



PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS ENGLISH

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Abstract

This paper attempts to ascertain the interactive effect of English language communication skills intervention programme and the medium of instruction at the school of B.Ed. students on their attitude towards English. For this purpose, an intervention programme based on English language communication skills of about 40 instructional hours was developed for B.Ed. students. A researcher-made rating scale was used to measure students' attitude towards English. A personal data sheet was prepared by the researcher for B.Ed. students to gather the information of student-teachers' medium of instruction in school. The participants of the study included 70 B.Ed. students in the experimental and control groups each respectively. The experimental group received intervention programme whereas the control group did not receive any such programme. The data was analysed using ANCOVA. The instructional programme was effective in enhancing attitude towards English in B.Ed students. The effect size of the intervention programme on attitudes towards English language is 2.21 which is high in magnitude.

Keywords: Attitude Towards English, English Language, Medium of Instruction at School

1. Introduction

India being a linguistically diverse country has a diglossia situation in which two or more distinct languages can be used by the same speech community. However, these languages differ in status, prestige and function. Therefore, the present study aims to identify attitudes towards English of B.Ed. students and attempt has been made by the researcher to develop positive attitude towards English through an intervention of English language communication skills instructional programme.

This study was based on the hypothesis that B.Ed. students hold different attitudes towards English and English language learning. Hence, the present study on the interactive effect of medium of instruction in school and the instructional programme on the attitude towards English of B.Ed. students was conducted.

2. Prior Studies on Attitude towards English

Hilliard (2014) conducted a study on Tanzanian students' attitudes toward English. The study surveyed 153 secondary students and 28 secondary school teachers from three secondary schools in Dares Salaam. Overall, both students and teachers had positive attitudes about learning and teaching English in the school system and recognized English as an important tool for advancement in their careers and future studies. Kadim (2014) conducted a study on the students' attitudes and motivation for learning English at Dokuz Eylul University School of Foreign Languages. Boruah (2014) conducted a case study on attitude of undergraduate adivasi students towards English language of Indira Gandhi

national tribal university in Madhya Pradesh. The study aimed to investigate the attitude of undergraduate tribal student of IGNTU towards English language, which is taught as a compulsory subject to the first year undergraduate students of the university. Graedler (2014) conducted a corpus-based study of the attitudes towards English in Norway, in terms of attitudinal expressions in newspaper discourse. This study explores some dimensions of how the role of the English language in Norway has been discursively constructed in newspapers during recent years, based on the analysis of data from the five-year period 2008-2012. Gajalakshmi (2013) conducted a study of high school students' attitude towards learning English language. The study attempted to investigate the standard IX students' attitude towards learning English language. Zafarghandi and Jodai (2012) conducted a survey of attitudes toward English and English learning at an Iranian Military University. This study intends to represent attitudes toward English and English learning at an Iranian military university. Iranian military staff is required to study English in a social environment where there is little immediate need or opportunity to use the language for real communicative purposes. Verma (2005) conducted a study of the attitude of learners towards language learning in a second language learning environment. The researcher selected the group of students pursuing different under graduate courses after secondary examination in Uttar Pradesh.

3. Purpose of the Study

In the light of this information, the primary purpose of this research was to determine the interactive effect of medium of instruction at school and the instructional programme on the attitude towards English of B.Ed. students.

3.1 Problem of the Study

Is there an interaction effect of English language communication skills instructional programme developed by the researcher for B.Ed. students and their medium of instruction at school on student-teachers' attitude towards English?

3.2 A Description of the Site and Participants

The participants in this study included 70 student-teachers in the experimental and control group each enrolled in full time Bachelor of Education from colleges affiliated to and recognised by University of Mumbai and situated in the Greater Mumbai. Participants varied, in terms of their medium of instruction in school, gender, socio-economic status, faculty at graduation and religion. The experimental group comprised of 70 student-teachers studying in Clara's College of Education in the academic year 2013-14. The control group also comprised of 70 student-teachers studying in Oriental College of Education in the academic year 2013-14.

4. Materials and Methods

In this study, the quantitative research approach was adopted. In quantitative approach, quasi-experimental design of the pre- test post-test, nonequivalent groups type was adopted. It is described as follows:

$O_1X O_2$ $O_3 CO_4$

Where,

O_1 and O_3 : Pre-test Scores

O_2 and O_4 : Post- test Scores

X : Experimental Group

C : Control Group

Here, the experimental group received the intervention programme and the control group did not receive the intervention programme. Both, the experimental and control groups underwent an oral test comprising of six questions. Two parallel tests were constructed: one

was used as a pre-test and the other as a post-test. The duration of the intervention programme received by the experimental group was forty hours.

4.1 English Language Communication Skills Instructional Programme

English language communication skill instructional programme was based on activities of forty instructional hours. It was designed with the specific objective to enhance English language communication skills and attitude towards English of B.Ed. students. The duration of each activity is a minimum of 60 minutes and a maximum of 120 minutes (wherever necessary). It focused on actional competence (as the term used by Marianne celce and Zoltan Donmyei in an article entitled 'communicative competence: A pedagogically motivated model with content specifications').

Activities in the instructional programme were bifurcated into following main dimensions i.e verbal expression, non-verbal expression, active listening and external behaviour. These dimensions were further bifurcated into sub-dimensions and components of communication skills such as verbal expression; appropriate construction of sentences, selection of words, use of grammar, pronunciation, voice modulation, fluency, audibility, coherence and non-verbal expression; body language, facial expressions, eye contact, active listening; response, paraphrasing, comprehending, external behaviour and confidence.

4.2 Instruments of the Study

In the present study, the following tools were used by the researcher to collect data:

- **Personal Data Sheet (Ansari, 2014):** This tool was prepared by the researcher to collect information about students' name, gender, faculty at graduation, medium of instruction in school, qualification, urban rural origin etc.
- **English Language Communication Skills Evaluation Rubric for Researcher (Ansari, 2014):** It consists of oral test and an evaluation rubric. Oral test consists of six questions. It helps in determining students' ability to speak with appropriate vocabulary, grammatical correctness, pronunciation of words, pause, pitch and voice modulation and most important convey message accurately. It is a test wherein the examiner possesses questions to the student in a spoken form. The student has to answer the question in such a way as to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the subject in order to qualify the exam. It attempts to measure what an individual has learned and to what extent it can be expressed in spoken form. The English language communication skills oral-test was evaluated with the help of English language communication skills evaluation rubric for the researcher. The researcher prepared English Language Communication Skills Evaluation Rubric based on the selected criteria, which was determined on the basis of review of empirical studies. The researcher has determined fifteen criteria to evaluate students' English language communication skills. The English Language Communication Skills Evaluation Rubric has three main criteria i.e Verbal Expression, Non-verbal expression and External Behaviour.
- **Attitude towards English Language Scale (Ansari, 2014):** It includes items on behavioural, cognitive and emotional aspect of attitude. It has 30 statements in which fifteen statements are worded positively and fifteen statements are worded negatively in the scale. For positively worded items, the scoring pattern is 4 3 2 1. For negatively worded items, the scoring pattern is 1 2 3 4.

4.3 Development of Attitude towards English Language Scale

The study attempts to measure the attitude of B.Ed. students towards English language. Some tools are available to study attitude of students towards different subjects. However, the instruments used in the developed countries of West are not always very suitable for studies conducted in India. On the basis of a review of the existing tools, the researcher developed the attitude towards English language scale. This scale was developed

by the researcher to measure attitude of student-teachers towards English language. It includes items on behavioural, cognitive and emotional aspect of attitude. It has 30 statements in which fifteen statements are worded positively and fifteen statements are worded negatively in the scale, out of which nine statements are based on behavioural aspect, ten statements are based on cognitive aspect and eleven items are based on emotional aspect of attitude.

Initially, a pool of items was prepared covering various dimensions of attitude towards English language. The number of items in the draft form of the scale was 40.

The next step was to decide the response categories or the scales which would be best suited for the items. The researcher decided to adopt the Likert scale. A four point scale was decided upon, with the response categories as Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. In order to ascertain the content validity and face validity, the attitude towards English language was given to ten experts in the field of education and psychology to ascertain the relevance of the items in the context of the definition of the concept of student-teachers' attitude towards English language. Those items, which were agreed upon by ninety five percent of the experts were retained and three items were modified in accordance with their suggestions. The content validity was thus established. Based on their opinions, ten statements were removed from the draft form of the scale.

For positively worded items, the scoring pattern is as follows:

Response Category	Scale Value
Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

For negatively worded items, the scoring pattern was reverse in order.

The highest and the lowest possible scores for each individual on attitude towards English Scale are 30 and 120 respectively.

4.4 Validity of the Attitude towards English Language Scale

For the validation of the tool, it was given to five experts from the field of Education and Language-Teaching and based on the suggestions, changes and modifications were made in the attitude towards English scale. The reliability coefficient obtained using Cronchbach's Alpha of the attitude towards English is 0.94. The co-efficient of stability obtained for test-re-test reliability of the scale is 0.93. There was a time gap of 4 weeks between the two administrations for establishing test-retest reliability.

5. Techniques of Data Analysis

The present research used statistical techniques of ANCOVA and Wolf's formula.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

INTERACTIVE INFLUENCE OF IP AND MOI ON ATE

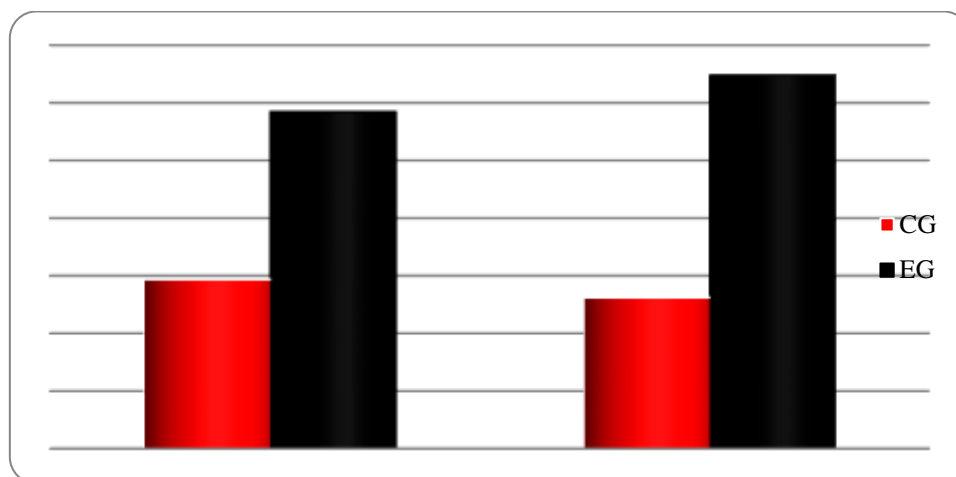
The following table shows the relevant statistics of interactive influence of instructional programme (IP) and medium of instruction (MOI) in school on attitude towards English (ATE) of B.Ed. students.

Table 1: Descriptive data for ATE

Variable	MOI	Sample size			Mean			
					Observed		Adjusted	
Attitude		EG	CG	Total	EG	CG	EG	CG

towards English	English	43	34	77	99.2093	96.323	99.6885	93.873
	Non-English	27	36	63	99.2593	92.777	100.9576	93.245

The following figure shows the mean ATE by instructional programme and medium of instruction.



The following table shows the ANCOVA summary of interactive influence of instructional programme and medium of instruction in school on attitude towards English.

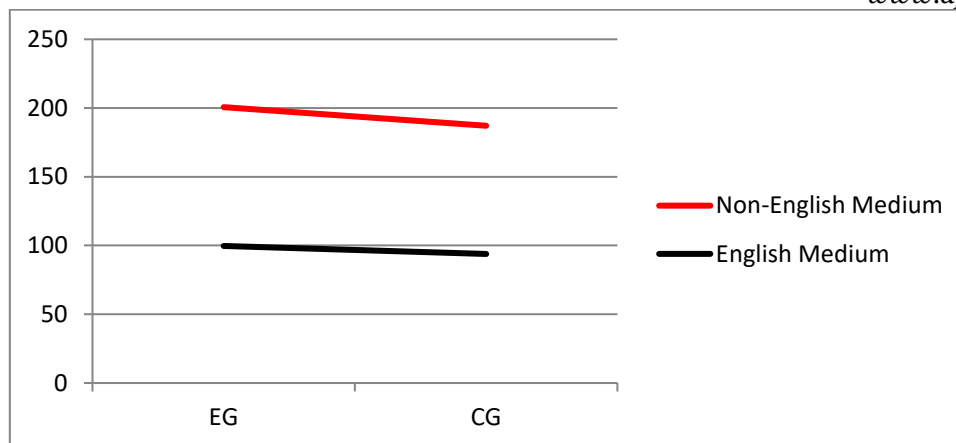
Table 2 shows Two-way ANCOVA for mean of ATE by instructional programme and medium of instruction.

TABLE 2: ANCOVA for mean of ATE by IP and MOI

Source	SS	df	MS	F	P
IP Effect	1522.86	1	1522.86	172.4	<.0001
MOI Effect	11.17	1	11.17	1.26	0.263
Interaction Effect	22.28	1	22.28	2.52	0.114
Adjusted error	1192.52	135	8.83		

It was found that the F-ratio for instructional programme effect was 172.4 ($P < 0.0001$). The F-ratio for moderating variable of MOI was 1.26 ($P = 0.263$) and was therefore, not significant. Also, the F-ratio for interaction effect was 2.52 ($P = 0.114$) was not significant. It implies that the English language communication skills instructional programme is equally effective in enhancing ATE for students with English as well as non-English media of instruction.

The following figure shows the interactive influence of instructional programme (IP) and medium of instruction (MOI) in school on attitude towards English (ATE) of B.Ed. students.



This was followed by computing the effect size of the intervention programme using the Wolf's formula.

5.1 Effect Size of the Intervention Programme

The Following table shows the effect size of the intervention programme on attitude towards English of student-teachers.

Table 3: Effect size of the IP on ATE

Independent Variable	Effect Size	Magnitude
IP	2.21	High

It can be seen from Table 3 that the effect size of the English language communication skills instructional programme on ATE is 2.21 which is high in magnitude.

6. Recommendations

Such an instructional programme needs to be made a part of the teacher education curriculum. Another research needs to be conducted after modifying the instructional programme so as to make it more suitable to student-teachers considering various regional languages. Design-based research is needed for all those speakers who are poorly exposed to the English language communication skills.

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