

English Speaking Efficiency: A Comparative Study of Government and Private Schools in District Pulwama

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Abstract

India is a diversified country of various languages. English is an adopted language in India but has obtained primary importance in business and educational fields. It is a universal language so it is the need of the day to learn it properly in order to expand our trade and commerce throughout the world and the non-natives of English should learn it so that they can communicate with the people throughout the globe. The aim of this research work is to study the role of private and govt. institutions in the development of English speaking skills among the students of rural India. The study is done in district Pulwama of J & K state of India.

Keywords: Speaking, Efficiency, Govt. schools, Private schools, Warm-up activities, Words, Phrases, Sentences, Interactive role play, Pronunciation

Introduction

India is a diversified country of various religions, races and languages where English is an adopted language. Instead of any local language or primary language, English is added in the curriculum by the educationists as a compulsory subject. "English in India is a question of linguistic centralism while the other Indian languages lead to linguistic regionalism" (Reddy, 783). It was a difficult task for the teachers to teach altogether a new subject to the students and challenge for them to provide a good result, so they trained the students to pass the examination only. But now it is the language of opportunity. Apart from being a secondary or foreign language, most of the people consider it as the language primary importance. Language learning is a process of knowledge building in the learner, not a product for knowledge transfer from the teacher.

English has become the modern language of communication among speakers of other languages. It can help bridge communication barriers across cultures. This age of globalization has a profound impact on different domains of life such as social, political and economic. It has also experienced significant changes in the communication dynamics of the world. English language is the most crucial gear of this new communication euphoria. English as a subject is of paramount importance in equipping the students to take up the challenges of the competitive survival and growing globalization in developing countries.

English is the dominant language of international business and economic development, and that dominance continues to grow with the continued globalization of business through mergers and international investment. This is high time we started to see the future development of English as a world language and took proper initiatives to develop our English language learners to a global standard in rural India also.

Theories of language learning and even the great philosopher Aristotle have said that human beings are imitative by nature. A learner imitates teacher's every utterance and gestures. The students in rural areas, who are very ignorant and first generation learners of English, treat a teacher's voice as a revered. So it is very important that a teacher teaching English at any level; primary, secondary or tertiary has to have a very good command over all the skills of English language. According to Dornyei, "teacher skills in motivating learners...(it) should be seen as central to teaching effectiveness" (116). Unfortunately, cutting across the States of India, this is not so. In fact the situation at primary and secondary level is pathetic. Moreover in a State like J&K there are no English teachers to teach English at primary level, any Social Studies' or science teachers usually teach English, assuming all is well. It is known to all those who are in the business of teaching language that critical age to learn a language is up to 04-10 years. One can imagine the intensity of damage done to a young learner. On the contrary I propose to the extent that there is no need to have exclusive English teachers at primary level at least. The logic is very simple; if teachers of all the subjects are very good at English, a learner masters the language

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automatically. On the contrary if non English teachers teach and communicate in vernacular (as most of the teachers do in rural areas), how could an English class of 45 minutes prove effective. The role of teacher becomes more challenging and demanding in rural areas because in such areas it is the teacher who is the model, to whom a student looks for all learning needs.

A fully English proficient student is able to use English to ask questions, to understand teachers, and reading materials, to test ideas, and to challenge what is being asked in the classroom. Four language skills contribute to proficiency as follows:

1. *Reading* - the ability to comprehend and interpret text at the age and grade appropriate level.
2. *Listening* - the ability to understand the language of the teacher and instruction, comprehend and extract information, and follow the instructional discourse through which teachers provide information.
3. *Writing* - the ability to produce written text with content and format fulfilling classroom assignments at the age and grade-appropriate level.
4. *Speaking* - the ability to use oral language appropriately and effectively in learning activities (such as peer tutoring, collaborative learning activities, and question/answer sessions) within the classroom and in social interactions within the school (Murali).

Literature review

According to Radhakrishna University Education Commission, "English is a language which is rich in literature humanistic, scientific and technical. If under sentimental urges we give up English we would cut ourselves of form, the living stream of ever-growing knowledge" (Sundari). English language is a non native language of India; it is treated as an alien by the people of India mostly by the rural people. In the far-flung areas somebody who has efficiency in English speaking is meant to a well learned person, so it means people considered English as the language of intellectuals and that is the reason large percentage of people avoid it for considering it 'out of reach' for them. Thus educationist keeping its importance in view introduced it as a compulsory subject in schools but when any language is taught in a foreign language setting, where in outside classroom the authentication of regional language is already available, it became a challenge for the teachers to first convince people for its learning and then making a favorable environment for its learning. Researchers have undertaken different research works on it; the outcome of some of such noteworthy works is as under:

Dr. Fadel and **Dr. Khalid** are teaching associates of college of Basic Education, English Language Department, Kuwait. They have worked on the problem entitled, *The Impact of Motivation on English Language Learning in the Gulf States*. The purpose of their research is to explore the types of motivational factors in learning of English

language as a secondary language. Further, it is focused on the reasons of reluctance of Gulf inhabitants' to learn English as a secondary language. Researchers have collected data for the study from primary sources such as action/ empirical research, case study, observations etc. It possesses an inductive research method, in which after generalization of data, it is analyzed, interpreted, evaluated and finally drawn the conclusion. The conclusion drawn by the researcher is that 'motivation' plays a pivotal in role in enhancing and accelerating the English language learning efficiency among the learners of GCC schools and universities. Furthermore, the researchers in this study suggest the teachers to use and employ a teaching ideology and techniques which encourages the growth of intrinsic motivation while boosting the integrative motivation of learners. The researchers also recommended various language activities which once employed will foster intrinsic motivation like, desire to communicate, boost learners' integrative orientation, enhancement of language abilities etc.

K. Ahalya and **BH. Latha** are research scholars at Department of Education, SPMVV, Tirupati; they have worked on the research problem, *Learning English as a Secondary Language in India* which is focused towards the common problems affecting teaching and learning of English as a secondary language in India. The purpose of the research is to explore the factors that affect the teaching-learning process in India. According to the researcher, a majority of Indian students are getting their primary education either in Hindi language or in their regional languages and it becomes the reason for their inefficacy in speaking English. Apart from this the researcher came out with the conclusion that the following factors are responsible for defective 'English language teaching learning' process.

- 1) **Lack of Clear Cut Policy:** There is no standard policy of government for the learning of English language. The academicians and politicians for their individual benefits are frequently changing the educational policies, and the worst kind of politics is being played with English language.
- 2) **Lack of Exposure:** The poor social and economic background of students restrain them from learning English language, because the socially downtrodden people usually can't speak English and their economic condition doesn't allow them to farm any such favorable environment for English language learning.
- 3) **Lack of Motivation:** The students are usually focused towards the goal of settlement in future. Lack of exposure and economic strength forces them to focus towards the subjects or activities of immediately returns. Because less than 0.2% of the people are looking for multinational companies to work in and less that 0.1% of people want to move

towards abroad. Thus most of the people are not motivated for the learning of English Language.

- 4) **Defective Methods:** The methods applied for teaching of English language are traditional, which lacks effective tactics. Oral presentations, group discussions and debates in classroom are totally neglected.
- 5) **Excess Strength in Class:** The strength of classes is usually large which restrains the teacher from paying attention on every student.
- 6) **Lack of Expert Teacher:** This is the worst factor responsible for inefficiency in English speaking. Non English experts are engaging the 'English Language' classes, which results in imperfect and defective 'English Language Learning'.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to find out the good impact of learned teachers of English language on students of rural India and bad impact of teachers on students who have different specialization. Further, the study sought to find out the impact of negative approach of government authorities on education. It also tries to shed some light on the fact that the recruitment of teachers should be based of persons' specialization.

Objectives

- 1) To establish the causes of non specialization of teachers on the learning of English language of students.
- 2) To establish the effect of avoidance of warm-up activities by teacher for the purpose of completion of prescribed syllabus for gaining good grades in examination.
- 3) To determine the losses caused by negative capability of concerned government authorities.
- 4) To determine the lack of availability of teachers in most of the government schools of our country.

Proposed Methodology

This study used a survey research method, employing interviews and conversations with various students of different government and non-government schools. It also sticks random sampling method, in which students from different institutions are randomly picked up and asked questions regarding teachers' orientation about teaching, up gradation of knowledge, modern and pedagogical skills and competence. The study took both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Qualitative approach was carried out through interaction with students and teachers of different schools in district Pulwama of J&K state. While in quantitative approach, one hundred and twenty one government schools students and, two hundred and two non-government school students were randomly asked about the

implementation of modern teaching methods by their respective teachers and a statistical data is formed.

The methodology also includes:

- 1) Collection and thorough study of critical or secondary works.
- 2) Study of reference material available on the topic.
- 3) Study of different research projects conducted by researchers on this issue.
- 4) Interaction with eminent teachers and scholars on the topic.
- 5) Documentation, citations and references according to MLA style sheet 7th edition, is strictly adhered.

Warm-up Activities

This can be helpful for both the teachers and the students to get to know or make acquaintance with each other in a relaxed atmosphere. "Using warm up activities can be one way to bring variation in class activity and to make the students curious, focus their attention, provide them purpose and motivation" (Eragamreddy). Two types of activities or tasks are performed by the students; the first type of task is based on having the students interviewing one another and asking questions, so that there will be an independent dialogue between the students which makes the classroom interactive. And the second task is based on games that helps to ease them into talking in programmed, student centered exercises.

Samples

- 1) 121 Students (Sample) from different Govt. Middle Schools of District Pulwama.
- 2) 202 Students (Sample) from different Private Schools of District Pulwama.

S. No.	Sampling Organization	Total Samples	Warm-up Activities Performed	Warm-up Activities Not-Performed
1.	Govt. Middle Schools	121	07	114
2.	Private Schools	202	173	29

Result: Out of 121 students of different Govt. Middle schools of district Pulwama, 07 believe that their teachers perform warm-up activities in their respective schools and 114 believe that no warm-up activities are being performed. And out of 202 students of different Private Schools of district Pulwama, 173 believe that warm-up activities are being performed and 29 believe that no warm up activity is been performed.

Reason: No extracurricular activity is performed by any Govt. School while extracurricular activity is necessary in most of the private institutions.

Words, Phrases and Sentences

Students should be asked to search or find, to remember or express, formulate concepts and ideas in words, phrases and sentences by their own without the interference of teacher. The teacher’s role should be only to work as a helper rather than as a dictator. If the students are asked to do their own thinking and looking-up and researching and discussing and exchanging of ideas and helping of one another, they will be better-able to pay attention, because they will feel themselves to be at the center of the action. Teacher should play an intelligible role to, “... avoid running the class in totally-dictatorial-teacher-centered-manner, the teacher may give the students sheets and let them work independently on the assigned task, and only report to the teacher later, when they have finished or their time has run out”(Holmes, 62).

Samples

- 1) 121 Students (Sample) from different Govt. Middle Schools of District Pulwama.
- 2) 202 Students (Sample) from different Private Schools of District Pulwama.

S. No.	Sampling Organization	Total Samples	Word, Phrase and Sentence Power Improved	Word, Phrase and Sentence Power Not-Improved
1.	Govt. Middle Schools	121	53	68
2.	Private Schools	202	106	96

Result: Out of 121 students (samples) of different Govt. Middle schools of district Pulwama, 53 students are good in word, phrase and sentence power while 68 are not good in word, phrase and sentence power. And out of 202 students of different Private Schools of district Pulwama, 106 are good in word, phrase and sentence power and 96 are not good in word, phrase and sentence power.

Reason: Same reason as above, No extracurricular activity is performed by any Govt. School while extracurricular activity is necessary in most of the private institutions.

Interactive Role- Play

Another way to teach speaking is through setting up interactive role play situations in pairs or groups. This means putting two or more students together and giving them a handout sheet, which they can first read and study, taking time to look-up unknown words and asking their friends about meanings and pronunciation. Then give them a little more time to practice speaking, with everybody in the room reading aloud to get a feel for the role they will be playing and get used to the words sounds, phrases and the rhythm of the language. When they have had enough time to develop some sense of

self-confidence, but before they begin to get bored, ask them to read out their parts aloud (in pairs or groups) with the rest of the class listening. They will be nervous and uncomfortable the first couple of times that they have to perform in front of others, especially the teacher, but with time, the more role-plays that they do, the more proficient and confident they will become. Teacher can built their confidence in other ways also,

An enthusiastic and considerate teacher can offer satisfaction to the learner’s extra needs. This helps strengthen the learner’s study motivation. On the other hand, a teacher’s attitude towards the learner has major influence on the learner’s learning. As regards emotional cramming, a teacher’s physically and mentally pouring into his teaching, and being filled with affection, will help arouse the learning enthusiasm of the learners. However, if the teacher only works as a ‘teaching craftsman’ and puts no emotion into teaching, the classroom will become static to lessen the learning enthusiasm of the learners (Feng, 64).

Samples

- 1) 121 Students (Sample) from different Govt. Middle Schools of District Pulwama.
- 2) 202 Students (Sample) from different Private Schools of District Pulwama.

S.No.	Sampling Organization	Total Samples	Interactive Role Performed	Interactive Role Not-Performed
1.	Govt. Middle Schools	121	09	112
2.	Private Schools	202	170	32

Result: Out of 121 students of different Govt. Middle schools of district Pulwama, 09 believe that their teachers played an interactive role in their respective schools and 112 believe that no such activities are being performed. And out of 202 students of different Private Schools of district Pulwama, 170 believe that interactive role is played by their respective teacher in the classroom while 32 believe that no such activity is been performed.

Reason: In Govt. Schools the teachers may be highly educated and knowledgeable but they are lacking professional skills while in private school the teachers are more skillful because appointment in private schools is done after their good performance in demonstration. No demonstration is conducted by the Govt. recruiters; recruitment is done of the Govt. teachers on the basis of their qualification, performance in written test and viva voce.

Pronunciation

There is no overestimating the importance of your pronunciation in English communication, especially in face-to-face situation. It does well if your English teacher has taught you English grammar and phonology. But if

you find that you are still unable to speak English properly, it means the problem may be your shyness, but this can be overcome with practice. But the real problem might lay elsewhere, if you have an un-efficient in other words non-professional of English teaching English, he may have placed the stresses on the wrong syllables, and the students may have been repeating pronunciation mistakes like their teacher. Sometimes a person is not able to speak an extraterrestrial sound, because he is not able to imitate this new word, here the teacher irrespective to accuse or curse him, "...needs to be able to give some hints which may help them to make the new sounds" (Kenworthy, 02).

Samples

- 1) 121 Students (Sample) from different Govt. Middle Schools of District Pulwama.
- 2) 202 Students (Sample) from different Private Schools of District Pulwama.

S. No.	Sampling Organization	Total Samples	Pronunciation Improved	Pronunciation Not-Improved
1.	Govt. Middle Schools	121	03	118
2.	Private Schools	202	184	18

Result: Out of 121 students of different Govt. Middle schools of district Pulwama, 03 are good in pronunciation while remaining 118 students are not good in the pronunciation. And out of 202 students of different Private Schools of district Pulwama, 184 are good in pronunciation while 18 are not good at pronunciation.

Reason: In private schools the teachers appointed for teaching any subject should possess his/her degree in the respective subject while in Govt. schools science or social science experts are teaching English and vice versa.

Discussion

The study is done in a rural district, Pulwama of J & K state of India. Randomly nine govt. Middle schools and nine private schools are selected for the study. Three hundred and twenty three samples (students) are taken from both the organizations; one hundred and twenty one samples are taken from govt. schools and the remaining two hundred and two samples are taken from private schools. Out of one hundred and twenty one students (samples) of govt. schools, only seven students believe that warm-up activities are performed in their classes, fifty three students are good in their word, phrase and sentence power, nine believe that teacher make an interactive environment in their classrooms while only three students are good in pronunciation.

Out of two hundred and two students (samples) taken from private schools, one hundred and seventy three believe that warm-up activities are performed by their class teacher, one hundred and six are good in their word, phrase and sentence power, one hundred and seventy

believe that teachers are making an interactive environment in the classroom and one hundred and eighty four are good in pronunciation.

From the study it is been observed that only 5.78% of govt. school students in comparison to 85.64% of private school students believe that warm-up activities are performed by their English teacher in the classroom and only 7.44% of govt. school students in comparison to 84.16% of private school students believe that teachers are making an interactive environment in the classroom. Likewise only 43.80% of govt. school students in comparison to 52.48% students of private schools are in word, phrase and sentence power. In the same manner only 2.48% of govt. school students are good in word pronunciation while 91.09% of private school student have good word pronunciation.

Conclusion

From the above study it is been observed that private school students are more efficient in English speaking than govt. school students. Some of the reasons responsible for this poor performance of govt. schools are given below.

- 1) Fewer infrastructures available.
- 2) Number of teachers is less than minimum requirement.
- 3) Non-English experts are teaching English in most of the institutions.
- 4) Govt. teachers are highly qualified but less skillful.
- 5) Teacher in govt. schools are appointed on the basis of educational qualification, performance in written test and viva voce while the private school teachers are appointed on the basis of their performance in demonstration.

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