

A STUDY ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING OF DALIT RESEARCH SCHOLARS OF BHARATHIAR UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Dalit research scholars have been struggling to the hilt of certain external pressures from the society and educational institutions as well. They try their best to break their sore shells and chains like oppression, exclusion from their Professors and Peers; internal pressures like complex, self empathy, fear, and hesitation. The present study was undertaken with a hope that fluency in English language may be a great hold up in their career. Since English plays a crucial role in all remarkable fields; the knowledge in English language boasts great confidence in every learner. Hence the present study is conducted on the language aspects of the Dalit Research scholars of Bharathiar University Coimbatore.

Keywords: *English Language Teaching, Scholars*

Introduction

Even though the scholars have been learning English as a Second language since primary education till higher education, they cannot reach momentum in their use of English fruitfully. They are familiar with the language but there are some hindrances denying them to use it properly. There are several factors which affect students' performance in speaking English fluently. Through the Researcher's observation they could not shine in their communication skills in English due to certain psychological factors. Psychological factors play an important role in a learner's success in acquiring and using a second language, how hard they try emotional factors like their attitude, lack of confidence, anxiety, and lack of motivation, helplessness and aversion towards a language influence bitterly in their use of vocabulary, pronunciation while they communicate in English. For instance, they are scared about committing mistakes while they speak. They also cannot express themselves well or adequately because they lack adequate and appropriate vocabulary. Another factor that makes students to hesitate to speak in English is that they are shy and nervous. They feel fearful to speak English in front of other people because they lack confidence about their own competence in English. So, it is important to help the learners overcome their anxiety, nervousness and fear with encouraging words and proper guidance. The present study tries to uncover all perceived difficulties assumed in the learning English language skills among the M. Phil and PhD Dalit scholars of the University.

Objectives of the study

The present study proposes to work with the following objectives:

- To probe the educational backwardness of Dalit people with reference to English language.
- To evaluate and appraise the English language proficiency between Dalit and non-Dalit research scholars.

- To study the English language problems encountered by M. Phil and PhD Research SC and ST scholars of Bharathiar University.
- To identify the Socio-Psychological issues of the Dalit research scholars with reference to English language learning.
- To study the problems SC and ST Research scholars face at the higher Education (with reference to M. Phil and PhD Research scholars)
- To apply the theory Communicative language Teaching Approach to improve English language proficiency. To design a workbook for SC and ST Research scholars to improve English Language proficiency.

Review of related Literature

A few reviews on various students' learning of the English language are listed below:

Wajiha Kanwal, Fauzia Khurshid (2012) conducted a research on the difficulties of University students in English language learning. After the success of experimentation on 30 students the research has extended to 200 randomly selected students of the department of English. Through the adaptation of proper methodology the results were found out. It was vivid through their research that university students still lack in listening, reading and writing skills. Hence, they recommended that the facilities like audio visual equipments to be provided for the students' enhancement of language learning.

Rebecca Belchamber (2007) came out with the analysis and advantages of Communicative language teaching in language learning. She focuses on the positive and the pivotal part of Communicative language teaching as it focuses on meaning, which is learner-centered, fluency is the primary goal, students are expected to interact with other people, either in oral practice, through pair and group work, or in their writings and more over which is task-based.

Prominence of English Language for Research Scholars

Being the research scholars, they dream of becoming great professors in their concerned subjects. Fortunately the research variables are selected from Department of Arts and Humanities. They deserve more social exposure than other department students. The medium of teaching is officially English in our educational institutions and universities for higher education. So the fluency in the official or second language is much needed for their prosperous career. Though they are the great scholars and possess good knowledge in their subjects, language as the medium is much needed to reveal their ideas with great comfort and confidence in front of others. If they are not confident enough to reveal their ideas due to language barriers or any other reasons, without the next thought, they will be degraded even by their students. So they have to be fluent in their communication as well as writing. At least there won't be any obvious signs that they lack in the communication skills. Hence accuracy and fluency in English language is an inevitable quality to every research scholar. The knowledge in English language boasts great confidence in every learner. Hence research scholars from various Departments should be fluent in using their Second language English both in communication and writing.

Methodology

The present study uses both primary and secondary data in order to find answers to the research problem. In order to conduct an empirical study, M.Phil and Ph.D Dalit Research scholars of Bharathiar University have been selected in order to identify and evaluate their proficiency in English language. Personal interviews and group discussions were conducted in order to collect the qualitative data used in this study, and a structured questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data. For the present study, the researcher has used the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program to quantify data and generate relevant tables. The study involves

participant and non-participant observation, structured and semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions. The present study aims at the upliftment of English language proficiency in Dalit scholars of Bharathiar University.

Problems of research scholars in learning a language

“Language reflects the worldviews, the thought processes, and the lifestyles of its people” (DeCapua, 2004). Though the scholars have been learning English as a Second language from primary education till higher education they cannot reach the momentum in their use of English fruitfully. Through the Researcher’s observation they could not shine in their communication skills in English due to certain psychological factors. As we know, psychological factors play an important role in a learner’s success in acquiring and using a second language, how hard they try emotional factors like their attitude, lack of confidence, anxiety and lack of motivation, helplessness and aversion towards a language bitterly influence in their use of vocabulary, pronunciation while they communicate in English. For instance, they scare for committing mistakes while they speak. They also cannot express themselves well or adequately because they lack adequate and appropriate vocabulary.

Another factor that makes students to hesitate to speak in English is that they are shy and nervous. They scare to speak English in front of other people because they lack confidence about their own competence in English. So, it is important to help the learners overcome their anxiety, nervousness and fear with encouraging words and proper guidance. The present study tries to uncover all perceived difficulties assumed in the learning English language skills among the M. Phil and Ph.D Dalit scholars of the university using the method called Communicative Language Teaching.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

For this research study, the researcher has used a structured questionnaire on LSRW skills in the English language using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program to collect the quantify data on the language proficiency of the M.Phil and Ph.D Dalit research scholars of Bharathiar university. 16 female and 9 male research scholars totally 25 research scholars from the departments of arts and humanities were selected as the research’s population. The variables are selected from the departments of Tamil, English, linguistics; Economics, Econometrics, Women studies and Psychology. Through the outcome of the analysis of a questionnaire, the variables’ proficiency levels of LSRW skills were calculated. It has given through a chart representation as:

- The first bar represents the listening skills of the variables
- The second bar represents the Speaking skills of the variables
- The Third bar represents the Reading skills of the variables
- The fourth bar represents the Writing skills of the variables

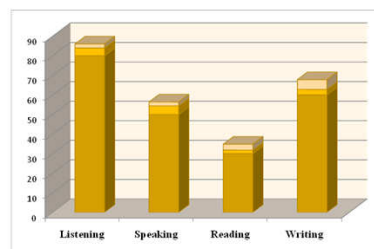


Chart 1 Language proficiency in LSRW skills

Communication Skills

After the in depth observation, the communication skills of the scholars were analyzed. The analysis was made through their fluency in grammar, pronunciation, use of vocabulary, use of idioms and phrases and level of conversation. The pictorial representation may show their efficiency in the communication skills based on the given criteria discussed above.

- Yellow represents the variables’ fluency in grammar
- Red represents the variables’ use of vocabulary

- Green represents the variables' use of idioms and phrases
- Purple represents the variables' pronunciation
- Blue represents the variables' fluency in conversation

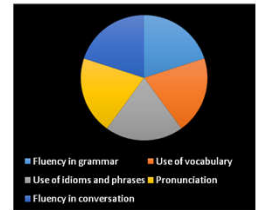


Chart 2: Communication skills

Findings and recommendations

On the basis of the research findings, it is concluded that students are hesitant in speaking English and using reading skill. It is recommended that there should be a regular practice for their improvement in communication and exercises should be added in order to improve the reading, writing and speaking skills of the students. Hence the workbook modules were prepared by the researcher as a remedy to the scholars' challenges of learning of the English language. It comprises

- Pronunciation
- Rich Vocabulary
- Idioms and phrases
- Fluency in grammar
- Functional English
- Clarity in Parts of speech in English, especially with prepositions

Conclusion

To conclude, the findings of the research make it clear that certain factors influence bitterly in the research variables' language skills. Hence the scholars should come forward to enhance their language skills through working on the workbook prepared by the researcher. Undoubtedly, they can gain the momentum with regards to the language skills through their constant practice on it.

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