SUMMARY

The title of the study is: ‘Impact of Teacher Training in Constructivist Pedagogy on Teacher Competence and Learners Proficiency in Malayalam under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan”

The present study has been undertaken at the backdrop of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) initiatives in Kerala for ensuring quality in primary education and the constructivist language pedagogy as envisaged in National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 and Kerala Curriculum Framework (KCF) 2007. The curriculum and related materials that are in use in Kerala have been erected on the pillars of social constructivism as conceived in Vygotsky, Chomsky’s innateness theory, and critical pedagogy. With regard to language pedagogy, there is a shift from the conventional skill-based and information-oriented treatment to knowledge-based and holistic treatment of language. The revised curriculum and textbooks expect learners to produce language discourses in various contexts rather than reproducing the content of the textbook. The curriculum change demands sufficient conceptual understanding on the part of teachers and resource persons about the theoretical underpinnings and the processes required for translating these into classroom practice.

As implied by the title the study focuses on the impact of teacher training on the achievement of the learners and the conceptual understanding and pedagogic skills of the teachers in carrying out classroom transaction as envisioned under the constructivist paradigm.
Scope of the Study

The present study is expected to provide theoretical and pedagogic inputs for the future implementation of the programmes for developing the proficiency of children in mother tongue in Kerala. The study may help the authorities concerned with SSA in Kerala to improve the standard of language acquisition programme.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To investigate the level of conceptual understanding of primary teachers about constructivist language learning and its classroom implications by virtue of Teacher Training programmes conducted by SSA, Kerala, in terms of the theoretical foundations of language acquisition, approach to learning mother tongue and classroom process under the constructivist language pedagogy.

2. To find out the ability of teachers to translate the theoretical postulates of social constructivism into classroom practice.

3. To study the relationship between the conceptual understanding of teachers and their classroom practice.

4. To find out whether the input given to teachers is reflected in the language proficiency of learners to construct various discourses spontaneously.

5. To suggest measures to improve the Teacher Training programmes under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan for improving language proficiency.
**Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses have been formulated in order to study the impact of teacher training conducted by SSA in terms of the achievement of the learners and the proficiency of teachers as manifested by their conceptual understanding and pedagogic skills in translating the theory into practice.

1. There is no relationship between the conceptual clarity of teachers and the adequacy of training days in language.

2. There is no relationship between conceptual understanding of teachers regarding language pedagogy they gained through training and their ability to handle language classes effectively.

3. The input given by SSA, Kerala through Teacher Training programmes does not have any impact on the conceptual understanding of teachers and their classroom practices.

4. There is no difference between different classes in primary section with regard to the process followed by the teachers in their classroom transaction.

5. There is no significant difference between the achievement level of learners in Class 2 and 4

6. There is no difference between the achievement level of students of urban, rural and tribal areas.

7. There is no difference between the achievement levels of learners from different regions of Kerala.

8. There is no difference between the achievements of primary school children with regard to the management of schools.
There is no relationship between the conceptual understanding of teachers and the achievement of students.

**Research methodology**

The impact of Teacher Training could be studied only by triangulating the teacher, the learner and the pedagogic inputs since the interplay of teacher’s belief system, conceptual understanding, and the classroom process leads to the achievement of the learners. Therefore it was necessary for the researcher to understand the belief system of the teachers, the inputs that helped them to gain conceptual understanding of the constructivist pedagogy and the actual classroom process they followed in the classrooms. It was also necessary to know about the achievement of the learners in language. Though the belief system of the teachers and their conceptual understanding could be derived from the teachers’ responses, it could not be obtained from the teachers’ responses alone. To have a clear idea about this the researcher had to interact with the Resource Persons and the concerned implementing officers of the Pedagogy unit of SSA. Moreover, the belief systems of the resource persons also had to be taken care of because these would have direct impact on the training conducted. It was with these assumptions the methodology and the tools for the research were decided. The methodology followed was as stated below:

1. **Interview**

   Structured interviews with Programme Officers of SSA in order to find out the initiatives taken by SSA for empowering teachers in language and pedagogy, the areas of training input, total number of days of training in language pedagogy, the nature of resource support given and the monitoring that was carried out.
2. Survey

Separate surveys were conducted involving resource persons and primary school teachers. Through the surveys the researcher wanted to know mainly about the belief system of the teachers, their understanding about pedagogy gained from training conducted by Sarva Siksha Abhiyan and the classroom process they followed.

3. Observation

Classroom observation was necessary in order to find out whether the process actually followed by the teachers was in conformity with the constructivist pedagogy. This would also reveal to what extent their understanding would be reflected in the classroom practice.

4. Achievement study

It was necessary to study the achievement made by the learners by virtue of the classroom experience they got without which the impact of Teacher Training could not be studied.

Tools

The tools designed were the following:

1. Interview schedule for district and state programme officers
2. Questionnaire for teachers,
3. Questionnaire for resource persons,
4. Observation schedule for collecting data related to classroom process,
5. Tool for Achievement test
Sample of the study

The sample for the present study was selected to get a judicious representation of the three regions namely, North, Middle and South. Kasaragod and Wayanad districts were selected as they represent northern part of Kerala. From the middle point of Kerala two districts namely, Thrissur and Palakkad were selected. To ensure the true representations of the Southern part of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, and Pathanamthitta were selected. Thus six out of the total 14 districts in Kerala were selected for the study.

The study focuses on the lower primary teachers and learners in Kerala. The pattern of lower primary stage that exists in Kerala is from Standard I to IV. Out of these classes, II and IV were selected as sample.

The total number of teachers in Standard II and IV in the six selected districts is 10,460. Hence 5% of the total teachers available in each district were selected for the study, following the quota sampling method. Thus the total number of teachers identified as sample is 526, which is the 5% of 10460. Out of the total sample of 526 teachers, equal distribution was made for classes II and IV and due weightage was given to the Rural and Urban areas.

As far as the management of the schools is concerned, equal representation was ensured for teachers from the Govt. sector and aided sector.

A total of 72 classes were observed with equal representation of Rural, Urban and Tribal areas in all the six districts. Since it was practically impossible to observe the classes of all teachers included in the study sample, the classes of only 12 teachers from each of the six sample districts were observed. Under each
of the urban, rural and tribal categories, equal representation was given for classes II and IV. In all these categories, one half is from the Government sector and the other is from the Govt. Aided Sector.

However, since the roll strength of each class was different equal number of students could not be obtained from classes II and IV. Thus out of 1948 students who represent the 72 classes, 916 students (47%) were of class II and 1032 (53%) were of class IV.

Structured interview was conducted of 6 programme officers of SSA who were in charge of Teacher Training in each of the six districts for collecting data. In addition to this structured interview with the State Consultant (Pedagogy) was also conducted.

The data for the study were collected through interviews, observation of classes, surveys and achievement test taking the above mentioned samples.

**Findings of the study**

1. From the study it is found that 70% of the total teachers under the study are of the opinion that the total number of training days they have received during the previous two years for language in lower primary section was adequate

2. Of the seven conceptual areas addressed through in service training by SSA Kerala, it is evident that except in using theatre techniques teachers brought under the study has good conceptual clarity.

3. Majority of teachers gained satisfactory level of conceptual clarity in social constructivism through in-service training.

4. It is found that there is strong relationship between the conceptual clarity
of teachers and the adequacy of training days in language. The mean of the scores of conceptual understanding of teachers those who told that they got adequate of training days in language is higher than the other group. This reveals that the training enhanced the teaching ability and hence conceptual clarity.

5. There is strong relationship between conceptual understandings of teachers regarding language pedagogy they gained through training and their ability to handle language classes effectively.

6. The mean of total score obtained in conceptual understanding of the teachers those who responded that the training was very helpful is remarkably higher than the other group. This indicates that the teachers who have better conceptual understanding regarding language pedagogy can impart their classes effectively than others. This conceptual understanding they gained was through rigorous training.

7. It is found that 93% the teachers are of the opinion that the training they received has been either very helpful or helpful for them to handle language classes effectively.

8. It is found that the methods followed in the in-service training programme have been in tune with the constructivist pedagogy.

9. The training given by SSA to teachers has to a considerable extent changed their perspective on language from the behaviourist paradigm to the constructivist paradigm.

10. It is evident that a great majority of teachers in classes II and IV follow the classroom process of writing as envisaged in the curriculum.
11. There is no significant difference between class 2 and 4 with regard to the process followed by the teachers in their classroom transaction.

12. Based on teachers' experience, 67% of them have the opinion that the constructivist pedagogy will help the learners to become independent readers.

13. The study reveals that teachers have made use of a variety of strategies for promoting reading habits of the learners.

14. It is found that there is no significant difference between the achievement level of class 2 learners and class 4 learners.

15. The mean score of learners is very high in both class 2 and 4. The scores obtained by the learners in both classes reveal that the inputs given to both teachers and resource persons by SSA have had their impact on the achievement of the learners.

16. There is a significant difference between the achievement level of learners from south and north region in class 2.

17. There is a difference between learners of south and middle in class 2 with regard to their achievement.

18. It is clear that there is no significant difference between learners of middle and north in class 2 with regard to their achievement.

19. There is a difference in the achievement level of learners of southern and northern regions of Kerala in the case of class 4.
20. There is no significant difference between the achievement level of learners of south and middle regions of Kerala.

21. There is significance difference between the achievement level of learners of both middle and north regions in class 4.

22. It is found that more than 70% of the learners of all the three areas (urban, rural and tribal) are high achievers in class 2 and 4. The percentage of low achievers in all the localities in these classes ranges from 3 to 7.

23. There is significant difference between the achievement of class 2 learners of urban and tribal area school. The achievement level of urban area students is better than that of tribal area school students.

24. There is significant difference between the achievement level of learners of urban area schools and rural area schools in class 2. The arithmetic mean of learners of urban area is higher than that of students of rural area.

25. There is no significance between the achievement level of learners of rural and tribal areas in class 2.

26. While considering the performance of class 2 students it is revealed that learners of urban area are ahead that of learners of other localities.

27. The mean scores of students in all localities shows that the learners attained remarkable achievement in language .This may be inferred that it is due to the continues input given by SSA to teachers.

28. There is no significant difference between the achievement level of learners of Urban and Tribal regions of Kerala.
29. There is significance difference between the achievement level of learners of both urban and rural areas in class 4.

30. There is significant difference between the achievement level of learners of rural area schools and tribal area schools in class 4.

31. The mean of scores of all learners reveal that irrespective of locality, students of class 4 attained comparably high level of achievement in mother tongue.

32. It is clear that the language proficiency of learners in primary classes has been enhanced and it may be inferred as the impact of teacher training conducted by SSA in constructivist language pedagogy.

33. There is significant difference between the achievement level of learners of government schools and aided schools in class 4. While comparing the mean it is found that the students of aided sector perform better than that of learners of government sector.

34. Irrespective of the management class 2 and 4 children in Kerala show remarkable achievement in language.

35. There is relationship between the conceptual understanding of teachers and the achievement of students.

**Limitations of the Study**

- The study is confined to six Districts only- Kasaragod, Wayanad, Thrissur, Palakkad, Pathanamthitta and Thiruvananthapuram.

- Only classes 2 and 4 are taken as representative samples of lower primary classes.
Conclusion

Based on the analysis of data collected it is found that the language proficiency of learners in primary classes has been enhanced and majority of teachers opined that the pedagogy is helpful for learners to acquire the ability to express their ideas with confidence before an audience to react to a given situation. From the study it is revealed that there is strong relationship between conceptual understandings of teachers regarding language pedagogy they gained through training and their ability to handle language classes effectively. The study reveals that the training enhanced the teaching ability and hence the conceptual clarity. The training given by SSA to teachers has to a considerable extent changed their perspective on language from behaviourist paradigm to the constructivist paradigm.

Thirty percent of teachers have felt that the number of days of training they have got is inadequate. SSA has been following cascade mode of training to all teachers of the state in a specific period with same duration of training days. The limitations of cascade mode of training are it does not address the needs of individual teacher and there is more possibility of transmission loss. To cater this process of training need identification is to be reviewed .The gap between the existing and expected performance level of teachers shall be identified. Focussed inputs are to be given to teachers and follow up activities of the training programmes are to be strengthened.