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RESEARCH PAPER

An analysis of Teachers' Perceptions for English as Medium of Expression affecting Exclusion of Learners

* **Dr. Vijay Kumar Grover**, Associate Professor
DAV College of Education, Abohar, Punjab
Email: grovervijayk@gmail.com 9417168659 (M)

Key words: *English, Medium of expression, English as medium of expression, Exclusion attitudes, Attitudes etc.*

Abstract

The paper is about assessment of teachers' attitudes towards English as medium of expression in classroom proceedings. It is study only related to assessment of exclusion attitudes that whether use of English as medium of expression automatically excludes students from classroom proceedings. A stratified disproportionate random sample of one hundred secondary school teachers was taken as participants. A standardized scale of exclusion attitudes towards English as medium of expression was used to collect the data. Analysis of data has been done in terms of percentage analysis and comparative analysis (t-test, one way ANOVA). Investigator concludes that teacher on the whole do not possess significant opposition for use of English as medium of expression in classroom. It is true for both teachers who use English as medium of expression and those who do not. Also study concludes that exclusion attitudes of teachers towards English as medium of expression remain unaffected by virtue of their attribute orientations i.e. variation across gender, locality and their teaching stream.

Introduction

Education is a vital tool for progress for human being in this era of knowledge. It is a process rather than product, where learner passes through different stages to reach the destination. The process of education depends upon number of factors for its efficiency. These factors may include personal as well as external ones. Personal factors like- physical fitness, intelligence, interest, motivations, study habits play significant role in one's academic performance. External factors may include- school, teacher, parents in both tangible as well as intangible sense. Tangible factors may be controlled on summative basis but intangible factors vary with respect to every individual. Most of these intangible factors operate in classroom in terms of teacher taught interactions. The main source of interaction in classroom is delivery of subject matter which has two dimensions- content and channel of communication. Supposing content adequacy is there channel of communication assumes

great importance. Channel of communication is nothing but medium of expression and artful use of it. Medium of expression can be chosen in terms of available languages which are known to both teacher and taught. In India there is more than one option for choosing a medium of expression for content delivery in classroom. Since colonial period Indians have a subtle attraction for English as medium of expression at all stages of education. Sometimes may be mistakenly speaking English or learning in English medium has been taken synonymous to indicator of ability and intelligence. Thus mysteriously English has become first choice as medium of expression in many Schools and Colleges and definitely in Indian Universities. For some subjects like Science, Mathematics and Commerce, English is definitely considered as preferred medium of expression may be due to its choice of symbols and style. But at the same time the fact remain that English is a foreign language which is not natural to our leaning. It is needed to be learnt as other subjects, rather than mere an instrument of knowledge acquisition. On the other hand mother tongue is a natural to human beings as instincts, should be a preferred choice for using as medium of expression. In a way English must be a factor hindrance to learning. Medium of expression should be a definite reason to include everyone in the ambit of knowledge. But use of English as medium of expression might be rather causing exclusion of learners form learning. This very idea has led to selection of the present problem i.e. study of perceptions of teachers in respect of English serving as instrument of exclusion when used as medium of expression.

Statement of the problem

Present problem can be stated as follows

An analysis of Teachers' Perceptions for English as Medium of Expression affecting Exclusion of Learners

Teachers' perceptions are independent variable whereas magnitude of exclusion is dependent variable.

Meaning of Terms used in the Statement of the Problem

Exclusion: As per dictionary exclusion would simply means not allowing including. Here it is bit abstract in a sense that supposedly student losses the terrain of learning by virtue of not been able to understand the content due to inability to understand English the channel of communication. Thus student gets excluded from the mainstream classroom proceedings. Sometimes it consequently happens that student changes the school by this very sole reason. It is complete exclusion by virtue of English being used as medium of expression. If it

happens for many students then we would call language (English) is serving as instrument of exclusion whereas its purpose is to include every student in the ambit of learning.

Medium of Expression: A language adopted for classroom instruction is termed as medium of instruction and when it becomes tool for interactions in all forms and for the purpose of evaluation, it is termed as medium of expression.

Perceptions: simply means one's reactions to some statements which are designed to assess their exclusion attitudes towards English as medium of expression for classroom proceedings.

Teachers: who classes teach from 6th to 12th (secondary stage) standards is called as teachers in this paper.

Operational Statement of the Problem:

Evaluating attitudes of secondary school teachers measured against exclusion attitudes scale for English as medium of expression serving as an instrument of exclusion of learners from classroom proceedings.

Research Design and Methodology:

Investigator used a standardized Likert type exclusion attitudes scale to be responded on five point scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree in respect of statement. Study can be categorized as survey type. One hundred teachers spread across attribute variables constituted the sample. Data collection has been on individual basis and sample could be termed as stratified disproportionate one. Directional hypothesis has been tested by using percentage analysis for significance whereas null hypotheses across attribute variables have been tested by using Analysis of Variance technique.

Objectives

The study has been conducted to attain the following objectives

- To assess the magnitude of exclusion attitudes of teacher regarding English as instrument of exclusion when used as medium of expression in classroom.
- To compare exclusion attitudes for English as medium of expression across teachers teaching with English as medium of expression and teachers not using English as medium of expression.
- To assess magnitude of exclusion attitudes of teachers for English as an instrument of exclusion in respect of attribute variables.

Hypotheses

The proposed study has been undertaken to test the following hypotheses:

H₁: There is significant magnitude of exclusion attitudes among teachers in respect of English as medium of expression in classroom.

H₂: There is no significant difference in the mean score of exclusion attitudes of teachers teaching through English and others teaching through other than English for using English as medium of expression.

H₃: There is no significant influence of attribute variables (gender, locality and Teaching subject) on exclusion attitudes of teachers in respect of use of English as medium of expression.

Data Collection Tool

A standardized Likert scale by Nancy and Vijay Grover has been used for assessment of exclusion attitudes of teachers in respect of English as medium of expression has been used for collection of data. A background questionnaire has also been used to collect attribute information regarding attribute variables.

Sample for the present Study

One hundred teachers from secondary schools spread across attribute variables constituted the sample for the study. The sample could be classified as disproportionate stratified random sample somewhat less random but more valid in sense of distribution across demographic variables.

Statistical Techniques used

The data has been analyzed using

- Descriptive analysis involving mean standard deviation, percentages and K-S test for ascertaining nature of the sample.
- Comparative analysis across multiple groups using ANOVA and t-test.

Rationale of the Study

Medium of expression has been the significant factor in content delivery and its understanding. Many of our educationists including Mahatma Gandhi have strongly opposed English as medium of instruction at least for primary classes. The opposition was clearly based on the fact that one requires extra energy to learn the medium of instruction

alone. Students stress more on learning the medium rather than the content. This is not the case with Indian languages and least with the mother tongue. But unfortunately most of the higher education content could not be developed in Indian languages. In fact this is not the problem with primary or secondary stage schooling. Even then many of the schools opt for English as medium of expression for classroom proceedings. Author feels that this might be causing as systematic exclusion of learners from classroom proceedings thus formed basis for present study.

Delimitations of the Study

Due to paucity of time and resources present study has been delimited in following respect of following dimensions.

Scope (Attitudes Dimensions): only exclusion attitudes of teachers in respect of using English as medium of expression have been studied.

Attitudes assessment: attitudes have been assessed by using single attitude scale.

Sample: only one hundred teachers have been taken as participants for the present investigation.

Statistical Analysis: only simple descriptive and comparative analysis has been used to analyze the data.

Exclusion Attitudes Scale

Theoretical constructs of the scale are- scope, reach, structure, acceptance, mode, learnability, utility of English as medium of expression which could be the cause of exclusion of students from classroom proceedings.

Reliability of the measure

Reliability of the measure is reported as follows.

Table 1

Sr. No.	Sub measure	Reliability	
		Half Length (r)	Full Length (R)
1.	Exclusion Attitudes Scale	.73	.84

Validity of the Measure:

Validity of the measure has been satisfactory calculated in terms of Mouly's (1970) method of agreement of responses in two different formats (written and face to face interview) and using contrast groups comparison method as popularly known as Kelley's Dichotomy.

Scoring of the Scale

It is as usual in case of Likert scale scoring procedure. For positive items five score is credited for response strongly agree (SA), score four is awarded for response agree (A), score three is credited for response no opinion (NO), score two is awarded for disagree (DA), and score one is awarded for strongly disagree (SD). For negative items score one is credited for response strongly agree (SA), score two is awarded for response agree (A), score three is credited for response no opinion (NO), score four is awarded for disagree (DA), and score five is awarded for strongly disagree (SD). After scoring for each individual item sum of scores and averages are used to calculate percentages and comparative analysis.

Application of K-S test

A powerful test named K-S (Kolmogorov-Smirnov) test is used to ascertain normality of the sample as a measure for application of parametric tests. The observed $I c.p_e - c.p_o I_{max.} = 0.0123$ is gratifying to ensure normality of the sample.

Hypotheses Testing**Testing of Hypothesis H₁:**

There is significant magnitude of exclusion attitudes among teachers in respect of English as medium of expression in classroom.

Percentage analysis has been used on whole sample for testing this hypothesis.

Here the two groups' comparison formula is modified to make it applicable for single group applied at two levels of percentage. One percentage is the observed one and other is maximum i.e. 100% to compare with. If the analysis shows significant difference between the two the observed percentage itself would be insignificant and if the difference is found to be insignificant consequently observed percentage would be significant.

$$P = \frac{P_1N_1 + P_2N_2}{N_1 + N_2} = \frac{(69.41 \times 100 + 100 \times 100)}{200} = 84.71$$

$$Q = 100 - P = 15.30$$

$$\sigma_D\% = \sqrt{PQ[1/N_1 + 1/N_2]} = 5.09$$

$$C. R = (P_1 - P_2) / \sigma_D\% = 6.00$$

The calculated value is far greater than the table values (Table D), explains the observed percentage difference is significant, i.e. it is far less from the maximum percentage to which we are comparing. It implies the observed percentage (69.41%) itself is insignificant on statistical parameters. Thus the proposed hypothesis "*There exists significant magnitude of exclusion attitudes among teachers in respect of English as medium of expression in classroom*" could not be accepted. Hence we conclude that teachers do not have significant exclusion attitudes towards English as medium of expression. Since the measure itself was of negative nature the result endorses the fact otherwise. This finding is good as far as use of English as medium of expression is concerned.

Testing of Hypothesis H₂:

There is no significant difference in the mean score of exclusion attitudes of teachers teaching through English and others teaching through other than English for using English as medium of expression.

The hypothesis is tested by using students' t-test for independent samples namely those who use English as medium of expression and those who use other than English as medium of expression. The calculations have been detailed in table 2.

Table 2

Parameter	N	M	σ	S E _d	t-ratio
English	35	47.15	9.75	2.00	1.10
Non-English	65	49.33	8.51		

The calculated t-ratio is much lesser than the table values ($t_{0.05}=1.98$, $t_{0.01}=2.63$, $df =98$) indicating that exclusion attitudes of teachers do not differ significantly across their choice of medium of expression they use in classroom proceedings. In statistical terms hypothesis could not be accepted i.e. we reject the hypothesis "*There is no significant difference in the mean score of exclusion attitudes of teachers teaching through English and others teaching through other than English for using English as medium of expression*". The obtained difference in favour of

one group is a matter of chance and cannot be considered as a fact. It shows that even those teachers who are using other than English as medium of expression in classroom proceedings have no greater rejection for English as medium of expression compare to those who use English. It indicates that teachers see knowledge as knowledge independent of preference for its communication channel. This is a positive result as far as breaking of the myth that English as a medium of expression is being used (consciously or unconsciously) an exclusion or inclusion instrument.

Testing oh Hypothesis H₃:

There is no significant influence of attribute variables (gender, locality and Teaching subject) on exclusion attitudes of teachers in respect of use of English as medium of expression.

The hypothesis was tested by using one way ANOVA. Factorial design could not be used due to small sample size. Summary of calculations has been detailed in table 3.

Table 3

Source of Variation	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Square (Variance)
Total sum of Squares		23850.57	
Among means of conditions	5	109.07	21.81
Within conditions	294	23741.50	80.75
Total	299	23850.57	
F ratio = 0.27	Table Values $F_{0.05} = 2.25$, $F_{0.01} = 3.06$, $df = 5, 299$		

The observed F ratio is far below the table values (Table F) as mentioned in the table 3. This implies that it does not affect exclusion attitudes of teachers towards English as medium of expression in classroom proceedings whether one is male or female, whether one lives in city or a village and whether one teaches science or humanities. This is an expected result as we believe there is no basis for such attitudes are affected by variation across attribute variables. Thus we refute the hypothesis "*There is no significant influence of attribute variables (gender, locality and Teaching subject) on exclusion attitudes of teachers in respect of use of English as medium of expression*" on statistical account. Exclusion attitudes towards English as medium of expression must not be associated with attribute variables.

Conclusions:

- Magnitude of exclusion attitudes in respect of English as medium of expression is not significant among the secondary school teachers.
- Magnitude of exclusion attitudes in respect of English as medium of expression is not significant in terms of variation in medium of expression being practiced by the secondary school teachers.
- Exclusion attitudes of secondary school teachers regarding English as medium of expression are not influenced significantly by the demographic variables.

Educational Significance of the Study

- Teachers do not reject English as medium of expression for classroom proceedings at secondary stage. In other words they do not believe that English as medium of expression serves as an instrument of exclusion of students from classroom proceedings. They believe that wherever English is being used as medium of expression students have accepted it will fully and they are prepared to deal with it with all its complexities of being a foreign language. Even this notion is challengeable due to the fact that English is effectively here by now more than hundred years. It seems to be logical also because in India there is always an offer of alternative medium for students to choose, consequently English is a choice not compulsion as far as medium of expression is concerned.
- Whether teachers teach through English or other than English as medium of expression their exclusion attitudes towards English as medium of expression remain uninfluenced. In a way it may be a personal choice independent of the medium they are using in classroom proceedings. Thus it is concluded that we cannot expect naturally negative attitudes towards English as medium of expression of teachers teaching through other than English and vice -versa i.e. positive attitudes of teachers using English as medium of expression.
- Exclusion attitudes are independent of attribute variables. This infers teachers divided across attribute variables (Gender-Male/Female, Locality-Urban/Rural, and Teaching stream-Science/Humanities) have no effect on building their attitudes regarding use of English as medium of expression in classroom proceedings. In other words teacher's choice of medium for expression should not be associated with their identity orientations.

Suggestions for further study

- a) Study could be replicated from learners point of view i.e. students be the participants of study to understand the difference in perceptions of the two stakeholders (teachers and students).
- b) Study should be replicated for other languages (Hindi and Punjabi) could be used as medium of expression to understand difference between the two in respect of convenience to both teacher and learner.
- c) Other variables like class size, administration type, and school type could be studied for preferences of English as medium of expression.
- d) Greater size of sample could be used for use of complex statistical techniques like 3-way ANOVA (factorial design) and the like.

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*** Corresponding Author:**

Dr. Vijay Kumar Grover, Associate Professor
DAV College of Education, Abohar, Punjab
Email: grovervijayk@gmail.com 9417168659 (M)