

**DEVELOPMENT OF MODULES FOR
ENHANCING ENGLISH LANGUAGE ABILITIES
AMONG THE STUDENTS OF
PRIMARY TEACHER EDUCATION
PROGRAMME**

**AN ABSTRACT
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**BY
FR. TELESPHORO TIAGO FERNANDES
REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE NO: 345
UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF
DR. ANJALI KHIRWADKAR**

**CENTRE OF ADVANCED STUDY IN EDUCATION
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY
THE M.S. UNIVERSITY OF BARODA**

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INTRODUCTION

Language is an essential part of human life. As man is a social being, he possesses innate language skills to communicate and build a strong social connection with one another. The word 'language' has a meaning. The Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (1989) defines language as 'System of sounds, words, patterns, etc. used by humans to communicate thoughts and feelings.'

Language is created by man for his social needs. Man requires language for his growth and development in the society. Language is a very difficult and versatile system used to communicate our thoughts desires and experiences to other persons. Even though we use gestures, signs, drawings, sculptures etc, these are not affable enough to replace language.

Language and human culture are closely related and the one is essential to the other. As man gives more attention towards the study of his culture, he should make effort to work out a comprehensive examination of the means of communication which is essential to his society. Language and society are constantly developing and are subject to undergo growth and change like any living organism.

Defining Language

The uses of the word language are so varied that any attempt at definition may pose some problems. However, one of the best definitions of language can be in the words of Sapir (1921):
"Language is a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and

desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols. These symbols are in the first instance auditory and they are produced by the so-called organs of speech”.

The implication and value of this statement lie in its emphasis on language as a specifically common attribute, capable of expressing ideas and emotions as well as the other fundamental desires which man may have in common with other animals. The statement stresses that language operates as a system of symbols of which the spoken form is of primary importance.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The study undertaken by the investigator is significant in many aspects. The Government of Gujarat is going all out to promote big time business ventures. The lacuna which the State faces is with regard to personnel proficient in the English language. The Government has made English subject compulsory in the tenth and twelfth standard Board Examinations and by introducing the Functional/Communicative Approach in the teaching of English in schools is making its intentions clear. Also, it has introduced SCOPE with the purpose of making the students proficient in the spoken form of the language.

It is highly essential and imperative that the teachers teaching in the primary schools are well-versed in their English language abilities otherwise it will have a disastrous and adverse impact on the young and impressionable minds of the students. The developed modules will give them a sound and thorough footing in the English language and will also act as a buffer and a resource material to fall back on.

The teacher trainees themselves are first generation learners of English and so fall short in their command over the English language. They experience deficiency in pronunciation, diction, intonation patterns, sentence construction, grammatical structures, spellings, use and usage of the language, et al. The developed modules will address all these deficiencies.

The Government too has initiated certain steps to further English teaching-learning abilities by introducing SCOPE. The functional level of English is emphasized through it. The state has deemed it fit to enhance the proficiency of the students keeping in mind the economic and global scenario. Language learning at a later age becomes difficult, especially learning a foreign language like English. It is easier at a younger age and children are more atuned to learning a

new language faster. It, therefore, implies that good teachers of English at an early stage of the students' life will make a world of difference to the uptake of the language.

L1 teaching-learning situation can be replicated in teaching L2 through the use of the training modules developed for enhancing English language abilities among the students of PTC colleges since the mother tongue is learnt more specifically on the basis of principles of Communicative approach. By providing an environment similar to L1 condition, learning the L2 will be faster, better, interesting and productive. Children in a given locality acquire fluency in more than one language using the skills associated with communicative learning. This then can be the basis for class-room teaching of L2 learning.

Further, the research findings of the investigator will shed light on the actual problems being faced, the deficiency of the system in place, the inadequacies of the teaching-learning situations and the mind-set of the teacher trainees. With the help of these findings, appropriate measures can be taken to plug the loopholes and tie up the loose ends so as to make the teaching-learning process and the acquisition of the English language skill as a second language meaningful and fruitful.

The status of English language in the schools of Gujarat is gaining ascendancy and considerable thought is going into its development and use. Making English as a compulsory subject in the S.S.C. and H.S.C. Board Examinations in itself is a bold step forward in propagating the language. Further, by introducing the Functional/Communicative Approach in the teaching of English language; the emphasis is placed on its usage. Stress is placed not so much on accuracy but on functional and appropriateness of language competence.

Keeping in mind the changed scenario in the State of Gujarat with reference to English teaching, it is imperative for the teachers of English to be competent and armed with the necessary techniques and skills in provoking the students in acquiring mastery over the language.

The English text-books used in the schools offer limited assistance to the teacher. It is more of a tool and is meant to be so. It is left to the teachers to be ingenious and creative. Quite a few teachers find it difficult to do so due to various constraints which are either personal or circumstantial.

The scope of this study, therefore, will be boundless. This study will help to measure the effectiveness of the modules being developed by investigator. It will also help the primary teachers of English to optimise their potentialities of teaching English in the classroom situation through the use the developed modules.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

DEVELOPMENT OF MODULES FOR ENHANCING ENGLISH LANGUAGE ABILITIES AMONG THE STUDENTS OF PRIMARY TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDIES

1. To develop and implement modules for primary student-teachers to enhance their English language ability.
2. To study the effectiveness of the modules in terms of their academic achievement in LSRW (Listening, Speaking Reading and Writing) skills.
3. To study the opinion of Experimental Group primary student-teachers towards the developed modules for enhancing English language abilities.
4. To study the change in attitude of the primary student-teachers of Experimental Group towards English language.

HYPOTHESES

1. There will be no significant difference in the academic achievement in Listening skill of the primary student-teachers of Experimental and Control Groups.
2. There will be no significant difference in the academic achievement in Speaking skill of the primary student-teachers of Experimental and Control Groups.
3. There will be no significant difference in the academic achievement in Reading skill of the primary student-teachers of Experimental and Control Groups.
4. There will be no significant difference in the academic achievement in Writing skill of the primary student-teachers of Experimental and Control Groups.

5. There will be no significant difference in the academic achievement in LSRW skills of the primary student-teachers of Experimental and Control Groups.
6. There will be no significant difference in the attitude of Experimental Group primary student-teachers before and after experiment with regard to 'The importance of the English language'.
7. There will be no significant difference in the attitude of Experimental Group primary student-teachers before and after experiment with regard to 'Liking towards the English language'.
8. There will be no significant difference in the attitude of Experimental Group primary student-teachers before and after experiment with regard to 'Views of primary student-teachers on English language teaching in present context'.
9. There will be no significant difference in the attitude of Experimental Group primary student-teachers before and after experiment with regard to 'Negativities towards English language'.
10. There will be no significant difference in the attitude of Experimental Group primary student-teachers before and after experiment with regard to 'Lack of exposure provided for the learning of English'.

DEFINITION OF THE TERMS USED

English Language Abilities

English Language abilities would mean one who is able to receive as well as express information, opinion, ideas, etc. efficiently in the English language.

Modules

Modules would mean a set of Self-explanatory tasks that would include the following components:

1. Grammatical Items, vocabularies, sentence constructions, situational text-materials and lessons.
2. Visual aids like pictures, charts, flash-cards, drawings, objects, et al.
3. Audio cassettes of songs, rhymes, speeches, declamations, intonation patterns, word-spell and pronunciation practice, radio news recordings, etc.
4. Audio-visual materials.

The focus will be on developing the four skills namely Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing in the English language.

DELIMITATIONS

The study is delimited only to the DIET (District Institute of Education and Training) PTC College, Idar, Sabarkantha District.

RESEARCH SURVEY

The reviews of the studies have been categorized under four different sub-categories as mentioned below together with the implication of each of these sub-categories and the variables and findings of utmost importance:

1. Studies Conducted In The Area Of Teaching Of English At The P.T.C. And B.Ed. Level.
2. Studies Conducted On Achievement In English At Primary And Secondary School Level.
3. Studies Conducted On Factors Affecting Learning English Language.
4. Studies Conducted On Approaches Followed In Teaching English.

The investigator sifted through a good number of sources and has identified studies a total of 47 both Indian and foreign that was done in the English language from the year 2000 onwards under four broad categories namely in:

1. The Area Of Teaching Of English At The P.T.C. And B.Ed. Level (Three studies): Raj(2004), Bushra, Aijaz and Saima (2010) and Bavesh (2012).
2. Primary And Secondary School Level (Twelve studies): Meera (2000), Jeyakumar and Sebastian (2003), Varghese (2005), Farooque (2005), Asha (2006), Muthukrishna and Singaravelu (2006), Rezwana (2007), Sharma and Yadav (2013), Steve (2005), Hussain (2005), Ezzedine (2011) and Erdem, Aliye, Mukaddes, Pala and Ferhat (2013).
3. Factors Affecting Learning English Language (Nineteen studies): Vuppala (2000), Hans and Dechen (2001), Bigelow Martha (2001), Hammonds (2001), Karasawa (2001), Sheorey and Dies (2001), Wapole (2001), Tommie (2002), Warsi (2002), Ali Nihat (2003), Mendoza (2004), Piotr (2005), Richley (2005), Hinkel (2006), Aribi (2012), Rani (2013), Gupta (2013), Meras (2013) and Druce (2013).

4. Approaches Followed In Teaching English (Thirteen studies): Singh and Satsangi (2001), Rosemary (2003), Al-Btoosh (2004), Al-Rajhi (2004), Alshwairkh (2004), Aiden (2005), Joseph (2005), Vinodkumar (2007), Malini (2012), Kemp (2012), de Chazal (2012), Lakshmi (2013) and Nirmala (2014).

IMPLICATIONS OF THE REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

It can be noticed by having a cursory glance at the related studies both Indian and foreign mentioned above that practically all the studies except the studies conducted by **Sheorey and Dies (2001)**, (Advanced Level of ESL Students) and **Hammonds (2001)**, (Advanced non-native speakers of English) concern with acquisition of English as a Second Language or English as a Foreign Language, which augurs well with regard to one aspect of the investigator's research studies, namely, English taught and learnt as a Second Language. Further, most of the studies in the English language are reported in the areas concerning Primary And Secondary School Level, Factors Affecting Learning and Approaches Followed. The least reported is in the area of Teacher Education Programme.

Many of the studies herewith also deal with skills related to listening or speaking or reading or writing for example **Wapole (2001)**, **Mendoza (2004)**, **Alshwairkh (2004)**, etc. Some have combined two skills as in the case of **Jeyakumar and Sebastian (2003)**. The study conducted by **Singh and Satsangi (May, 2001)** was an experimental one and took into account all the four skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. But the nature of the study was different.

The study undertaken by **Vinodkumar (2007)** conducted an experimental study on Activity Based Teaching of English. But the study takes into account only two skills namely, reading and writing. So does the study undertaken by **Erdem, Aliye, Erdem and Ferhat (2013)** for the Fourth grade students on An Example of a Constructivist Blended Learning Environment for Developing Language Skills which also deals with two skills namely Listening and Speaking skills.

The closest studies that could match with the study of the investigator is that of **Raj (2004)**, with regard to the functional proficiency of student teachers (student-teachers) in English language and the methodology employed was through six validated tools for testing the research hypothesis but the study was not experimental in nature. And another by **Bushra, Aijaz and Saima (2010)** conducted A Study of the Reported Language Skill Development Strategies of the Student Teachers by employing the Survey method. **Bavesh (2012)** dealt with the Communicative Approach in learning English language for the B.Ed. teacher trainees. But no one has prepared MODULES for teaching English for the students of Primary Education Programme.

METHODOLOGY

POPULATION

All the P.T.C. (Primary Teacher Certificate) Colleges in Gujarat State that impart primary teacher-training programme over a period of two academic years. There were 341 registered P.T.C. Colleges in Gujarat State as per the website of National Council for Teacher Education (N.C.T.E.), Bhopal.

SAMPLE

The First Year P.T.C. students of the DIET (District Institute of Education and Training) P.T.C. College, Idar were selected as a sample for the present study. It was a purposive sampling as the college authorities were willing to permit the researcher to use and implement the developed modules for the purpose of the stated research.

VARIABLES

The independent variable is developed modules that is meant to enhance primary student-teachers' English language ability whereas the dependent variable is student-teachers' academic achievement in Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing skills based on researcher developed Pre and Post test.

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUE

Academic achievement was measured with the help of Pretest – Posttest. Opinionnaire and Attitude scales were used to collect the required data. The details of the tools and technique employed to serve the purposes of the present study has been presented below.

PRETEST – POSTTEST ACHIEVEMENT TEST

For developing Pre and Post Test academic achievement, researcher referred the English (Second Language) Textbooks of Standards IV to VIII published by Gujarat State Board of School Textbooks, Gandhinagar. The researcher also studied the Standard 4 to 12 English (Second Language) Textbooks of the Gujarat Board and listed down the required competencies that student is supposed to achieve by the successful completion of twelve years of schooling and thereafter, the test was constructed. The pretest-posttest was constructed in line with the modules that the researcher implemented. The test was of total 40 marks, aimed to assess Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing skills acquired by the first year students of Primary Teacher – Training College before and after the implementation of the modules.

After developing initial draft of the test, it was given to the experts of the English language and the experts in the field of Education. Based on experts' suggestions, the test was modified. The same pretest was employed as posttest in the present study.

OPINIONNAIRE

To study the opinion of Experimental Group primary student-teachers towards the developed modules for enhancing English language abilities, Objective 3 'To study the opinion of Experimental Group primary student-teachers towards the developed modules for enhancing English language abilities' of the present study, the researcher constructed the Opinionnaire on the three-point scale, 'Agree', 'Cannot Say' and 'Disagree'. The Opinionnaire encompassed various statements to collect the students' opinion towards the developed modules in terms of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. The Opinionnaire was read, studied with reference to the modules to be implemented and then, it was modified accordingly. The first draft of the Opinionnaire contained 40 statements. Researcher, then, for the purpose of the face-validation,

gave the Opinionnaire to the experts and modified it again based on experts' suggestions. The final draft of the Opinionnaire contained total 30 statements which were classified into four major categories by the investigator as mentioned under:

- I. Appreciation shown towards the modules
- II. Activity-oriented teaching in language learning
- III. Use of Technology/ICT in language learning
- IV. Kinesthetic-learning aspects in modules

ATTITUDE SCALE

The objective 4 was, "to study the change in attitude of the primary student-teachers of Experimental Group towards English language"; therefore, the researcher constructed the attitude scale. The researcher enlisted the basic components on which the student-teachers' attitude can be studied and a total of five components were listed down mentioned as under:

- I. The importance of the English language
- II. Liking towards the English language
- III. Views of primary student-teachers on English language teaching in present context
- IV. Negativities towards English language
- V. Lack of exposure for the learning of English

The attitude scale was constructed based on three point scale in which three options 'Agree', 'Disagree', and 'Can't Decide' were given. Initial draft of the attitude scale, contained a total of 55 statements. It was given to the experts in the field of Education and the attitude scale was modified by incorporating their suggestions. The final draft of the attitude scale used in this study encompassed total 40 statements spread over five components as stated above

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The study followed quasi-experimental-pretest-posttest design in which two groups: Control and Experimental were taken.

O1 X O2 O1 O3 = Pretests, X = exposure of a group to the developed modules

O3 C O4 O2 O4 = Posttests, C = exposure of a group to the functional approach

PLAN AND PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

The plan and procedure of the study is discussed as under in different phases:

PHASE 1: DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODULES AND TOOLS

The modules were developed with an overview of the textbooks of Standard IV to VIII English Textbooks (2009) published by the Gujarat State Board of School Textbooks, a wide variety of publications for English language teaching and learning with each module having certain competencies to be achieved by the teachers in terms of LSRW skills. Further, the modules were designed keeping in mind the various strategies and learning situations like dialogue, role-play, declamation, recitation, group discussion, critical appreciation, pictures, power-point-presentation, film, audio-visual cassettes, 'Improve Your Pronunciation' CD by Victor W. Tucker S.J. (2009), etc. The training modules were designed and were given to the experts (elementary school English teachers and educators) to obtain their suggestions for modification. As per their suggestions a series of modifications were made and incorporated into the modules, and thus, the content validity of the modules was established. English rhymes, action songs, games and activities were also incorporated into the classroom dynamics to make the sessions interesting, lively and a joyful learning experience.

The various tools: Pretest-Posttest, Opinionnaire, attitude scale were developed by the investigator and they were face-validated by obtaining the experts' suggestions which is discussed in previous sections.

PHASE 2: DATA COLLECTION

The steps followed during the duration of the experiment for the Experimental and the Control Groups are shown below in Table1.:

Table 1. : Data Collection Steps

Experimental Group	Control Group
1. Pre-test	1. Pre-test
2. Attitude Towards English Language	2. Not Applicable
3. Experimental treatment: Through	3. Through Gujarat State Textbooks Stds. 4

developed modules	to 8 (Traditional Approach by Teacher Educator)
4. Post-test	4. Post-test
5. Attitude Towards English Scale	5. Not Applicable
6. Opinionnaire Test	6. Not Applicable

PHASE 3: DATA ANALYSIS

Mann – Whitney U test was used to study the effectiveness of the implemented modules and Wilcoxon-Signed Pair test was used to study the attitudinal change among experimental group students. The experimental group students’ opinion towards the developed modules was analyzed using percentage analysis and intensity index.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of the study are as under:

The major findings of the study are as under:

1. The experimental group achieved significantly on posttest score in listening skill after experiencing the programme. It indicated that the experimental group sharpened their listening skill by listening attentively to the TV news, video clippings, voicemail messages, action songs, teacher’s reading of the text, etc.
2. The experimental group after experiencing the programme improved upon their speaking skills by way of participating in role-plays, dialogues, picture descriptions, spinning yarns, declamation, debate, et al. This helped them to build their confidence in the skill of speaking.
3. The experimental group after the intervention improved upon their reading skill as they listened to good English from BBC News, Fr. Tucker’s pronunciation CD, reading practice given by the teacher from the lessons in the module, advertisements, etc. They were able to read with comprehension which proved beneficial as the result suggests.

4. The experimental group had to do written exercises, grappled with grammar lessons, learnt to write correct spellings of words, wrote postcards, letters and essays. Thus, they developed their writing skills.
5. The experimental group after going through the modules could excel in all four skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. Language skills cannot be learnt in isolation and therefore the combination of skills through the use of various methods and techniques had helped positively the experimental group in the LSRW skills.
6. The experimental group after experiencing the programme showed positive attitude towards the importance of English language.
7. The experimental group after the intervention through modules, the experimental group developed a liking for the English language and had a joyous experience.
8. The experimental group views on English language teaching in the present context have to be taken into consideration and a need analysis has to be formulated before implementing any language programme.
9. The experimental group started appreciating the English language and started taking an active part in learning it with enthusiasm. Their fears were put at rest as they gained in confidence in learning the language and quelled the negative attitude towards English language.
10. The experimental group being first generation learners of English and come from rural background with no one to converse with them in English. The developed modules exposed them to the English language through innovative ways of teaching and a participatory approach through various activities. Thereby, offsetting the lack of exposure in the English language.

Implications

The researcher, through a judicious assortment of the different approaches, methods and techniques developed the modules to enhance the English language abilities among the primary student-teachers. The focus was to develop the Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing skills which brought about the desired results in the primary student-teachers in all four LSRW skills.

Further, the attitude of the primary student-teachers towards the English language showed marked improvement as seen in the result. They developed an interest and liking towards English. They waited eagerly for the English classes and participated in all the activities and exercises with total involvement. They being future teachers, bears a lot of significance in the way they will view the English language which will then have a ripple-effect on their prospective students.

The implications based on present research are as under:

1. Modules for teaching English Grammar should be developed, designed and implemented for the teaching of English as a Second Language in school curriculum.
2. 'Use' and 'Usage' are both crucial in language learning as they are like two sides of the same coin; implying a re-look at the Functional Approach to language learning that stresses more on the 'Use' of language.
3. An 'Eclectic Approach' by way of 'informed eclecticism' needs to be used for the teaching of English language.
4. A systematic, well-designed and compact methods and strategies have to be planned and worked-out in the teaching of English.
5. A judicious mix of activities, games, creative ideas, audio-visual aids, et al should be incorporated to enhance the Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing (LSRW) skills in language learning.
6. ICT or Digital Classroom settings: through the use of LCD projectors, DVD players, video-clippings, voice-recorders, power-point-presentations, etc. ignites language learning.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Following are the suggested studies based on the present study:

1. Development and implementation of modules for advancing English language skills among the B.Ed. Teacher-Trainees
2. A Critical Study of Functional Approach to teaching of English in Schools in the State of Gujarat.

3. Effectiveness of Task-based Approach verses Function-based Approach to Language Learning at the Lower-Primary School Level.
4. The Use of ICT in enabling and advancing English Language Abilities among the High School Students.

CONCLUSION

The findings prove that the developed modules for enhancing English language abilities among the primary student-teachers in the Experimental Group on post-testing performed better than their counterparts in the Control Group. The opinionnaire and the attitude scale data indicate that the Experimental group students profited and enhanced their English language abilities. There was marked improvement in the language skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. The present study gives an inkling into the various approaches that can be used in the teaching of the English language and offers a path-way to be followed in using different strategies in mastering the skills of language namely Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. It also reveals the lacuna in following one particular approach which could be detrimental to language learning. Further, a strong pitch is made to critically evaluate the Functional Approach that is in vogue in the schools of State of Gujarat and help teachers of English to reformulate their approach to teaching of English in schools and educational institutions.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kZIXWp6vFdE> (Powerful Inspirational true story...Don't give up!)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BZmuz88KEY> (This is a beautiful story of a father and son who don't see eye-to-eye and forget what family is but they come back together when.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SMpx-1dV24> (My Beautiful Woman Video Inspirational Unconditional Love Will Touch Your Heart)