CHAPTER - VI
SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

6.0. Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher has briefly reviewed the study and discussed its implications and relevance. Some suggestions for further research and concluding remarks are made. The study, arising from a theoretical and practical concern, was an attempt to identify the problems of first-year undergraduate students at St. Joseph’s College (Autonomous), Tiruchirappalli. It was aimed at verifying the validity of the assumption that the students’ language skills in English can be developed through Psycho-physiotherapeutic strategies. Accordingly, attempts were made to examine the Psycho-physiotherapeutic strategies in an elaborative way, in all related aspects. The means employed were both theoretical and practical. The entry and exit language level of the experimental group was established by four diagnostic, four formative and four summative tests.

6.1. A Summary of the Work Done

The study is divided into six chapters. Chapter-I introduces the problem with an evaluation of its background features, including the relevance of the learners’ language level. The objectives of the study, hypotheses and methodology of the study are stated. Chapter-II provides the theoretical background and application of Counselling cum Interview. Chapter-III provides the theoretical adaptation of physiotherapeutic aspects in English language teaching. Chapter-IV concerns itself with the empirical aspects of the Psycho-physiotherapeutic training strategies while Chapter-V offers the interpretations and analysis of the data.
In the first chapter, the assumptions and the problems of the linguistic ability of the students were discussed. Experimental study made by the investigator unveiled the inadequacies of the already existing strategies to develop the students’ communication skills in English. Studies reveal that the existing methods are inadequate to meet the common needs of the students. It is noted that the existing teaching strategies fail to capture or assess the language skills of the students. The need for a more effective teaching strategy is emphasized.

In chapter-II, the theoretical background answers questions concerning what, why and how of counselling cum interview method. It provides insights into the current counselling techniques and interview techniques. It also emphasizes the need for effective and valid strategy to identify the particulars, which help improve teaching and learning considerably. The concept of counselling cum interview as a diagnosing strategy is highlighted.

Chapter-III provides formulation of the theoretical ground for the adoption of physiotherapeutic strategies in English language teaching. It elucidates the techniques in which the physiotherapeutic strategy is employed in English language teaching. This chapter also suggests research-based measures for effective teaching of English for the ESL students. It emphasizes the need for adapting Psycho-physiotherapeutic training strategy, an innovative modern concept in English language teaching. It recommends steps to make the material and methodology more communicative. It also points out the need for making feedback and interventions more realistic and supportive for better teaching and learning.

Chapter-IV outlines the practical ground on which the application of Psycho-physiotherapeutic strategies are implemented. It presents an account of the empirical steps to verify its validity of the assumptions.
The language skills of students at the entry level in higher education are determined through four different diagnostic tests. The special instructional programme is discussed. The chapter aims at studying the nature and degree of learning occurrences in the students. It suggests the learners to develop their language skills in English.

Chapter-V provides the interpretation and analysis of the data. The findings of the development of the students’ communication skills in English from the entry level to the exit level are represented in pie-diagrams, bar diagrams and a graph. The data of different tests are interpreted quantitatively, and the language behaviour is described in operational terms. The students’ development of language skills is described in practical terms.

6.2. The Findings of the Study

The primary intention of this study was to find a new English language teaching strategy to enhance the English language skills of the ESL learners. The researcher attempted to achieve this goal by deriving and combining the relevant aspects of Psychotherapy and Physiotherapy. This Psycho-physiotherapeutic strategies were achieved through a brief programme conducted in five phases. The findings from the study are as follows:

1) The performance of the students in the post-test has significantly improved compared to that of pre-test in communicative skills in English.

2) There is significant improvement in the post-tests scores compared to the progressive test scores in written communication in English.

3) A good rapport was built between the language trainer and the students in Counselling cum interview session. This has helped the students to participate in the classroom language activities interestingly.
4) Psycho-physiotherapeutic training strategy has made the students learn English actively.

5) Language trainer’s autonomy and the students’ involvement are high.

6) Language trainer is able to teach and provide language learning opportunities to the students according to their needs.

7) Through counselling cum interview the language trainer is able to identify the problems of the students before the language training programme.

The several stages that have emerged from this study are:

1. Counselling cum Interview at the entry level.

2. Conducting pre-tests to identify and evaluate the LSRW skills of the learners.

3. Planning the course with the data collected in counselling cum interview and pre-tests.

4. Teaching the students with the material designed.

5. Conducting formative assessments.


7. Summative assessments.

In the sections that follow, these stages are discussed with the help of insights received from the study.

a) The study initially attempted to create in the learners an awareness of their English language level through counselling cum interview method alone. But, this did not lead to the improvement in English language skills, as expected. Hence, students were exposed to feedback from language trainer and the members of the peer group. It was observed that there was a significant improvement in English language skills of the learners. The learners were further encouraged to talk and convey their ideas, and
were instructed to correct their errors. A lack of awareness of alternative strategy limits an individual’s ability to perform appropriately and effectively. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the language trainers to provide opportunity for the learners to generate ideas and structure them in the form of sentences.

b) In this study, the students showed a marked improvement in the writing activity towards the end of the study. The brief programme resulted in the following changes:

i) All the students started to use the grammatical and lexical relationship between the different elements of a text. They realized the significance of cohesion.

ii) Learners grew more aware of their own limitations and drawbacks in oral presentations. This resulted in consciously making changes at the surface level as well as meaning level of their presentations.

iii) Learners were able to understand and interpret the feedback given by their language trainer.

iv) The learners gained confidence in performing speaking tasks independently. They could appreciate the use of multiple intervention processes and see the difference between the first and the final performances.

6.3. Verification of the Hypotheses

1. There will be significant differences in the competency of acquiring English language skills of the ESL learners before, between and after the PPTS implementation and execution. This hypothesis is justified, based on the results of the pre-tests and post-tests which indicate that there is a marked
improvement in the competency of acquiring English language skills of the experimental group. (emphasis added).

2. There will be significant differences in the quantity of the words of the ESL learners in the training course before, between and after the PPTS implementation and execution. The data collected in the study show that there is a minimal improvement in acquiring words.

3. There will be significant differences in the grammatical correctness in ESL learners’ spoken output before, between and after the PPTS implementation and execution. The result shows that this statement is true.

4. There will be significant differences in the involvement of the learners in learning communicative skills in English before, between and after the PPTS implementation and execution. The conclusion of the study reveals that the test scores of the learners indicate a significant improvement in the involvement of the learners in learning communicative skills in English throughout the study.

6.4. Uniqueness of the Study

1. It is a research in exploring learners’ competence to acquire language skills through Psycho-physiotherapeutic strategies.

2. It is unique by diagnosing the students’ competence to acquire language skills through Psycho-physiotherapeutic strategies at the entry level in the collegiate education.

3. The experiment is based on properly designed, well-graded and activity-based language teaching material. Audio-visual materials, print materials, materials from website were taken to enhance the competence to acquire language skills of ESL learners.
6.5. Limitations of the Study

1) The study was restricted only to fifty students belonging to first year undergraduate students of St. Joseph’s College, Tiruchirappalli. Hence, broad generalization of the findings is not claimed.

2) The study was restricted to Tamil literature students only.

3) The students underwent this English course through psycho-physiotherapeutic strategy along with learning their regular subjects.

4) Attention was paid mainly to the diagnosing of the language learning problems and language needs of the students.

6.6. Discussion of the Findings

Though a lot of researches had been done on the approaches, methods and procedures to teach English language, very little attention was given to identify the language problems of the learners at the entry level. Paruchuri Usha Prasad (1997) explored learner strategies in large ESL classes at the tertiary level. Rajul Sogani (1977) found effectiveness and relevance of General English at the undergraduate level. P. Felix (1981) designed self-instructional bilingual reading material for Non-formal learners of English who are literate in Tamil language. Syeda Syadath Unissa (1995) investigated the factors leading to low achievement in English at the secondary level. Tara Ratnam (1993) evolved principles for designing a bridge-course in English for low achievers at the pre-university level. M. Saravanapava Iyer (2008) paid attention to develop strategies of the listening comprehension.

In inter-disciplinary approach, Arkoudis (2005) collaborated with ESL and science teachers. Cargil and O’Connor collaborated with Chinese scientists to publish
research work in English. In Thailand, Hurst and Davidson (2005) collaborated with history, civilization and science teachers to plan academic curriculum. In USA, Iancu (2002) collaborated with sociology professors to design study materials to develop the learners writing skill. In Japan, Nagano and Koyama (2000) collaborated with engineering faculty to develop and teach a content-based EFL course. No researchers have focused on combining Psycho-physiotherapeutic training strategies in English language teaching. Hence, in the present experimental study, the investigator has merged psycho-physiotherapeutic training strategy with ELT.

6.7. Experimental Validity of the Study

The students taken as sample by the investigator belong to first year undergraduate Tamil literature class learning English as a second language. Moreover, the Psycho-physiotherapeutic strategies to enhance the competence to acquire language skills of the learners in the experiment were designed and language activities were suggested in the General English textbook prescribed for first year undergraduate students at St. Joseph’s College, Tiruchirappalli. Therefore, the result that emerged out of this action-research is applicable to all the first-year undergraduate students at St. Joseph’s College, Tiruchirappalli.

6.8. Educational Implications of the Study

The findings of the present study are very important, when viewed both from the point of theory as well as application. These findings are relevant in the field of English language education. The above-mentioned findings indicate that there are significant differences in the ability of the students to enhance their language skills through psycho-physiotherapeutic strategy. This gives a psychological insight into the
standard of students’ language competencies in acquiring English as a second language and their motivational characteristics. The present study finds proper training strategy to involve the students in language learning activities and to improve the language skills of the learners with special reference to second language learning. On the whole, the students have improved their language skills by having involved themselves in learning English through Psycho-physiotherapeutic strategies.

6.9. Problems Faced During the Study

An investigator / a teacher may envisage and face the following problems in the process of teaching English as a second language at the collegiate level.

1. The investigator did not get the cooperation of all the students at the beginning of the experiment.

2. The students were distracted by external factors like announcements of holidays, closing of the hostels and functions in the college.

3. A few students in the class were distracted by others.

4. The classroom did not have the infrastructural facilities such as electronic gadgets namely laptop, LCD projector and audio systems.

5. Counselling session was time consuming.

6. Unavailability of technician to record the classroom activities in video camera was also a problem faced by the investigator.

6.10. Scope for Further Research

The study has pointed out the need for research in the direction of need-based language training strategy. It has also provided the necessary initiatives. The researcher suggests the following areas on which further research could be carried out:
(i) The present study was an attempt to explore the problem of fifty first-year undergraduate students. One can make a longer-scale research in this domain.

(ii) The same experiment can be extended for primary schools, high schools, higher secondary schools Engineering colleges and teacher-training institutes.

(iii) Investigations may be done on teaching English grammar through psycho-physiotherapeutic training strategies.

(iv) Psycho-physiotherapeutic Multi-media packages can be developed to improve communication skills in English.

(v) A comparative study of communicative competence of the students may be done.

(vi) Research projects or studies can also be done on the following realms:
   
   (a) A study on counselling needs of the students and the effects of counselling with particular reference to motivate them in different stages at the undergraduate level.

   (b) Preparing or adapting suitable intervention materials can be done.

   (c) Experimenting with new and potentially more effective testing techniques for better teaching and learning.

   (d) Experimenting with general public who needs to develop their communication skills.

   (e) Experimenting with the students, who, after completing their degree courses, have a gap of three or four years in learning English.

6.11. Suggestions for Improving ELT at the University and State

The research on enhancing the proficiency of the learners through application of Psycho-physiotherapeutic training strategy for the first-year undergraduate students
in Tiruchirappalli has brought to light many other sources related to ESL learners and teaching strategies. Drastic measures are called for to make teaching and learning of English purposeful. The researcher makes a few suggestions here, and some of them are of general nature calling for long-term planning while others are more specific and directly related to the students of undergraduate level. The recommendations are as follows:

1) Equal importance should be given to oral English along with written English.

2) Textbook writers have to be oriented for writing innovative textbooks incorporating interactive strategies.

3) Counselling cum interview sessions can be arranged for the students at the entry level of the language training course.

4) Oral tests should be held and should be included while evaluating students in the post-tests.

5) Training in English Language Teaching for College Teachers

Teachers teaching English language are in dire need of some basic training in English language teaching to tackle the ESL learners. In this regard, some suggestions are given below:

(i) Short-term training programmes in the forms of workshops and orientation can be arranged for college teachers with the help of the experts in the field of English language teaching.

(ii) Such programmes can be made compulsory for in-service college teachers.

(iii) More and more college teachers can be motivated to attend English language seminars, and conferences at the national and international level.
(iv) New college teachers can be expected to possess some special training in English language teaching as essential qualification.

(v) Effective material for teaching and learning can be produced under the guidance of competent authorities in the field of English language teaching.

6.12. Conclusion

This research enterprise is an attempt to employ the Psycho-physiotherapeutic training strategy to train the first-year undergraduate students at their entry level in higher education. This strategy could be extended to students at other levels. Focused could be given on the need to adopt and adapt more modern and dynamic forms of education which encompass instructional objectives, learning and teaching strategies, learning experiences and evaluation, and constant interaction with the students at the centre.

The constraints of resources in terms of time, and occurrences of disturbances during the experiment have prevented the study from being more particular with regard to the implementation of the strategy during the free hours of the students. It is presumptuous to claim that the research and its conclusions are final and complete. Hence, if this study has initiated a new strategic idea to solve the language problems of ESL learners in the first-year collegiate level, the researcher will feel that the attempt was worthwhile.