

Chapter – 5
Discussion &
Implication

CHAPTER – V

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5.1 DISCUSSION

Language is intimately tied to man's feelings and activity. It is bound up with nationality, religion, and the feeling of self. It is used for work, worship and play by everyone, be he beggar or banker, savage or civilized. Because of its pervasiveness, it is the object of study by many branches of learning. Languages play a very important role. The basic aim of teaching language, it is believed to enable the student to develop skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Reading is a complex cognitive skills which plays an important role in scholastic achievement. The importance of reading lies in the fact that the child must first learn to read so that he can later read to learn. Reading is the process constructing meaning from the printed text through a dynamic interaction among the reader. The text and the context of the reading situation (*Lerner, 1990*).

A Childs reading achievement consists of both the process of identification or recognition of words, independent of any context, and the process of comprehending a sentence or paragraph. The former is termed reading decoding and the latter, reading comprehension.

Skilled reading requires an individual not only to decode the words successfully but also to comprehend the material in a meaning full way. Hence decoding and comprehension ability are complementary to each other.

An individual who faces difficulty in the recognition of words would obviously fail in task of comprehension. However, a person good in word reading may or may not perform well in comprehension. Research studies have shown that performance in reading improves when children have active experiences in written and oral language. An issue of considerable research interest here relates to the students performance across different languages and their relationship with mathematics achievement.

A knowledge of children's competence across languages can help us to help children improve upon their performance. The present study has taken a step towards this end by examining grade V students performance on decoding and comprehension in two different medium of instruction and also find out its relationship with mathematics.

Comparison of the performance of English medium and Hindi medium children on tasks of reading skills and mathematics achievement reveals better performance of English Medium Students than Hindi Medium Students.

English medium students were given reading comprehension task in English similarly Hindi medium students in Hindi. Results shows that the superiority of English medium students.

In case of English Medium children English is used as the primary formal mode of instruction. However, the verbal interactions of the students with the teachers and the peers at school are regulated by Hindi, which is their mother tongue. The process of verbal communication at school and home is, thus,

governed by Hindi. Hence they are in an advantage position. The language skills learned in their mother tongue are transferred to their second language. The performance of the students on the measures of decoding and comprehension can be discussed from a perspective of bilingualism.

Cummins (1979) theory of linguistic interdependence advocates that the school related aspects of proficiency in two or more languages are common or interdependent across all languages of the bilingual at the underlying level. Thus, the skills in scholastic use of language, such as reading and comprehending text materials will generalize from one language (L_1) to the other (L_2) provided the level of development in L_1 is adequate. The study has found that the proficiency in L_1 (their mother tongue, which is Hindi) is highly developed as to generalize to and develop high literacy skills in L_2 .

Since the problem of language of instruction in India cannot be viewed from the monolingual perspective, the schools have the major responsibility of ensuring a smooth transition from regional to the state language and to national link language (*Mohanty, 1994*). Thus a bilingual multilingual programme can be followed which will not only help in mother tongue maintenance but also will facilitate acquiring efficiency in other languages.

EFFECT OF LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

A comparison of the mean scores of English medium and Hindi medium children on various tasks in their respective languages of instruction, shows that the performance of English medium students is better in grade V.

The results thus indicate that language of instruction has an important role to play in student's performance which goes in favour of English medium. This can be explained by the fact that English, being the language of instruction for these students gives more exposure and proficiency in the language. Besides their exposure to Hindi language is also good, it being their mother tongue. Hence they are getting the benefit of learning to languages.

It should be noted here that it may not be the mother tongue per se that is important as the medium of instruction, but the proficiency in the mother tongue that is important. Thus the child can have any language as his mother tongue provided he has ample opportunity to develop proficiency in that language. Of course it is easier to develop proficiency in one's mother tongue.

5.2 IMPLICATION

An important factor in the language development of the child is the fact whether he has to learn one or two languages in the house in his early age. At an earlier age, conceptual development is facilitated by the mother tongue language because the child does not have to give emphasis both on learning the language and learning the content or subject matter. The language has become automatized. But in case of L_2 , at an earlier age, the child has to learn both the languages and the subject matter, so performance suffers. However, as proficiency develops in L_2 , effort is directed only to learning the subject matter, so the performance improves. Further learning subject matter requires the child to read words and comprehend it. At earlier grade, thus comprehension is affected by decoding ability, but by later grade, decoding becomes more or less automatized and does not influence much the ability to comprehend.

Reading comprehension ability affects the mathematics performance of children. findings of the study support this, English medium has performed better in reading comprehension and their mathematics achievement is also better as compared to Hindi medium students. Hence teacher should take this also consideration & focus on effective reading comprehension ability of children. Thus the implication of this study can be said to be practical oriented. Here English medium students, coming from majority language group are in an advantage position

According to the interdependence hypothesis of *Cummins (1991)*, “To the extent that instruction in L_x is effective in promoting proficiency in L_x’. Transfer of this proficiency to L_y will occur provided there is adequate exposure to L_y (either in school or environment) and adequate motivation to learn L_y” (Cummins & Swain 1986).

Thus what is important is not so much whether L₁ or L₂ is used for initial instruction but the potential exposure to the languages in the environment and motivation to continue developing it.

Bilingual students actually have an advantage over students who speak just one language, suggesting that the wisest course might be to enhance language skills for bilingual students in both their original language and English. English medium students have proficiency in Hindi as it is their mother tongue. They also have proficiency in English as it is their medium of instructions. Hence their reading comprehension has been found to be better compared to Hindi medium students and consequently their mathematics achievement is also better as compared to Hindi medium students.