Introduction

‘Child is our future wealth.’ We should focus our all attention and capabilities to make our country a leading nation, so learner-centered curriculum of National Educational Policy, 1986 is prepared. Development of various competencies among children is considered very important.

To know the child and to recognize his inborn proficiencies and abilities is extreme need of education as well as society. To fulfill these needs, reforms should be implemented in education system. Now, it is the time to think over evaluation and measurement with different outlook than traditional evaluation by exams.

Education is a continuous and life long process. Children have learnt many things from their family and natural surroundings till the age of five. Then, schools and colleges provide them systematic formal education where they study. In our country, knowledge of vernacular language is provided as the first language and Hindi is taught as second language, where as English is given the third place. Hence, modern technology has achieved immense progress; English language is going to play a vital role in all the fields. If a person gets mastery over English language, he will be able to use technology successfully. It is rightly called that ‘English is the window of the world.’

Some specific abilities can be measured by Proficiency Tests. It is essential to know how anyone is competent and how much language proficiencies he has developed.

Measurement of proficiency of students is the foremost demand of modern age. Considering this fact, it was tried to
examine English language proficiency of students of std. 9 studying in Secondary school in the present study.

Statement of problem

To evaluate English language proficiency of students of std. 9 of Secondary school, the title had been worded as below.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY OF STUDENTS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL

Objectives of the study

Following objectives were decided for the present study.

1. To construct and standardize English Language Proficiency Test for students of Secondary schools.
2. To examine English language proficiency of students of Secondary schools.
3. To examine effect of gender on English language proficiency of students of Secondary schools.
4. To examine effect of area on English language proficiency of students of Secondary schools.
5. To examine effect of type of school on English language proficiency of students of Secondary schools.

Variables under the study

Variables of the present study were divided into two parts.

- **Independent variables**

  Following variables were accepted as Independent variables.
Following hypotheses were formulated in the present study.

**Hypotheses of the study**

- **Ho₁.** There will be no significant difference between mean scores of boys and girls on English Language Proficiency Test.

- **Ho₂.** There will be no significant difference between mean scores of boys and girls of rural area on English Language Proficiency Test.

- **Ho₃.** There will be no significant difference between mean scores of boys and girls of urban area on English Language Proficiency Test.

- **Ho₄.** There will be no significant difference between mean scores of boys and girls of granted schools on English Language Proficiency Test.
Ho$_5$. There will be no significant difference between mean scores of boys and girls of self-financed schools on English Language Proficiency Test.

Ho$_6$. There will be no significant difference between mean scores of students of rural area and urban area on English Language Proficiency Test.

Ho$_7$. There will be no significant difference between mean scores of students of granted schools and self-financed schools on English Language Proficiency Test.

**Operational definitions of terms**

**Students of Secondary school**

Students studying in std. 9 to 10 after passing in annual exam of std. 8 in Govt. approved Upper Primary School.

**English Language Proficiency**

Proficiency based on expected educational objectives of curriculum of English language suggested in std. 1 to 8 like vocabulary, meanings of words, opposite meanings, translation, comprehension of a paragraph etc.

Here, English Language Proficiency means scores obtained by students of std. 9 on the English Language Proficiency Test constructed by the investigator according to above stated skills.

**Delimitation of the study**

Education is a continuous going on process. No any action of education is perfect so limitations are to be remained. The investigator had to finish the present study within a short time so
it is obvious that some limitation would have remained in it. Limitations of the present study are mentioned below.

1. Present study was limited for Gujarati medium schools only.
2. Present study was limited for variables such as gender, area and type of school only.
3. Present study was limited for students of std. 9 only.
4. Because of natural limitations of Paper-pencil Test, it was limited for only reading and writing skills from four language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Importance of the study

English language proficiency of students of std. 9 of Secondary schools could be examined by English Language Proficiency Test. If this test is used by teachers, students will become more favorable toward English language.

Difference between boys and girls in view point of English language proficiency can be known.

Difference between students of rural and urban area in view point of English language proficiency can be known.

Difference between students studying in granted and self-financed schools in view point of English language proficiency can be known.

Population and sample of the study

All students of std. 9 studying in Gujarati medium Secondary schools of Gujarat State during academic year 2013-2014 were included in population of the present study.

Researcher uses many tools to collect needed information for his research. It is not possible for any researcher to conduct
the study on whole subjects of universe so sample selection is not only necessary but also essential. Investigator gets opportunity for better use of time, money and energy by selecting a sample.

In the present study, whole region of Gujarat was divided into four zones: North Gujarat, South Gujarat, Central Gujarat and Saurashtra – Kutch.

One district from each zone was selected by using stratified random sampling and students of std. 9 studying in Secondary school of those districts were selected by stratified cluster sampling. Total 1767 students of std. 9 were selected in which 1044 boys and 723 girls were included in the sample of the present study.

In this way, sample selection was made by using stratified random cluster methods.

**Research method**

Various research methods and techniques are used in educational researches. Investigator had used proper research method considering nature of content, population, suitability for the present study. For first and second try out, sample was selected by systematic randomized sampling where as in final try out of the test, districts from four zones and schools from selected districts were selected by systematic randomized sampling. In this way, systematic randomized sampling and the Survey Research Methods were used in the present study. English Language Proficiency Test was used as a tool.
Research tool

Research tool is like a backbone of any research. Selection of tool depends on research problem.

Research tool is as important as thing to be achieved. Achievement relies on tools. Investigator decides about tools for data collection while preparing the research design.

In the present study, a self-constructed English Language Proficiency Test was used as a tool. English Language Proficiency Test was prepared after constructing proper items.

Data Collection

In the present study, English Language Proficiency Test was constructed and standardized so sequential sample was decided. Data was collected in three parts: first try out, second try out and final try out. For this purpose, the investigator had visited selected schools personally and made the Principals familiar with the objectives of the study. Time and date were fixed for data collection. Then, at fixed time and date, the test papers of English Language Proficiency Test were given to students of std. 9 and they were instructed how to respond the test items. Students had given answers to English Language Proficiency Test within fixed time limit. The test papers were collected.

Data Analyse

After completing data collection of final try out of the English Language Proficiency Test, the answer sheets were examined and frequency distribution was prepared based on scores obtained by each student on the English Language Proficiency Test.
Statistical analysis was made based on scores. After first and second try out, items were selected based on Difficulty value and Discriminating index of items. After conducting final try out, mean, standard deviation, standard error, significance of mean difference and t-value were computed based on frequency distribution of each group. Then, data was interpreted and reliability and validity of the English Language Proficiency Test were decided.

Findings of the study

1. English Language Proficiency Test was standardized for students of Secondary school. Its reliability was found out by Cronbach and Split-half method, which was 0.91, 0.87 (for half test) and 0.93 (for the whole test) respectively. In short, a most reliable and suitable English Language Proficiency Test has become available for students of std. 9 studying in Secondary school.

2. Average English language proficiency of students of std. 9 studying in Secondary school was found 67.82% and SD was 19.62%, means English language proficiency of students was found higher than average 50% but very far from 100% English language proficiency.

3. Girls were found having higher English language proficiency than boys had.

4. No effect of gender was found on English language proficiency of students from rural area.

5. Effect of gender was found on English language proficiency of students from urban area, in which girls were found having higher English language proficiency than boys had.

6. No effect of gender was found on English language proficiency of students studying in granted school.
7. Effect of gender was found on English language proficiency of students studying in self-financed school, in which girls were found having higher English language proficiency than boys had.

8. Students of urban area were found having higher English language proficiency than students of rural area had.

9. No significant difference was found between English language proficiency of students studying in granted schools and self-financed school.
References:


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