

LANGUAGE IN INDIA

Strength for Today and Bright Hope for Tomorrow

Volume 12 : 7 July 2012

ISSN 1930-2940

Managing Editor: M. S. Thirumalai, Ph.D.

Editors: B. Mallikarjun, Ph.D.

Sam Mohanlal, Ph.D.

B. A. Sharada, Ph.D.

A. R. Fatihi, Ph.D.

Lakhan Gusain, Ph.D.

Jennifer Marie Bayer, Ph.D.

S. M. Ravichandran, Ph.D.

G. Baskaran, Ph.D.

L. Ramamoorthy, Ph.D.

Assistant Managing Editor: Swarna Thirumalai, M.A.

Factors Affecting Quality of Teaching-Learning of English Reading at the Secondary School Level

Vanite Bala, M.A. Education, M.A. & M.Phil. English, B.Ed.

Veena Bamba, Ph.D.

=====
Abstract

English in India is more than a foreign language and less than a second language. It has become the walk of all trades and developments. In Haryana state it is considered a second language, compulsory from 1st grade. English has been part of our education system for more than a century. Yet, the quality of English teaching is simply not good enough. The support systems, such as the number of teachers or materials for teaching, are neither adequate nor appropriate.

The objective of the present study is to analyse the factors influencing teaching learning of reading ability of English language. Survey method is adopted to collect the data by instrumenting self-prepared teachers' opinionnaire.

Language in India www.languageinindia.com

12 : 7 July 2012

Vanite Bala, M.A. Education, M.A. English, M.Phil., B.Ed. and Veena Bamba, Ph.D.

Factors Affecting Quality of Teaching-Learning of English Reading at the Secondary School
Level

The data reveals that education system is highly responsible for the precarious situation of English. Methods of teaching and other socio-cultural factors are also found responsible to some extent to make the situation more dismal. It is suggested that the first and the foremost concern should be to make amendments in the education system especially the staffing of trained faculty and essential infrastructure.

Introduction

English in India is more than a foreign language and less than a second language. It has become the walk of all trades and developments. It serves as the window through which we can peep into the outside world and can get the knowledge of the whole universe. The National Knowledge Commission 2006 in its report says that English has been part of our education system for more than a century, yet English is beyond the reach of most of our young people, which makes for highly unequal access. Indeed, even now, not more than one percent of our people use it as a second language. The quality of English teaching is simply not good enough. The support systems, such as the number of teachers or materials for teaching, are neither adequate nor appropriate.

In Haryana though English is considered as a second language, Haryana Govt. realising its necessity has introduced it as a compulsory subject from 1st standard in its education set up since 2001. The state also established effective linkage between the SCERT, DIETs and schools so that altogether they can play better constructive role in its drive of pedagogical revival of teaching and learning of English in the State. Besides, seminars and camps in-service training, induction and in-school training have been launched to uplift the below mark status of teaching and learning of English language. In spite of the above said developments in ELT, Haryana is one of the states in India where English language is facing a very precarious situation. The overall situation is dismal (Daisy, 2010).

Language in India www.languageinindia.com

12 : 7 July 2012

Vanite Bala, M.A. Education, M.A. English, M.Phil., B.Ed. and Veena Bamba, Ph.D.

Factors Affecting Quality of Teaching-Learning of English Reading at the Secondary School Level

The ability to read written material is very important in the civilized world. In a society characterized by globalization and technological change, where knowledge is becoming increasingly important, reading ability is a key skill for active participation. Reading proficiency is the royal road to knowledge and it is essential to the success in all academic subjects. Seyed Hussein Fazeli (2010) and Shayistz (2003) state that reading comprehension is an important life skill. It is one of the most important domains in education, because it is the best predictor of success in higher education and job performance. Elley, (1994) stresses that reading ability is necessary for many occupations and a prerequisite for future life-long learning Levin (1975) noted that the ability to read well is the basis for success in school and thereafter.

English being the library language all over the world, the priority of reading ability is also the uppermost in the mind of most of the educational planners. The Education Commission (1964-66) accepted the idea that English is an exclusive 'window to the world' and the Study Group Reports (1969) emphasized that reading comprehension is a priority area all over English language teaching programmes. This has a special importance when we think of the place of reading at secondary level. Here the teaching-learning of English reading is affected by socio-cultural factors, factors related to education system and methods and techniques of teaching.

Objectives

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To study the impact of factors related to education system on the reading ability of English language.
2. To study the effect of factors related to methods/techniques of teaching on the reading ability of English language.

Language in India www.languageinindia.com

12 : 7 July 2012

Vanite Bala, M.A. Education, M.A. English, M.Phil., B.Ed. and Veena Bamba, Ph.D.

Factors Affecting Quality of Teaching-Learning of English Reading at the Secondary School Level

3. To study the effect of socio cultural factors on the reading ability of English language.

Methodology

The researchers used the survey method. The main instrument used for this study was a teachers' opinionnaire. The researchers designed the opinionnaire by generating a list of items, which solicited teachers' responses on state education system, methods of teaching used by them and socio-cultural factors affecting the teaching learning environment. The teachers who are teaching English to secondary classes are randomly selected as a sample from five districts Kurukshetra, Karnal, Panipat, Rohtak and Jind of Haryana State. The sample size is 100. Their responses are recorded on three point response rating, that is, *to great extent*, *to some extent*, and *not at all*. The teachers profile is noted in open-ended short answers. The data so collected is tabulated and graphs drawn to have a clear overview of the factors affecting teaching learning of English language. The simple percentage method is used for calculation of results in the present study.

Results and Discussion

Section -1 deals with the factors related to education system.

Section -2 deals with the factors related to methods and techniques.

Section-3 deals with socio-cultural factors influencing the reading ability in English language.

Section -1

Factors Related to Education System

Table 1.1

N=100

Sr.No	Factors	To Great Extent	To Some Extent	Not At All
1	Lack of tailored curriculum	48	52	0

Language in India www.languageinindia.com

12 : 7 July 2012

Vanite Bala, M.A. Education, M.A. English, M.Phil., B.Ed. and Veena Bamba, Ph.D.

Factors Affecting Quality of Teaching-Learning of English Reading at the Secondary School Level

2	Lack of provision of language lab	74	20	6
3	Dearth of trained teachers	20	56	24
4	Defective evaluation system	40	56	4
5	Frequent change of govt. policies	80	20	0

The table 1.1 depicts that 48 percent teachers are of the opinion that untailored curriculum influences the teaching learning of reading ability of English language to great extent and 52 percent think that this factor influences the teaching-learning to some extent only. None is there to say that this factor does not have any effect. One and the same textbook is prescribed for all students with a wide range of abilities. Pardhan (1991) also supported that the prescribed syllabus of English for different schools is not up to the mark. It is not related to the surrounding of the learners. Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the teachers feels the lack of English language lab greatly affects learning while $\frac{1}{5}$ finds this factor responsible to some extent, only a few do not find the necessity of language lab.

As far as the issue of training of teachers is concerned 56 percent accept the fact that it affects the teaching-learning of English reading ability to some extent, 20 percent feel that it greatly affects, while 24 percent do not find any problem whether teachers are trained or untrained. Bose (2005) has also noted that English has become a far cry because there is dearth of efficient teachers in rural areas. The evaluation system is found defective by 96 percent population to some or great extent. Only negligible number finds it suitable. Hussain A.M. (2010) also emphasizes the need for change in “student-friendly” examination system if the standard of teaching English in India is to improve. Frequent change of government policies is termed as the most responsible factor hampering teaching learning of English reading ability.

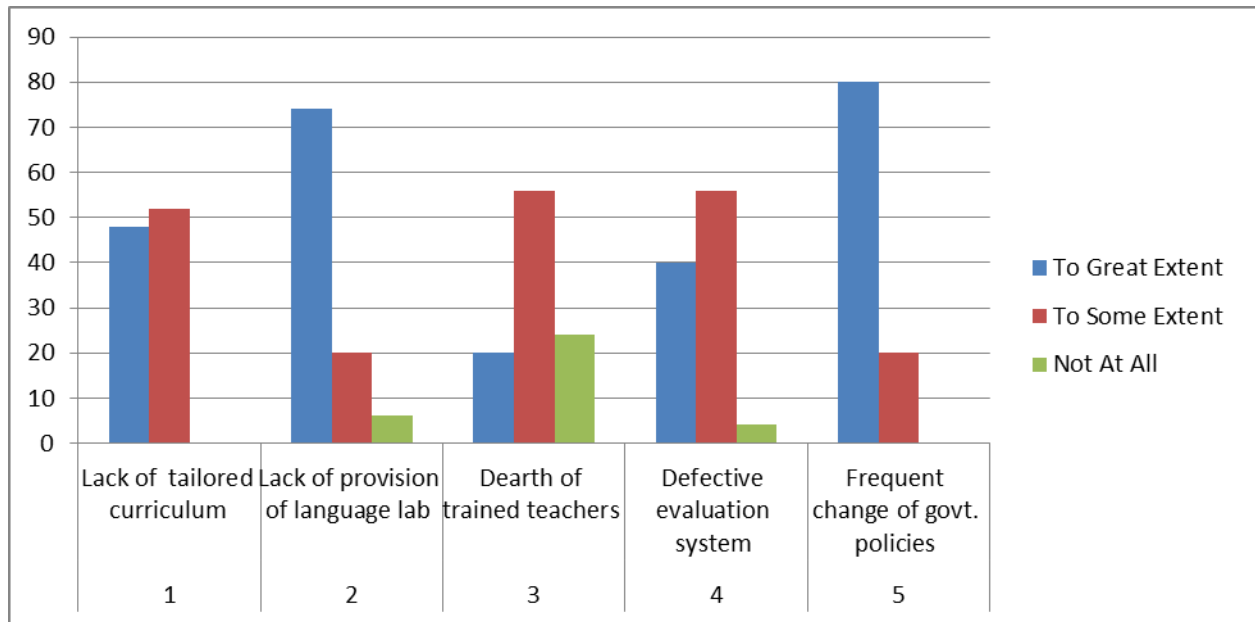


Figure -1

Section- B

Factors Related to Methods and Techniques

Table 2.1

N=100

Sr.No	Factors	To Great Extent	To Some Extent	Not At All
1	Lack of scientific approach to teach foreign language	72	28	0
2	Lack of knowledge of micro – skills of reading	16	66	18
3	Focus on mechanism rather than mental ability	28	64	8
4	Lack of tailored remedial measures	24	64	12
5	Lack of motivation to read extra material	60	28	12

The factors related to methods and techniques have noticeable effect over the teaching - learning of reading of English. 72 percent teachers admitted that lack of scientific approach in teaching of foreign language greatly affects the learning of the reading skills, 28 percent find it

Language in India www.languageinindia.com

12 : 7 July 2012

Vanite Bala, M.A. Education, M.A. English, M.Phil., B.Ed. and Veena Bamba, Ph.D.

Factors Affecting Quality of Teaching-Learning of English Reading at the Secondary School Level

responsible to some extent . The result of present study is also supported by Kaur (1979) who found that the translation method which is not scientific to teach a foreign language is the sole favourite method of the teachers.

As far as teachers’ expertise in micro skills of reading is concerned, 66 percent agree to some extent, 16 percent to great extent and 18 percent do not find any deficiency in their expertise. 64 percent teachers accepted to some extent the statement that teaching the reading skill focuses on mechanism rather than on mental ability involved in reading, 28 percent accepted it to great extent, only 8 percent are confident that both the mechanism and mental ability are taken into consideration while teaching the reading skill. The lack of tailored remedial measures are responsible to great extent in the view of 24 percent teachers , to some extent in the view of 64 percent teachers while 12 percent are satisfied with the remedial measures.

Motivation to read is an important aspect of learning in general & reading in particular. Here 60 percent opined that lack of motivation to read extra material influence the reading ability to great extent, 28 percent put it to some extent and 12 percent find no effect of motivation.

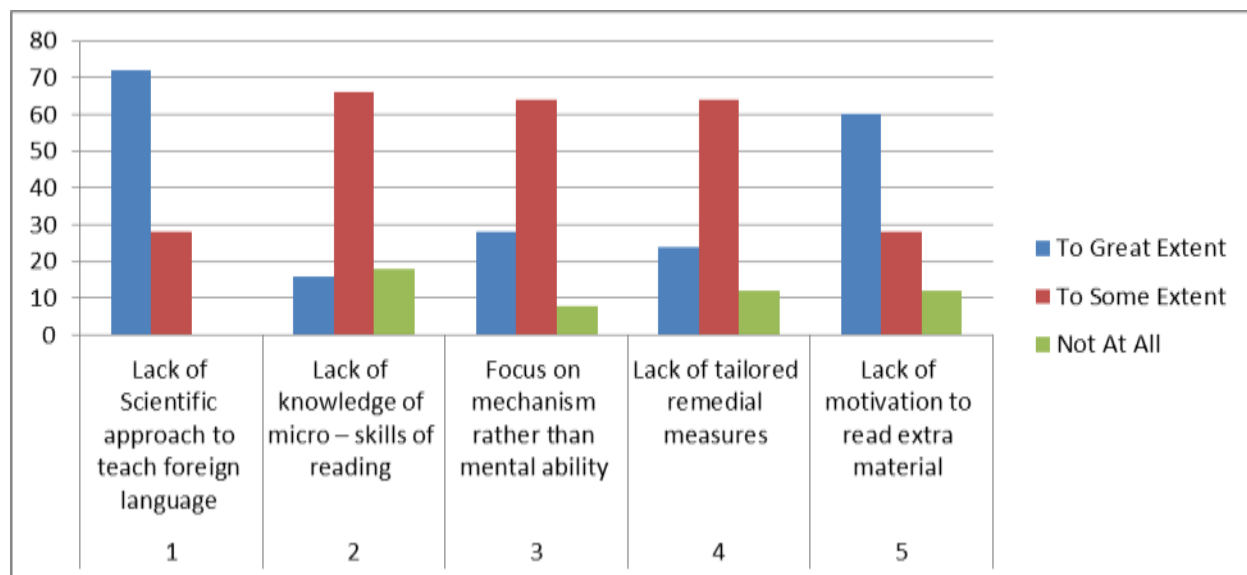


Figure – 2

Section – C

Factors Related to Socio-Cultural System

Table 3.1

N=100

Sr.No	Factors	To Great Extent	To Some Extent	Not At All
1	Psychological fear of foreign language	64	34	2
2	Hurdle of mother- tongue	64	36	0
3	Lack of English speaking and listening environment	100	0	0
4	Choice of teaching profession is not by choice but by chance	49	36	15
5	Over crowded classrooms	48	52	0

Among the socio-cultural factors, the absence of English speaking and listening environment is exclusively responsible to great extent in teaching-learning reading ability. Interference of mother tongue and overcrowded class-rooms are also fully responsible with a little difference of degree of extent in learning the reading skill. The psychological fear of foreign language influences to great extent in the view of 64 percent teachers and to some extent in the view of 34 percent teachers. Only negligible, that is, 2 percent rule out such fear. The most surprising factor, the choice of teaching profession is not by choice but by chance, greatly affects the teaching-learning of English reading ability in the opinion of almost half of the population. For 36 percent it affects to some extent and for 15 percent it hardly matters.

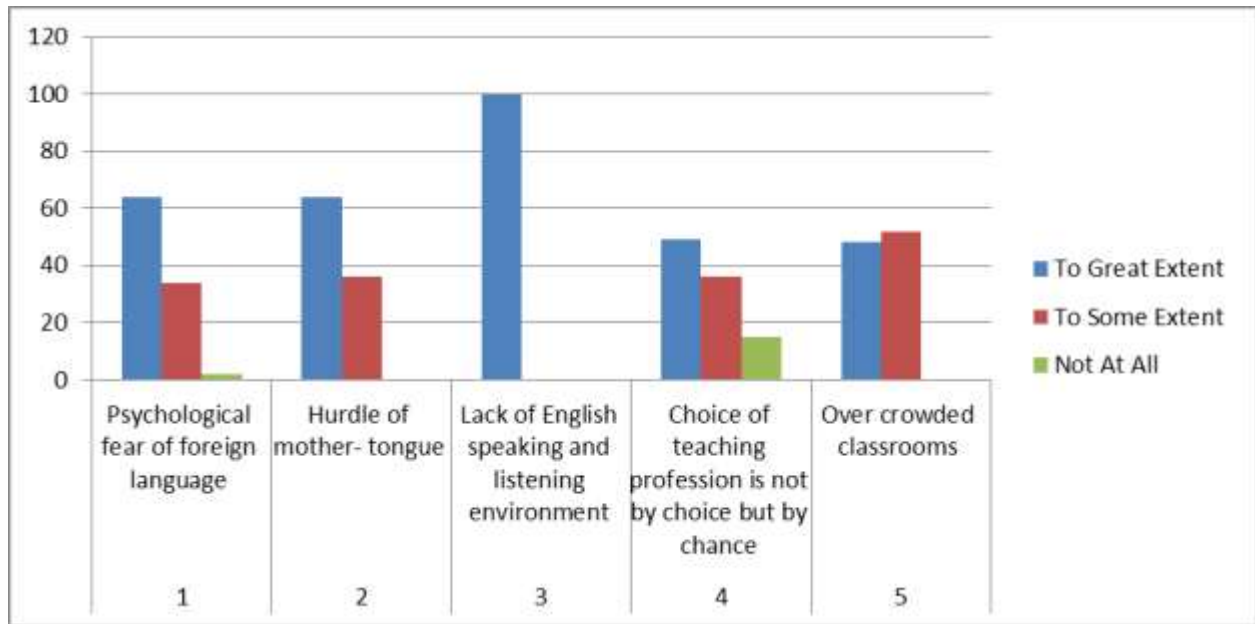


Figure-3

The factors responsible for the above stated problems are lack of constant practice (Das Gupta, 1975), poor training of teachers, lack of students' involvement, improper evaluation (Bhattacharyajee 1984), and lack of teaching aids and faulty methods of teaching (Mohire 1989).

Also the most prominent factor 'parental involvement' was found responsible for affecting teaching and learning of English as studied by Sharma (2000) and Shashi (1991). The overcrowded classes also hamper the teaching-learning pedagogy as the same was found by Xu (2001). Last but not the least is the time factor, that is, sufficient time is not given for reading skill. The same is the result of Rubia Fernando & David Schwarzer (2011) that only 8% of the total time is devoted to the teaching of reading.

Conclusion

It is apparent from foregoing results and discussion that major causes of this low level of English reading ability in Haryana is due to lack of English-speaking and listening environment, frequent change of government policy in education, lack of language labs and lack of scientific approach in teaching English. It is suggested that the state government should immediately look

Language in India www.languageinindia.com

12 : 7 July 2012

Vanite Bala, M.A. Education, M.A. English, M.Phil., B.Ed. and Veena Bamba, Ph.D.

Factors Affecting Quality of Teaching-Learning of English Reading at the Secondary School Level

into this matter on a priority basis and must remove the bottlenecks in the education system. A sound recruitment policy and in-service training for teachers should be scientifically designed and the latest technology should be made available to the schools so as to raise the level of teaching-learning of English in general and reading ability in particular to cope with competitive environment at the global level.

=====

References

- Aslam, M. (2003) Teaching of English: A practical course for B.Ed. Students, New Delhi: Foundation Books.
- Bhattacharjee, R (1984). Investigation into the teaching of English in High School of East Khan Hills District of Meghalaya. In M.B. Buch (1991), Fourth Survey of Research in Education (1983-88), Vol. 1, New Delhi, NCERT.
- Bose A.C. (2005) The problems in Learning Modal Auxiliary Verbs in English at High School Level. Available on <http://www.language.india.com>.
- Daisy (2010) Effective Teaching of English : A CLT Perspective for Haryana. *Language in India* Volume 10: 9 September 2010, pp 56-62.
- Dasgupta, N. (1975). A critical study of the vocabulary in English of the students of class VI reading in the Non-English Medium Schools of Meghalaya and Influence of Socio-economic background on the Actual Vocabulary. In M.B. Buch (1991), Fourth Survey of Research in Education (1983-88) Vol. I, New Delhi, NCERT
- Education Commission, 1964-66. Education and National Development, Ministry of Education, Government of India, New Delhi.
- Elley, W.B. (1994). The I.E.A. study of reading literacy : achievement and instruction in 32 school systems Oxford : Pergamon. Pr.
- Govt. of India (2006). Report of National Knowledge Commission. Retrieved from <<http://knowledgecommission.gov.in/downloads/recommendation/language>> on 10th January 2008.

Language in India www.languageinindia.com

12 : 7 July 2012

Vanite Bala, M.A. Education, M.A. English, M.Phil., B.Ed. and Veena Bamba, Ph.D.

Factors Affecting Quality of Teaching-Learning of English Reading at the Secondary School Level

- Govt. of India (1967). The Study of English in India. Report of the Study Group submitted to the Education Commission in 1965. New Delhi, Ministry of Education.
- Kaur, N. (1979). A Comparative Study of the direct Mehtod & translation Method of Teaching English at High School : Research in Sohan Lal College. Vol.-I. New Delhi: DAV College Managing Committee.
- Levin, H. (1975) Reading Research. What, Why, and from Whom? In Gunderson, D.V. (Ed.) Language and Reading pp 123-135. Washington D.C., Centre for Applied Linguistics.
- Mohire, V.N. (1989). A Critical Analysis of Methods and Means of Teaching English applied at the undergraduate level. In M.B.Buch (2000), Fifth Survey of Research in Education (1988-92), Vol.II, New Delhi NCERT.
- Pardhan, S.S. (1991). A comparative study of the effectiveness of the direct method and bilingual method of teaching English in class X in the district of Cuttack. In M.B. Buch (2000), Fifth Survey of Research in Education (1988-92), Vol-II New Delhi, NCERT.
- Seyed Hossein Fazeli (2010) Some Gaps in the Current Studies of Reading in Second/Foreign Language Learning. *Language in India*, Vol.10, pp 373-385.
- Sharma, K. (2000). A Study of Psycho-Social factors Affecting Reading Skills in English. New Delhi : Gyan Publishing House.
- Shashi, M. (1991). A Study on the role of aptitude, attitude and innovations in English acquisition. In M.B. Buch (2000), Fifth Survey of Research in Education (1988-92), Vol-II New Delhi, NCERT.
- Shaywitz, S (2003). Overcoming Dyslexia. New York Alfred A. Knopf.
- Strange, Ruth. Diagnostic Teaching of Reading, Second Edition Mcgraw-Hill Book Company, USA
- Xu, Z. (2001). Problems and Strategies of teaching English in large classes in the People's Republic of China. In a Herrmann and M.M. Kulski (Eds.) Expanding Horizons in Teaching and Learning. Proceedings of the 10th Annual Teaching Learning Forum, 7-9 February 2001. Perth : Curtin University of Technology.

=====

Language in India www.languageinindia.com

12 : 7 July 2012

Vanite Bala, M.A. Education, M.A. English, M.Phil., B.Ed. and Veena Bamba, Ph.D.

Factors Affecting Quality of Teaching-Learning of English Reading at the Secondary School Level

Vanite Bala, M.A. Education, M.A. & M.Phil English, B.Ed.
Corresponding Author
Research Scholar
Singhania University
Jhunjhunu
Rajasthan
India
vanitabala@gmail.com

Veena Bamba, Ph.D.
Principal
B.A.R.J. College of Education
Kaul 136042
Kaithal
Haryana
India
Veenabamba25@gmail.com

Language in India www.languageinindia.com

12 : 7 July 2012

Vanite Bala, M.A. Education, M.A. English, M.Phil., B.Ed. and Veena Bamba, Ph.D.
Factors Affecting Quality of Teaching-Learning of English Reading at the Secondary School
Level