

CHAPTER-6

FINDINGS,

CONCLUSIONS

AND

SUGGESTIONS

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6.1 Introduction

In the introductory part of the thesis, the aspects of language, language testing, and, the role of the teacher's language proficiency in the classroom teaching have been discussed. It is a fact that the proficiency in English for the teachers in general and for upper primary school teachers in particular is a very important requirement. It was necessary to find out whether the teacher is proficient in English or not. That is why the investigator felt the need of constructing and standardizing language proficiency test in English for the upper primary school teachers.

Keeping in view all this, the subject of present research study was selected and the investigator tried to justify the task of the present research work. This being the subject of language proficiency testing, she was quite aware of the fact that a language teacher in particular has to realize that the language is a powerful means of communication, perhaps more powerful than the faster means of communication invented by science.

In the whole thesis this chapter occupies the most important place, as this chapter deals with the findings and conclusions of the present study. The investigator has also tried to give certain suggestions for future study.

6.2 An Overview

The whole study was divided into three parts. They were;

- (A) Construction of the proficiency test in English
- (B) Standardization of the proficiency test and
- (C) To study the proficiency in English of the upper primary school teachers of RMC.

(A) Construction of the proficiency test in English:

To construct a good proficiency test in English, the investigator followed accepted procedure as given below.

- (1) The investigator studied the related literature of the English language testing and previous research studies in the field of proficiency test. Moreover, she has

reviewed the two international tests of English i.e. TOEFL and IELTS. Moreover, she consulted some experts of English language and language testing.

- (2) With the help of experts, the areas under measurement were determined and types of test items to measure the proficiency were constructed.
- (3) First the investigator constructed a pre-pilot test having 350 items. Here the language components under measurement kept in mind were vocabulary, functional grammar and reading comprehension. Types of items selected for the test were fully objective type i.e. match making, multiple choice type, cloze type, fill in the gaps type, alternative type... etc.
- (4) The pre-pilot test was tried out on 20 senior teachers of English and experts of English language and language testing.
- (5) According to the suggestions of above mentioned 20 experts and senior teachers the investigator constructed a pilot test with 64 subtests having 300 test items. The pilot test was equally divided into two parts: A and B in terms of number of the test items. The main three components as mentioned above were kept in the mind while the investigator prepared the pilot test.
- (6) The pilot test was tried out on the sample of 140 B.Ed. trainees of 5 education colleges and 160 upper primary language teachers of RMC. After counting the scores of the answer sheets, item analysis was carried out.
- (7) With the help of item analysis, the difficulty value and discrimination index of each item were computed. Items having difficulty value of 35 to 75 have been included in the test and items having discrimination index of more than 30% were selected.
- (8) With proper collection and selection of the test items, final proficiency test having 24 subtest and 100 items were constructed.

(B) Standardization of the test:

After constructing the test, the standardization of the test was a major task. To carry out this, the investigator followed the following steps:

- (1) The final run of the test was administered on 150 teachers of selected schools of RMC. The answer sheets were assessed and raw scores were obtained.
- (2) With the help of raw scores frequency distribution was prepared and descriptive statistics were computed by the computerized Microsoft Excel 2010 and IBM SPSS Statistics 19 software.
- (3) The validity of the test was estimated. The content validity, face validity and construct validity were also estimated. To find out the validity of the test the investigator follows Pearson's correlation coefficient method from SPSS software.
- (4) The reliability of the test was also established with the help of most acceptable two methods, Split-Half method and KR-20 method.
- (5) The investigator established percentile norms and T-score based on obtained part-wise score and overall score.
- (6) Different types of graphs were potted and presented to facilitate the understanding of the data analyses.

(C) To study the proficiency in English:

To test the proficiency in English the investigator has studied each variable in detail and analysed each of them with the use of SPSS software.

To study the proficiency of the teachers, the variables analysed in detail were sex of the teachers, age, educational qualification, teaching experience in English and special subject/method of the teachers. The effect of the variables on the proficiency in English was studied with the computation of t-ratio and F-test (ANOVA) with the help of SPSS software. The hypotheses were tested and data were analyzed to derive at conclusions.

Moreover, the investigator took personal interview of some teachers who are teaching in RMC schools. Thus, with the help of teachers' interview and discussions based on language proficiency the investigator prepared a research report. Not only that but the researcher herself worked in the RMC Upper Primary School for three years which helps her to arrive at certain conclusions.

Finally, the investigator prepared research report to present the whole work in the six chapters followed by the two appendixes viz forms of the (1) pilot tests and (2) final proficiency test.

6.3 Findings

The study has led to the following findings:

1. It is found from the frequency distribution of the overall score that the mean score of teachers is 54.95 whereas the maximum score is 89 and the minimum score is 33.
2. The validity of the test is found 0.86 which is very good.
3. The reliability of the test is found 0.94 which is also very good.
4. There is no significant difference in the mean score of vocabulary of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the sex, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.1) is confirmed.
5. There is no significant difference in the mean score of grammar of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the sex, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.2) is confirmed.
6. There is no significant difference in the mean score of reading comprehension of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the sex, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.3) is confirmed.
7. There is no significant difference in the mean of overall score of the proficiency test in English of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the sex, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.4) is confirmed.
8. There is a significant difference in the mean score of vocabulary of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the age, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.5) is rejected.
9. There is a significant difference in the mean score of grammar of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the age, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.6) is rejected.

10. There is no significant difference in the mean score of reading comprehension of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the age, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.7) is confirmed.
11. There is a significant difference in the mean of overall score of the proficiency test in English of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the age, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.8) is rejected.
12. There is a significant difference in the mean score of vocabulary of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the educational qualifications, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.9) is rejected.
13. There is a significant difference in the mean score of grammar of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the educational qualifications, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.10) is rejected.
14. There is a significant difference in the mean score of reading comprehension of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the educational qualifications, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.11) is rejected.
15. There is a significant difference in the mean of overall score of the proficiency test in English of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the educational qualifications, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.12) is rejected.
16. There is a significant difference in the mean score of vocabulary of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the teaching experience in English subject, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.13) is rejected.
17. There is a significant difference in the mean score of grammar of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the teaching experience in English subject, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.14) is rejected.
18. There is a significant difference in the mean score of reading comprehension of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the teaching experience in English subject, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.15) is rejected.
19. There is a significant difference in the mean of overall score of the proficiency test in English of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the teaching experience in English subject, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.16) is rejected.
20. There is a significant difference in the mean score of vocabulary of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the special subject/method, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.17) is rejected.

21. There is a significant difference in the mean score of grammar of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the special subject/method, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.18) is rejected.
22. There is a significant difference in the mean score of reading comprehension of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the special subject/method, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.19) is rejected.
23. There is a significant difference in the mean of overall score of the proficiency test in English of the teachers working in the RMC in relation to the special subject/method, and hence, the hypothesis (1.13.20) is rejected.

It is also observed from the analysis of the proficiency test that the score of the reading comprehension part is lower than the other two parts. For that the investigator has tried to give certain remedies to improve reading comprehension of the upper primary school teachers in English.

6.4 Remedies

To improve the reading comprehension there are a variety of comprehensive strategies that could be considered when reading to second/foreign language. Here is a list by Grabe and Stoller (2002, cited in Wang Qiang, 2006, p.181) as:

- Specifying a purpose for reading
- Planning what to do/what steps to take
- Previewing the text
- Predicting the contents of the text
- Checking predictions
- Skimming the text for the specific information
- Distinguishing main ideas from supporting details
- Posing questions about the text
- Finding answers to posed questions
- Connecting text to background knowledge
- Summarizing information
- Making inferences
- Connecting one part of the text to another

- Paying attention to text structure
- Guessing the meaning of a new word from context
- Using discourse markers to see relationships
- Checking comprehension
- Identifying difficulties
- Taking steps to repair faulty comprehension
- Critiquing the author
- Critiquing the text
- Judging how well objectives were met
- Reflecting on what has been learned from the text

This list of reading strategies can be used as guidance for teachers to improve their reading skills and finally become independent readers.

More than this, some generalized remedies can be also helpful to improve reading as stated below:

1. Government should arrange special teachers' training program on developing reading skill regularly.
2. National and International Seminars and Workshops on reading strategies can be arranged for teachers.
3. At school level also certain reading programs can be arranged.
4. Authentic reading materials should be used.
5. Teachers should enrich their personal library.
6. On social networking sites teachers should use only English rather than using first language. Moreover special English users groups can be joined. So, automatically one can make habit of reading.
7. Finally, reading is a matter of self-interest. No one can develop it but the individual himself or herself should try to manifest over the problem.

6.5 Conclusions and Observations

The study has led to the following conclusions and observations about each variable.

6.5.1 Conclusion (Sex)

- (1) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of vocabulary is not significantly different among the men and women teachers of RMC.
- (2) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of grammar is not significantly different among the men and women teachers of RMC.
- (3) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of reading comprehension is not significantly different among the men and women teachers of RMC.
- (4) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of the overall score is not significantly different among the men and women teachers of RMC.

Observations

It is observed that the mean score of female teachers was higher than the male teachers. The difference of the mean score in vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and overall score between the male and female teachers was found -1.066, -0.953, -1.498 and -1.344 respectively, but this difference does not reach at any level of significance. Hence, it is concluded that the sex difference does not affect the vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and overall score of the proficiency test.

6.5.2 Conclusion (Age)

- (1) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of vocabulary is significantly different among the three age groups of the teachers of RMC.
- (2) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of grammar is significantly different among the three age groups of the teachers of RMC.
- (3) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of reading comprehension is not significantly different among the three age groups of the teachers of RMC.
- (4) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of overall score is significantly different among the three age groups of the teachers of RMC.

Observations

It is observed that the mean score of vocabulary, grammar and overall score of the proficiency test in English of the age groups up to 30, 31 to 40 and above 40 years is significantly different. The least significant difference between two pairs of mean found at 0.05 level of significance. But there is no significance difference found in the mean score of reading comprehension.

The younger teachers' performance is higher than the older teachers in terms of their proficiency in vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and overall score. The age group of up to 30 scores higher in each part of the proficiency test than the age group of above 40.

6.5.3 Conclusion (Educational Qualifications)

- (1) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of vocabulary is significantly different among the five groups of teachers namely B.A. B.Ed., M.A. B.Ed., B.A. PTC, M.A. PTC and Additional qualifications group.
- (2) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of grammar is significantly different among the five groups of teachers namely B.A. B.Ed., M.A. B.Ed., B.A. PTC, M.A. PTC and Additional qualifications group.
- (3) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of reading comprehension is significantly different among the five groups of teachers namely B.A. B.Ed., M.A. B.Ed., B.A. PTC, M.A. PTC and Additional qualifications group.
- (4) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of overall score is significantly different among the five groups of teachers namely B.A. B.Ed., M.A. B.Ed., B.A. PTC, M.A. PTC and Additional qualifications group.

Observations

It is observed that the mean score of the teachers with master degree and the teachers with other additional qualifications like M.Ed., M.Phil., or Ph.D. scores higher than the teachers with bachelor degree. The difference of the mean score in vocabulary, grammar,

reading comprehension and overall score was found in the teachers' educational qualifications.

6.5.4 Conclusion (Teaching Experience)

- (1) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of vocabulary is significantly different among the three groups of teaching experience of the teachers of RMC.
- (2) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of grammar is significantly different among the three groups of teaching experience of the teachers of RMC.
- (3) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of reading comprehension is not significantly different among the three groups of teaching experience of the teachers of RMC.
- (4) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of overall score is significantly different among the three groups of teaching experience of the teachers of RMC.

Observations

It is observed that the mean score of vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and overall score of the proficiency test in English of the teaching experience groups like; below 5, 5 to 10 and above 10 years is significantly different. The mean difference between the two groups of teaching experience namely below 5 and 5 to 10 years is found very high. It is also observed that the less experienced teachers' performance is poorer than the 5 to 10 and above 10 years experienced teachers.

6.5.5 Conclusion (Special Subject/Method)

- (1) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of vocabulary is significantly different among the four groups of special subject/method of the teachers of RMC.
- (2) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of grammar is significantly different among the four groups of special subject/method of the teachers of RMC.

- (3) The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of reading comprehension is not significantly different among the four groups of special subject/method of the teachers of RMC.

The study shows that the proficiency of the teachers in terms of overall score is significantly different among the four groups of special subject/method of the teachers of RMC.

Observations

It is observed that the mean score of the teachers with English as a special subject /method score higher than the teachers with other special subject /method. The difference of the mean score in vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension and overall score of the proficiency test was found very high. The reason for that is they have to teach English though it is not their special subject/method under the category of language teachers in their schools.

6.6 Educational implications of the present study

On the basis of findings and the conclusions stated above, it is now possible to discuss the implications of the present study.

- (1) Such proficiency test can help us in gathering vital information about the existing standards of English at the school level. Any language teacher cannot teach English which he does not know. As a result the level of his proficiency reflects the level of English language teaching in our classroom.
- (2) The test of proficiency would be useful in other languages like Gujarati, Hindi and Sanskrit also.
- (3) Our teachers should be encouraged to take such tests of proficiency from time to time as a part of their own self assessment as well as a part of their salary increment, which can lead to the self-improvement.
- (4) Such test of proficiency can also be used for diagnostic and remedial purpose. Hence, such test would be highly useful in the colleges of teacher education, especially for designing effective in-service training program.

- (5) The use of standardized tests of proficiency can have a positive impact on the process of exam reform in our school system. The terminal and annual tests given to our students can slowly improve and become more valid and reliable in future if the teachers are exposed to standardized tests.

6.7 Suggestions for the future research

The present study has indicated a number of gaps in the existing knowledge which need to be bridged with the help of other research studies in the future. The following areas for future research are therefore highly recommended.

- (1) Specific tests of proficiency should be constructed and administered to the teachers of Grant in aid schools, Self finance schools, Ashram Schools, Vocational Schools, Technical Schools and Uttar Buniyadi and minority schools.
- (2) Similar test of proficiency should be constructed and administered to the teachers of English at secondary school level and higher secondary school level.
- (3) More advanced tests of proficiency should be constructed and administered to the teachers of English medium schools.
- (4) Tests of proficiency should be constructed and administered to the teachers of other language such as Gujarati, Hindi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Marathi and so on.
- (5) Standardized test of proficiency in English should be constructed and administered to measure the teachers' ability in listening and speaking as well as in writing skills.
- (6) A natural corollary of the present study would be to take up a study which is aimed at helping the teachers of English in those areas of proficiency which are not so satisfactory.
- (7) It would be useful to construct and administer a test of proficiency to the trainees of B.Ed. course. So that definite information is made available about their level at the point of entry in the profession.
- (8) The English proficiency comparison research can be carried out between the upper primary school teachers of various districts of Gujarat State.

(9) Apart from the teachers, standardized tests should be made available to the member of other professional groups such as supervisors, lawyers, doctor, engineers etc.

Although the present study was limited to the teachers of English working in the RMC schools, it has thrown ample light on related areas and thus it is useful for the teachers and other professional in general. By extension, it is also useful to the students of English in Gujarat because the information about the teachers is likely to help us to understand the problems faced by the teachers. The vast ocean of knowledge invites scholars of all branches of learning to deep and come out with precious pearls of knowledge. It is hoped that the present study is understood as one such attempt in the direction of academic excellence.