

CHAPTER - III

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In the present chapter, methodology of the study is discussed to describe design, plan and procedure of the study adopted by the researcher. The chapter also contains rationale of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, operationalization of the terms, hypothesis, area and type of the study, delimitation of the study, selection of the population and size of the sample, sources of data, tools for data collection and statistical techniques used for data analysis.

3.2. RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

India is a country of diversities. Language is one of the diversities, widely prevailed due to number of state languages and dialects. Thus, multilingualism broadly prevails in each state of India. Because of multilingualism, the people of rural locale especially of backward classes face more severe problems in language learning than that of urban one. Most of the backward classes i.e. Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, have their own dialects. When they enter into the school, the language of instruction becomes a second language . When English is introduced to them, it comes at fourth, fifth and even sometimes sixth number of language to be learnt by a student. For example, a boy of a small remote village of Tapi district enters into the school first time, he had already learnt his dialect, say Choudhary. Now as he enters into school environment, he learns Gujarati and Hindi languages primarily. But simultaneously he also learns the dialects of other communities of the area like, Gamit, Vasava, Kokani, Dhodia. Thus, when a student starts learning English in Class V, it comes at almost sixth number of language to be learnt by the student.

Thus, the students of backward classes face vast problems in learning English language. They need, therefore an ample attention in general and for English language in particular. Today, the world is becoming a global village rapidly. But until English language is made to be used in domestic way and in domestic context, learning of English as a second language perhaps would be a far reaching moon for the people who live in the village considering itself as a globe.

The people we find in southern part of Gujarat state are alike. The Tapi district to which Vyara tehsil belongs to is located in the southern part of Gujarat. On 27th September 2007, the district of Surat was bifurcated into two districts, viz. Surat district with its headquarter at Surat and Tapi district with its headquarter at Vyara. The newly constituted Tapi district consists of five talukas viz. Vyara, Songadh, Uchhal, Nizar and Valod.

Since, there are number of dialects in the district, students learn various dialects preferring their own dialect. Therefore, as they enter into school environment, they learn Gujarati as mother tongue, and Hindi or English as second languages. Gujarati and Hindi language having great preference and exposure in school and social environment, dominates the language learning of students up to Class XII. As a result, when they enter into the graduate level courses, they cannot speak even a sentence in English language. The basic knowledge of English language, i.e. phonological, syntactic and semantic patterns required for adequate proficiency, is not acquired properly by the students due to such circumstances.

To overcome the learning problems of such students, diagnostic approach has been effective and widely suggested by the researchers and experts of the field. Since, the very key function of the diagnostic approach is detecting errors and slow or lower progressing learners; finding out causes of the errors; identifying learning difficulties of the learners; and rectifying errors through careful remedial instruction, the teaching of English in the schools also calls forth to the approach to overcome the difficulties. Error analysis, as a part of diagnostic approach, is a very useful practice to study the errors of the learners. Ellis (1995) and Gao (2009), also emphasizes on error analysis in language teaching as it is very useful in organizing and teaching grammatical items through error-based remediation.

The trend report of the Sixth Survey of Educational Research-I (1993-2000) observes that error analysis studies have been profuse in the Indian Educational context the findings of which have not been formalized for pedagogical purposes. For strategy training, these findings highlight the need for errors of interference, transfer and overgeneralization to be addressed specifically. National Curriculum Framework (2005)

therefore emphasizes on the matter of researches that, much of research time has gone into the teaching of English for the middle classes in English medium schools, rather than the teaching of English as a second language in regional language medium schools. Hence there is a need of researches on second language teaching.

Language learning is the process that involves the making of mistakes and errors, so errors are regarded as the product of learning. Dulay, (1982) states that, “Studying error serves two major purposes: it provides data from which inferences about the nature of the language learning process can be made and it indicates to teachers and curriculum developers in which part of the target language students have most difficulty producing correctly and which error types distracts most from a learner’s ability to communicate effectively”. Students errors, in this way, should be studied which is very useful to the teachers and curriculum developers.

The present study, hence, deals with the problems in acquiring English proficiency amongst students of Std. VIII. To address the problem, the study aims at diagnosing and remedying learning problems of students of Std. VIII, and suggesting remedial measure for teaching at primary school level in the state of Gujarat.

3.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

“Diagnosis and Remediation of English Proficiency among Students of Std. VIII.”

3.4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out the status of proficiency in English among the students of Std. VIII.
2. To identify and locate the learning errors committed by students in acquiring proficiency in English.
3. To develop and suggest remedial measures to overcome students’ learning problems.
4. To study the effectiveness of remedial measures taken for overcoming learning problems.

3.5. OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE TERMS

3.5.1. English Proficiency

The term, English Proficiency refers to the ability or skill of the learner to use English language grammatically and contextually correct in speaking and writing; and to comprehend it appropriately while listening and reading.

3.5.2. Diagnosis and Remediation:

Diagnosis is defined as the process of identifying the learners having difficulties in acquiring proficiency in English, identifying and locating difficulty area faced by the learners and overcoming such difficulties through suitable treatment or remediation. Remediation is inseparable part of diagnosis; meaning the treatment given to the learners having difficulties in specific learning area of English Proficiency.

3.5.3. Error

The term, Error refers to the incorrect responses given by the learners in specific area. There is infinite talk on difference between the terms ‘errors’ and ‘mistakes’. The present study sticks to the meaning given in the first line.

3.6. HYPOTHESIS

- I.** There will be no significant difference between the mean achievement scores of the experimental and controlled group students on pre test and post test.
- II.** There will be no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of the experimental group students on pre test and post test.

3.7. DESIGN OF THE STUDY

As per the nature and requirement of the study **Experimental Design** i.e. pre test-treatment- post test design, was selected.

3.7.1. Pre Test

An achievement test (Pre-Test) was prepared by the investigator and administered to the students of both experimental and controlled group.

3.7.2. Treatment

1. After analysis of the test scores of experimental group, the errors of students were studied. On the basis of error analysis, Diagnostic Tests were prepared and implemented on the experimental group.

2. The results of Diagnostic Tests were carefully analyzed and probable causes of learning problems were carried out. Based on diagnostic analysis the Remedial Programme was developed to overcome the problems.

3.7.3. Post Test:

At the end of remediation, parallel test to achievement test was administered to both the groups of students to check the effectiveness of Remediation.

3.8. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The present study was delimited to the students of Std. VIII of the selected Gujarati medium primary schools of Tapi district in the state of Gujarat, following Gujarat State Education Board, Gandhinagar.

3.9. POPULATION OF THE STUDY

All the students of Std. VIII of Gujarati Medium Primary Schools of Vyara tehsil, following Gujarat State Education Board syllabus constituted the population for the present study.

3.10. SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

The sample of the study was randomly selected. Using Lottery Method, out of 17 schools Primary School Chikhalvav, Vyara and Primary School Vashkui, Vyara was selected as a sample. All the students of Std. VIII of both the school constituted sample for the study. Pre test was given to all the students of Std. VIII of both the schools. After analysis of Pre test the mean scores of both the classes were analyzed. The mean scores of Primary School Chikhalvav and Primary School Vashkui were 32.15 and 33.63 respectively. Thus Primary School Chikhalvav having low mean score than the other was selected as experimental group and Primary School Vashkui, Vyara having higher mean score, was selected as controlled group. Thus, all the students of both the classes constituted sample for the present study.

3.11. PLAN AND PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

- 1) Developing parallel Achievement tests on English Proficiency

- 2) Administering parallel Achievement test (Pre test) on English Proficiency.
- 3) Analyzing the test and identifying errors committed by the students.
- 4) Developing and implementing Diagnostic Tests to locate the errors and finding out causes of learning problems.
- 5) Developing and implementing Remedial Measures to overcome the learning problems of students.
- 6) Implementing parallel Achievement test (Post test) on English Proficiency.

3.12. TOOLS OF THE STUDY

The researcher prepared the following tools for data collection in the present study:

3.12.1. Parallel Achievement tests (Pre-test and Post-test)

The parallel achievement tests were constructed on the aspects of four skills, i.e. Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing.

The researcher constructed the parallel Achievement tests for the realization of the objective no.1 (to find out the status of proficiency in English among students of Std. VIII) and objective no. 4 (to study the effectiveness of remedial measures taken for overcoming learning problems). The Achievement tests were validated by the experts and tried out before implementation. The mean score of the students in the pre test was 27.07 and in the post test was 31.33 respectively. To ensure the reliability of the tests r was calculated. The r of the test scores was 0.79 which indicates the adequate reliability of the parallel tests employed. The pre-test was conducted with the objective of testing the previous knowledge of the student in the area of English Proficiency and to prepare error analysis for the development of Diagnostic Tests..

3.12.2. Diagnostic Tests

3.12.2.1. Diagnostic Grammar Test

On the basis of Error Analysis of the responses obtained in Pre test, Diagnostic Grammar Test was prepared. It comprises of total sixty questions which are based on grammar points such as, Parts of Speech, Parts of Sentences, Modals, Primary Auxiliaries, Use of Has/Have, Use of There, Do/Does/Did, Question tags, 'Wh'

Questions, Degree, Voice and Indirect speech. The objective of employing diagnostic test was to know the learning difficulties of the students in English grammar.

3.12.2.2. Diagnostic Listening Test

The Diagnostic Listening Test was developed and administered on the students to know the learning difficulties they exhibit in the communicative tasks. It is consisted of total 3 Questions. The First Question examines the sound and word recognition skill of listening skill through dictation task. The Second Question examines the comprehension skill of listening skill through performing instructed task. The Third Question examines the responding skill of listening skill through responding to a question.

3.12.2.3. Diagnostic Speaking Test

The Diagnostic Speaking Test was developed and administered on the students to know the learning difficulties they exhibit in the communicative tasks. It is consisted of total 3 Questions. The First Question of the test was set to examine the Read aloud ability of the students. The Second Question of the test was set to examine the Describing Ability of the students. The Third Question examines the essential skill of narrating a story of the students.

3.12.2.4. Diagnostic Reading Test

The Diagnostic Reading Test was developed and administered on the students to know the learning difficulties they exhibit in the reading tasks. It is consisted of total 2 Questions. Both the Questions of the test were set to examine the comprehension ability of the students in Reading texts. The Reading Comprehension covers sub skills like, Recognizing, Inference, Predicting or Guessing, Previewing, Skimming, Scanning and paraphrasing. The sub-questions of the test hence represent the above sub skill or skills for testing Reading Skill.

3.12.2.5. Diagnostic Writing Test

The Diagnostic Writing Test was developed and administered on the students to know the learning difficulties they exhibit in the writing tasks. It is consisted of total 4 Questions. The First Question of the test is set to examine the ability of the students to write the given texts correctly and systematically. The Second Question was set to

examine the ability of the students to write essay on given topic. The Third Question was set to examine the ability of the students to use Punctuation and Capitalization rules. The Fourth Question of the test was set to examine the ability of the students to write the story on the basis of given pictures.

3.12.2.6. English Proficiency Scale

The achievement tests used for testing English Proficiency of the students were also measured using English Proficiency Scale. The researcher looked for readymade English Proficiency Scale for measuring proficiency of the students of Std. VIII., but could not find suitable one for them. For these reason, the researcher developed an English Proficiency Scale after studying the standard English Proficiency Scales of authentic organizations. The tool is comprised of five descriptive levels labeled as Extremely Limited User, Limited User, Modest User, Good User and Competent User. The scale measures the four major language skills, i.e. Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

3.13. DATA COLLECTION

The data were both quantitative and qualitative in nature and personally collected by the researcher. For realization of the first and fourth objective, data were collected by conducting Achievement Tests. For the second objective Diagnostic tests were employed to collect both qualitative and quantitative data.

3.14 DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING REMEDIAL PROGRAMME

The remedial programme must have research-based data to be worked out for overcoming learning difficulties. In the present study required data for developing remedial lesson plans were gathered from the analysis of various Diagnostic Tests i.e. Diagnostic Grammar Test, Diagnostic Listening Test, Diagnostic Speaking Test, Diagnostic Reading Test and Diagnostic Writing Test. The steps taken for developing and implementing remedial programme in the present study were as follows:

- 1) The most common learning difficulties observed in the learning of students were classified and the analysis of students having learning difficulties were carried out based on the prerequisites, their learning needs, learning abilities, learning styles and interests. The student profile was developed to gather students' personal as well as academic information to find out their learning abilities, learning styles and learning interests.
- 2) Based on the information sought in the first step teaching objectives were formed. The data regarding learning difficulties formed the base for formulating different teaching objectives for all the four skills. However, the aims of the teaching remain the same as the development of all language skills in the students.
- 3) As the process of remedial teaching suggests, the English language textbooks of Std. V to Std. VIII which are published by Gujarat State School Textbook Board for Gujarati Medium Primary School Students were decided as the curriculum of the remedial programme. However, to make the programme more effective the use of various teaching aids like flash cards, pictures, charts and reference books were used in the remediation programme.
- 4) To organize the teaching material the textbooks of various standards were made available for the students. Teaching aids like, Pictures, Charts, Flash Cards were prepared before going for teaching.
- 5) As per the suggestions for remedial teaching, the strategy used in the present programme was Individualized Teaching. To bring the students having more difficulty in learning individual attention was paid. However, when required, group teaching was also carried out for better learning.

- 6) Before classroom teaching, apart from the textbooks, supporting material like, charts, flash cards, pictures, reference books etc were gathered and prepared the lesson plans.
- 7) As per the selected strategy, Individual or group teaching was carried out. The students with more learning difficulties were given more individualized teaching, while others were mostly provided with group or co-teaching.
- 8) The formative evaluation of the students was carried out in the end of the course of teaching on daily basis so as to ensure the rectification of learning difficulties. The homework also played significant role for formative evaluation. The observation notes were also prepared on the language skills, Social-interaction skills and strengths and weaknesses of the students. The summative evaluation was carried out by taking achievement test that covered the entire syllabus of the programme.
- 9) When the achievement of objectives was observed in formative evaluation, the advanced learning or new teaching point was targeted.
- 10) When the obstacles were faced during the learning process, the revision of the plan was carried out or another teaching plan was formulated.

The follow up of the above steps was carried out using the following format of lesson plans:

FORMAT OF THE LESSON PLANS		
Day:		Duration: 45 to 60 minutes
Topic:		
Aims & Objectives:	Aims: To develop Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing Skills of the students. Objectives: The students will be able to:	
Skills:	Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing	
Learning Difficulties:		
Approach / Method:	Functional Approach, Communicative Approach	

Resources:	Textbook, Dictionary, Chart etc.		
Activities/Tasks:		Teachers Activity	Students Activity
	Warming Up:	The teacher will exhibit the recitation of a rhyme.	The students will listen to the rhyme recited by the teacher and follow him.
	Introducing the topic	The Teacher will introduce the topic from the textbook and ask some questions to the students related to the topic.	The students will respond the questions asked by the teacher.
	Teaching of the topic		The students will do as per the directions of the teacher.
	Grammar Point		
Practice	The teacher will give the exercise to practice the grammar point / Task.		The students will do as per the directions of the teacher.
Evaluation	The teacher will evaluate the students' learning by asking questions or assigning a task or activity.		The students will do as per the directions of the teacher.
Assigning Homework	The teacher will assign topic related homework to the students.		The students will do as per the directions of the teacher.

Considering the feasibility and need of the remedial programme, total 50 lesson plans were prepared. When revision required, modifications and additions were made. After completion teaching of 50 days remedial programme, achievement test was implemented to ensure the success of remediation.

3.14. DATA ANALYSIS

The collected data were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The data collected using Achievement Tests were analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative techniques employed were, Frequency Distribution, Mean Difference, and Percentage Analysis. The qualitative techniques employed for analysis were content analysis, classification and inferences. The data obtained through Diagnostic Tests were analyzed using qualitative technique i.e. Content Analysis.

The following chapter discusses about analysis of Achievement tests and Diagnostic tests. It also discusses about the interpretation of the data and findings of the study.