

Effect Of Language Proficiency On Problem Solving Skills Of Students

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Abstract

The researcher's concern is in the minimum proficiency level of students in various elements of language, which is very much necessary to solve problems in different kinds of examinations, whether it is mere a class test or the toughest examination in the world. In higher studies later on most of the contents are in English language. Good command on the language will help students to decode any content at shortest period of time, help them to make notes in the classroom or somewhere else, and speak to anyone about any matter without any hesitancy. In this study researcher examine the secondary school students' attitude towards English language. Here, researcher will study the performance of students in language proficiency test which incorporates reading, writing, listening and speaking. Later two will be studied through teachers' response. The main aim behind incorporation of these four dimensions of language is to understand their level of proficiency in them. To understand something first we have to listen or read those things and to convey someone about something we have to speak or write to them. In higher study a student will feel the need of these four stuffs all the time to solve problems, so this study is entirely focuses on effect of language proficiency on their problem-solving skills.

Key Words: Language Proficiency, Problem Solving skills

Introduction

Students must be good writers in order to participate in the literate society of the future. Writing abilities are a crucial part of literacy. The literacy requirements of our society are growing and are anticipated to keep growing, according to Standards for the English Language Arts, a 1996 report by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the International Reading Association (IRA). According to researchers, pupils will need strong literacy skills by the year 2020 in order to fully engage in society and the workplace. "Changes in technology and society

have altered and will continue to alter the ways in which we use language to communicate and to think," the NCTE/IRA report concluded. These requirements must be met by the students. The significance and logic of the issue under study will be developed using this source. Since persons who know, a language is frequently referred to as speakers of that language, speaking appears to be the most crucial of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) (Ur, 1996). The ability to communicate clearly and effectively in English should be the main objective of any English language instruction (Davies & Pearse, 1998). Nevertheless, due to a lack of basic knowledge, not all English language learners are able to communicate effectively and eloquently, despite years of study.

An in-depth analysis of the prior research revealed that assisted approaches appear to be more effective than unassisted approaches, repetitive approaches do not appear to hold a clear advantage over no repetitive approaches, and effective fluency instruction goes beyond a single approach. However, it is unclear whether this effectiveness is due to specific instructional features or because it involves children reading increased amounts of text (Melanie R. Kuhn & Steven A. Stah, 2003); accuracy, which is the accurate decoding of words in text; automaticity, which is the efficient use of attentional resources when decoding words; and prosody, which is the effective use of expression and phrase to convey meaning (Timothy V. Rasinski, 2004); the three skills or signs that make up fluency are accuracy in decoding, automaticity in decoding, and prosody in oral text. Reading fluency should be periodically evaluated in the classroom, as it is an essential component of instructional reading programmes. A one-minute oral reading passage can be used to quickly and easily measure all aspects of reading fluency (M. P. Wilger, 2008); his automaticity theory, which contends that proficient readers are those who instinctively process material to free up attention for comprehension, served as the foundation for the repeated reading technique (S.J. Samuels, 1979); the study's findings showed that reading fluently was a sign of comprehension; prosody predicted deeper meaning connections more accurately than other fluent reading abilities; and proper reading skills predicted deeper meaning connections more accurately. The results also showed that understanding and reading speed only had a modest relationship (M. Basaran, 2013); effectively deriving meaning from text is said to depend on both oral reading fluency and reading comprehension. The two are related in a way that makes it possible to comprehend more fully as one reads more quickly (Jessica A. Talada, 2007); findings show that despite differences in reading speed, word recognition percentage, and

prosody in favour of narrative texts, there was no discernible variation in reading comprehension level. The significant difference in the percentage of word recognition was found to be minor ($r = .18$), the significant difference in reading speed was considerable ($d = 1.02$), and the significant difference in prosody was in the middle ($d = .75$) when the magnitude of impacts was examined. Prosody, accuracy, and reading speed have been discovered to have a significant positive link with reading fluency, and a similar relationship can be noticed between reading comprehension and different sorts of texts in each type of text. Additionally, the study found that prosodic values and reading speed can significantly predict the proportion of reading comprehension in both informative and narrative text types. The study's conclusions matched the literature it offered as support (PinarKanik Uysala & Huzeyfe Bilgeb, 2018); the process writing technique was envisioned as a help menu based on the six recursive stages of composition at the commencement of this endeavour. The most significant finding from current writing research for writing education is that professional writers and good writers seem to go through specific processes that result in successful pieces of writing work. Good authors begin by having ideas in their heads. They consider what they want to write about and the audience they are writing for. Sections of the writing are then drafted. They continually evaluate, revise, and edit their work as they work on these sections. Or, to put it another way, good writers are characterized by having a sense of direction, audience, and purpose in their work. The 80 informants from the two experimental groups who were unskilled writers tended to be significantly more haphazard and insecure in their approach. Therefore, the task was to change our informants' writing habits (H. Yahiaoui, 2012); there were no appreciable differences in the pupils' test results when the pretest and posttest results were compared. The results disproved the claim that teaching the writing process alongside writing across the curriculum would help at-risk kids' writing abilities. However, instructor evaluations revealed that students made some modest improvements in their usage of the writing process, particularly prewriting, which enhanced the ideas and content of their class writing projects. The use of proper paragraph structure by students, particularly when writing topic sentences, has also improved, according to teachers (Theresa A. Dean-Rumsey, 1998); the pretest, post-test, and questionnaire were the three instruments employed in this study to gather data. The eighth graders at SMPN 2 Selat during the academic year 2013–2014 served as the study's subjects. There were 11 ladies and 16 men in this class, making a total of 27 pupils. It was discovered after pre-test answer analysis that the kids' writing score was incredibly low.

The current classroom action research was then conducted using cycles one and two of guided writing. Each cycle's post-test results revealed a considerable improvement in the subject's writing skills, particularly in the creation of descriptive paragraphs. The results of this study also showed that, as a result of the subjects' favourable reactions to the technique used to enhance their writing ability, there was a change in their learning behaviour. The current classroom action study demonstrated that, throughout the academic year 2013–2014, eighth grade students at SMPN 2 Selat may improve their writing abilities through guided writing. The students were encouraged to learn how to write (Luh Sri Dani, 2014); the research revealed that creative writing workshops are popular with students and have an impact on their language acquisition. Additionally, they are having issues in different parts of their creative writing programmes. As a result, it may be claimed that creative writing is a useful technique for learning a language (Ishrat Akhter, 2008); the study's findings indicate that during the teaching and learning process, there are favourable changes in both the classroom environment and students' writing abilities. A comparison between the pre-test conducted prior to the activity and the post-test conducted following the action reveals which test result improved. The average test results are 68.22 for the pretest, 75.58 for cycle 1's post-test, and 78.31 for cycle 2's post-test. The students gain information about specific themes by watching the videos, which helps them quickly create and generate ideas for a narrative story based on the video that was provided. On the basis of the typical arrangement of narrative material, they can also arrange paragraphs more effectively. The use of short movies by students has significantly improved their writing abilities, according to the t-test analysis of their test results. Between the pre-test and post-test 2, the t-test result was 8.77. The t table (tt) for 34 students is currently 2.04. Given that $(t_o)^2$ is greater than tt, there is a significant difference between the pretest and post-test 2 scores, (NununIndrasari, 2010); the study's findings identified a number of issues with vocabulary, grammar, syntax, spelling, and punctuation. In addition to these issues, the study also found redundancy of content, mother tongue interference, and genre identification. The study's conclusions will serve as a benchmark for assessing high school students' proficiency in writing in the English language (Jeen Peter1 & Prof. G. Singaravelu, 2021); the results imply that this objective can be achieved through the use of technology, pre-taught vocabulary, different teacher influences, and the adoption of beneficial diversified literacy practices (Jenny Cole & Jay Feng, 2015); the questionnaire's results showed that students had a high level of satisfaction with the framework for English writing education in

a blended learning approach. Based on the results, the researcher came to the conclusion that teaching English writing to students using a blended learning strategy improved their ability to write in English (SudaratPhosa, 2020); the results of the study suggested that teaching pupils about the writing process could improve their writing abilities. The diagnostic test's mean score of 59.84 for students changed to 66.38 in cycle 1, and after revision in cycle 2, the mean score increased to 70.79 thanks to the use of descriptive text (St. Asriati& AM. Maharida 2017); both primary and secondary sources of information were used by the researcher. The instrument for data collection was a set of test items that included two guided and two free writing prompts. Based on the tabulated data, the data were examined and interpreted in accordance with the predetermined goals. The results demonstrated the students' satisfactory performance. Students from ED-Mark College and Manamohan Memorial College outperformed those from Janamaitri and Pashupati Multiple Campuses in academic performance (Chandu Sharma, 2009); it was determined that there was a substantial difference between all of the factors affecting speech anxiety, including fear of failure, familiarity with public speaking, negative audience attitudes, and criticism. According to the study, pupils should receive training to reduce their fear and improve their speaking abilities (Asif Iqbal, et. Al, 2017); according to the findings, anxiety, fear of making mistakes, peer pressure, and shyness are affective elements that have an impact on students' speaking abilities (Saleh Alrasheedi, 2020); The study's findings show that the students struggled with a variety of issues, including speaking infrequently or not at all, having trouble coming up with something to say, using Vietnamese rather than English when speaking in groups or pairs, having low or uneven participation, being unmotivated to express themselves, being afraid of being judged or looking foolish, and having a habit of translating information from the textbook into Vietnamese before speaking. The findings also indicate that a variety of characteristics, including topical knowledge, listening skills, motivation to talk, teachers' feedback during speaking activities, confidence, pressure to do well, and time for speaking, had an impact on students' speaking performance (Nguyen Hoang Tuan & Tran Ngoc Mai, 2015); the high positive connections I discovered between hearing and other language abilities in the setting of EFL show that listening ability is important even when English is not the primary language (Hosseini Bozorgian, 2012); EFL students can improve their speaking skills by using a variety of tools, including role-playing, films, flash cards, and graphs. This essay also considers important elements and strategies for enhancing precise and fluent speaking abilities. To achieve this,

language teachers play a crucial role in establishing a conducive environment in the classroom that motivates both kids and adults to first participate in class discussions before facilitating opportunities to continue doing so outside of class. As a result, it is advantageous for both kids and adults (Ali Derakhshan, et.al., 2016); teaching listening skills has no effect on how well university students succeed academically (C. W. Mangrum, 1993); the study involved two groups of 58 male and female English majors. The participants in one group—the treatment group—received 14 hours of instruction in listening methods, which included presentations, exercises, and reviews. The students in the other group (the control group) did not receive any formal instruction on strategies. The results of the data analysis showed that in listening comprehension exams, pupils in the treatment group did noticeably better than those in the control group. The findings of the current study provide additional insight into how teaching listening techniques affects listening comprehension (Khaled Moradi, 2012); it was discovered that neither the teachers nor the students were particularly aware of the value of excellent listening and the role it plays in assisting students in their academic journey. They had the wrong idea about the importance of excellent listening, how to teach and learn it, and how it affects academic success. Additionally, the teachers paid no attention to the techniques that should be used to help their students become skilled listeners (DagneTirunehDinsa& Tariku MekonnenGutema, 2017); it follows that instructors who frequently use the auditory mode may be fostering an environment in which certain students experience anguish and turn to dishonest means of satisfying their demands. The main conclusion was that teachers who had a significant focus on cognition tended to have higher listening skills. Regardless of a teacher's personal orientation, connecting with students on a personal level is a prerequisite to learning (Michael B. Gilbert, 2005); this research report attempted to provide information on the significance of language, the main obstacles and weaknesses in listening abilities, as well as how this talent can be successfully cultivated. Additionally, it has offered several exercises for students to use while listening in class or any other public setting to solve problems that are challenging for them (Prakash S. Chauhan, 2012); according to this article, we place too much emphasis on the results of listening and not enough on the process. The remedy it suggests includes numerous micro-listening drills, which can be used prognostically as a part of listening instruction or diagnostically in reaction to indications of comprehension breakdowns. The activities serve three different purposes: teaching students certain smaller-scale strategy tactics, familiarizing them

with the characteristics of normal conversational speech, and preparing them with the subskills that a competent native listener may be expected to possess. Of course, these techniques and micro strategies must be merged and used in a longer work after being performed separately. It has been asserted that modeling—incorporating it into the structure of the listening lesson—rather than individual instruction is preferable for main listening methods requiring the creation and verification of inferences (John Field, 1998); the results of this study showed that teaching listening comprehension techniques has a big impact on how well viewers understand real documentary videos (Fatemeh Hosseini, 2013).

Objectives

- To study the level of reading proficiency of students in English language critically.
- To study the level of writing proficiency of students in English language critically.
- To study the level of awareness of teachers related to students' listening and speaking skills of foreign language (ENGLISH) both inside and outside the classroom.

Research Design

The study was followed by Descriptive Survey Research. There are 105 government secondary schools in Sambalpur district and out of them 10 are in Redhakhol. Apart from these 10 high schools there are other non-government secondary school exist in Redhakhol. Out of all the secondary schools come in Redhakhol block three schools (A B High School, G C High School, Prabhuji English Medium School) were selected. Out of these three schools 53 secondary students were selected as sample by simple random sampling. After analyzing the related literature, the researcher decided to process ahead with the self-made standardized tool. A good deal of variables under treatment in the present study were qualitative and quantitative by nature the responses obtain from the target group were in the form of a fixed opinion such as yes or no and in open way where they write and read the content in paragraph. The responses of the respondent were not converted into any kind of numerical or weights. No sophisticated techniques were applied and simple percentages of frequencies were calculated.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

TABLE – 1

Students' listening and speaking proficiency

N = 53

Sl. No.	Questions	Yes	No	NA
1.	Do you think your classroom environment is conducive for accepting English language as a medium of interaction & instruction?	33.3%	66.6%	
2.	Do you think it is difficult to talk in English for students?	33.3%	66.6%	
3.	Do your students talk in English in classroom?	33.3%	66.6%	
4.	Do you think students commit grammatical mistake in English?	100%		
5.	Do you think students are unable to translate their feelings into foreign language (English)?	66.6%	33.3%	
6.	Do you see students speak to each other in English in free time?		100%	
7.	Do you think students are showing hesitancy while speaking in English inside classroom because they shy to commit mistake in front of their friends?	100%		
8.	Do you think while students are responding in English it appears as in the memorized it more than they speak it naturally?	100%		
9.	Do you think even though students are good at writing their lack of practice in speaking and listening prevents them to become a proficient speaker?	100%		
10.	Do you believe every student need to be look after according to their level of proficiency?	100%		
11.	Do you take necessary steps to improve students' English speaking & listening ability?	100%		
12.	Do you believe that the steps which you have adopted are working properly?	66.6%		33.3%
13.	Do you think students' home environment plays a decisive role in shaping their English-speaking ability?	100%		
14.	Do you think parents' literacy sometimes create impediment in student English speaking ability?	100%		
15.	Have you seen students from rural area speak poor in English than the students from urban areas?	66.6%	33.3%	
16.	Do you think the lifestyle of rural students forcing them to favor Local language more than the foreign language?	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%
17.	Do you think it is vain to put effort in improving the speaking ability of students from rural areas?	33.3%	66.6%	
18.	Do you think parents from urban area are more concern about the education of their child than the rural areas' parents?	66.6%	33.3%	
19.	Do you think extra classes on English will help to improve proficiency of rural students?	100%		
20.	Do students use English in every class albeit different subject for having conversations?	33.3%	66.6%	
21.	Do you think your colleagues those who have not taught English subject communicate students through English?	66.6%	33.3%	
22.	As you can see English speaking is very much in demand in	100%		

	present, don't you think every faculty should embrace English as the medium of expression inside the classroom?			
23.	Do you think making English a compulsory medium to interact inside classroom is a good decision?	33.3%	66.6%	
24.	Do you think scaffolding students in English speaking will help them to become an efficient speaker?	66.6%	33.3%	
25.	Do you believe reward & punishment should be a way to create concern among students to speak in English language?	33.3%	66.6%	
26.	"Telling the students to talk to each other in English even if they are committing mistakes and watch English shows" do you think these are positive reinforcement or a good practice?	100%		

TABLE – 2

Students' reading proficiency

N = 53

Sl. No.	ACCURACY			AUTOMATICITY			PROSODY		
	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD	POOR	AVERAGE	GOOD
1	94.11%	5.88%	0	88.27%	11.76%	0	100%	0	0
2	55%	35%	10%	75%	20%	5%	85%	10%	5%
3	0	56.25%	43.75%	0	50%	50%	0	68.75%	31.25

TABLE – 3

Students' writing proficiency

N = 53

Sl. No.	TOPIC SENTENCE			SUPPORTING SENTENCES			CONCLUDING SENTENCE		
	POOR	AVG	GOOD	POOR	AVG	GOOD	POOR	AVG	GOOD
1	64.7%	35.3%	0	64.7%	35.3%	0	82.35%	17.64%	0
2	85%	0	15%	75%	20%	5%	90%	5%	5%
3	56.25%	25%	18.75%	50%	43.75%	6.25%	68.75%	25%	6.25%

Findings and Discussion

From the above analysis the data interpreted the following findings

1. Majority of classroom in Odia medium are not conducive for interaction in English language.
2. The placement of the schools is very much decisive in students' language proficiency. Students belong to the rural area schools are less efficient in reading, writing, speaking and listening than the students of urban areas.

3. Parents' literacy, teacher support and home environment are the influencing factors in student's language proficiency.
4. Majority of students in Odia government school cannot read with proper accuracy, automaticity and prosody compare to the English medium school.
5. Majority of students cannot write with proper topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentences whether they belong to the Odia medium or English medium. There is no unity and coherence in their writing.
6. The placement of the school is the key element which makes the difference in students' language proficiency level. So, the students from the school that placed in rural area have poor proficiency than the students in the urban area.
7. The medium of instruction that the curriculum allow in the school is another factor that influence the attitude of students towards English language.
8. Lastly, home environment, parent literacy and teachers' support are another important factor which have the potential to create impediment in the path of excellence in language proficiency.

Reading is one of the most popular cognitive skills for an individual to understand something that is available in written form through its subcomponents like word recognition (accuracy), automaticity (reading rate) and prosody (Prosody is the element of fluency that allows oral reading to sound like spoken language). Reading is not only a matter to pronounce words accurately but also to recognize them instantly through prosodic features such as pitch, stress, intonation and the use of appropriate phrasing. Writing is another cognitive skill, in which people incorporate the process of planning, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. In this process we can see articles, which are comprised of various paragraphs. Each paragraph has its own significance and it builds upon three elements which are topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentences. Moreover, there are two other elements which are very important for the reader to understand those are unity and coherence. Unity ensures that every supporting sentences will discuss about same idea and coherence enable the reader to follow the idea easily because it ensures that each sentence naturally led to another sentence. There are four other factors which are essential to ensure the technical correctness of writing - format, mechanics, organization and grammar and sentence structure. The term "format" refers to the standards and writing etiquette (margin). The word "mechanics" refers to using proper spelling and punctuation. A different sense of writing will result from incorrect spelling and punctuation. The logical information of the content (coherence) is referred to as "organisation." It has well-organised, currently-written sentences that flow naturally. The terms "grammar" and "sentence

structure" refer to the proper use of grammar and the arrangement of words into phrases and sentences. To survive in a society a living being has to communicate and the better way of communication is speaking. Speaking itself is a very big challenge for people when it comes to foreign language. We noted from above related literature that linguistic competence is not sufficient for someone to achieve communicative competence. Communicative competence is described with four components including linguistic competence, sociolinguistic competence, pragmatic competence and strategic competence. There are several factors those are impeding students' speaking ability such as higher anxiety, lower self-confidence, high pressure, inhibition, lack of motivation, listening inability, lacking knowledge in vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation, predominance of mother tongue, etc. 45% of our time in a day we're spending in listening activity. The attitude which students have towards listening lesson is the best determining factor for their success in developing their effective listening skills. The attitude can be influenced through implementing the real life talks inside the classroom. This can be done through adopting technology-based language teaching such as learning through audio-visual instruments. While teaching in this procedure teacher supposed to convey the background knowledge to the student so that student can relate to the topic during watching multimedia content.

Students spend their day inside schools, so it's the teacher responsibility to create an environment that shouldn't let any child to feel inferior from other. Hesitancy is the element that should be removed from students' behavior, student shouldn't feel guilty while committing mistakes. Mostly in rural areas, teacher should mold the attitude of students to make them think of English as a language that would help them to communicate in the present competitive society. Parents in rural areas need to be supportive in the betterment of education of their child and the teacher in this area should make the parents aware about the present need of the society. In Odia medium schools the period that has allotted to the English subject, there, the English teacher must make sure that all the interaction should happen through English language, which can bring changes in the attitude among students towards in English language. Though students belong to the English medium school nevertheless their writing ability is very average, so teacher should teach the technicality of writing which clearly suggest that there should be a topic sentence which is followed by supporting sentences and end with a concluding sentence. All these sentences should be united and coherence.

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