.85 and 18.8 respectively. The computed 't' value is 0.037, which is less than the tabulated value 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that existence of difference is not found. The null hypothesis is retained. Similarly, significant difference is not found between government aided school and self-financing school. Their mean scores are 19.033 and 18.8 respectively. The computed 't' value is 0.15 which is less than the criterion value 1.97 at 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis is retained. The last sub variable is the medium of instruction. The mean comprehension score of Tamil medium is 18.933 and for the

English medium is 18.833. the computed 't' value is 0.091. The obtained 't' value is less than the tabulated value 1.97 at 0.05 level of significance. It is inferred that the medium of instruction does not cause any effect on the comprehension score. The null hypothesis is retained.

Hypothesis - 4

There is no significant difference between various groups of sub - variables in the post - test mean score of the comprehension test.

Table - 4

Background Variables		N	Mean	SD	t - value	Level of Significance
Gender	Boys	120	39.091	2.130	23.529	Significant
	Girls	120	44.850	1.627		
Locality	Rural	120	41.808	3.430	0.729	Not Significant
	Urban	120	42.133	3.476		
School Type	Government	120	42.025	3.45308	0.136	Not Significant
	Aided	60	42.100	3.50641		
School Type	Government	120	42.025	3.453	0.536	Not Significant
	Self-finance	60	41.733	3.433		
School Type	Aided	60	42.100	3.506	0.579	Not Significant
	Self-finance	60	41.733	3.439		
Medium of Instruction	Tamil Medium	120	42.047	3.438	0.317	Not Significant
	English Medium	120	41.900	3.474		

It is understood from the above table 4 the mean score of comprehension test of the boys is 39.091 and the girls is 44.850 in the post - test. The computed 't' value is 23.539 which is higher than the tabulated value 1.97 at 0.05 level. Therefore, it is concluded that there exists significant difference between male and female in the post test. In other groups of sub - variables significant differences do not exist. The 't' values of respective groups are less than the tabulated values. The stated null hypothesis is not retained except for the sub - variables male and female.

Hypothesis - 5

There is no significant difference between the pre - test and post - test means scores of comprehension test with reference to various groups of sub - variables.

Table - 5

Background Variables		N	Mean	SD	t - value	Level of Significance
Boys	Pre-test	120	11.800	4.46574	41.748	Significant
	Post-test	120	37.508	5.05598		
Girls	Pre-test	120	26.250	4.99622	38.775	Significant
	Post-test	120	44.850	1.62775		
Rural	Pre-test	120	18.725	8.48128	27.639	Significant
	Post-test	120	41.808	3.43070		
Urban	Pre-test	120	19.042	8.59489	27.284	Significant
	Post-test	120	42.133	3.47605		
Government	Pre-test	120	18.850	8.57851	27.453	Significant
	Post-test	120	42.025	3.45308		
Aided	Pre-test	60	19.033	8.56276	19.310	Significant

	Post-test	60	42.100	3.50641		
Self-finance	Pre-test	60	18.800	8.50882	19.360	Significant
	Post-test	60	41.733	3.43396		
Tamil Medium	Pre-test	120	18.933	8.58936	27.361	Significant
	Post-test	120	42.047	3.43828		
English Medium	Pre-test	120	18.833	8.48957	27.546	Significant
	Post-test	120	41.900	3.47476		

From the above table 5 it is clearly understood that calculated 't' values of all the groups are higher than the tabulated values at 1.97 at 0.05 level. It is inferred significant difference exists between the pre - test and post - test of the sub variables of various groups. The existence of the difference may be due to treatment given before taking the post test. Hence, the null hypothesis not retained. It is concluded that there is significant difference between pre - test and post - test with respect to all the sub variables.

Hypothesis - 6

There is no significant difference between the pre-test and post - test means scores of comprehension test.

Table - 6

Background Variables	N	Mean	SD	t - value	Level of Significance
Pre-test	240	40	8.521	5.063	Significant
Post-test	240	49	3.430		

It is evident from the above table 6 that the mean comprehension score of the pre - test is 40 while that of the post test score is 49. The computed 't' value is 5.063. The obtained 't' value is higher than the table value 1.97 at 0.05 level. The stated null hypothesis is not retained. The 't' value found to be significant. The existence of difference shall be due to the experimental treatment.

FINDINGS

1. It is found that the levels of comprehension scores vary among various groups of the sub - variables in the pre - test.
2. It is found that the levels of comprehension scores vary among various groups of sub - variables in the post - test.
3. There is no significant difference between various groups of sub variables except male and female groups in the pre - test mean scores of comprehension test.
4. There is no significant difference between various groups of sub variables except male and female groups in the post - test mean scores of comprehension test.
5. There is no significant difference between pre - test and post - test mean scores of comprehension test mean scores of comprehension test with reference to various groups of sub - variables except male and female.
6. There is no significance difference between pre - test and post - test mean scores of comprehension test.

CONCLUSION

From the analyses and findings it could be decided that intensive training on tense and voice forms has positive effects on comprehension. Introducing language structural patterns help learners to understand the textual passages better than ever before. If these structural patterns are introduced earlier, understanding can be increased; achievement will be more.

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