



Assessment of the Speaking skills of the Students: A Study of Senior Secondary Schools Located Rural Areas of Rewari District of Haryana

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Abstract: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing are the four main pillars of the communication of any language. In second language learning these skills are acquired. In our education system, more focus is paid to improve students' English communication skills in writing but less emphasis is being paid on listening and speaking skills. The lack in teaching proper communication skills has been a common instance in the rural areas of Govt. Senior Secondary Schools of Rewari affiliated to Board of School Education, Bhiwani, Haryana. Both the students and teachers give the priority to complete the syllabus; instead of enhancing communication skills. This study intends to find out the reasons of the students' reluctance in improving English Speaking skills, for this purpose a survey was conducted among 50 students of 5 government senior secondary schools of rural areas of Rewari district Haryana. These schools that were surveyed are Government Senior Secondary Schools located in Budhpur, Dadoli, Bodia Kamalpur, Lula Ahir and Jhadoda. Questionnaires were distributed to the students for this study. This paper is an attempt to explore the problems faced by the students when they try to speak in English and to suggest some solution to overcome these problems.

Key Words; Communication, Speaking skills, Quality Education,

Introduction: Speaking skills are considered crucial among all other communication skills although we use these skills in routine to express our thoughts, feelings, and desires. Speaking skills have become very essential for the international access in the today's cutthroat competitive world as these have become the major part of in the most examinations at international level. In words of Rebecca (2006, 144) "speaking is the first mode in which children acquire language activities and it is the prime motor of the change." This

definition tries to explain that the speaking skill is a productive skill and the ability to express the ideas, thoughts and feelings etc. with others. In learning any second language, speaking is considered of the basic skills. The speaker should be able to evaluate the effects of communication so that the listeners can understand the meaning of the uttered words.

Literature Review: in order to support any research we need previous studies that have been conducted in related area, so the review of some of the studies are listed below:

The study by UlfaYusica(2015) investigates the problems faced by Thai Students in speaking English. The researcher intended to find out the problems faced by Thai students. The study shows that Thai students have a lot of problems while learning English.

According to Zaremba(2006) of all the four macro English Skills, speaking seems to be the most important skill required for communication. He also pointed out that a study indicating that speaking skills or communication skills are usually placed ahead of work experience.

Many researches have been conducted in finding out the problems faced by the rural students one of the studies conducted by Zulkefky and Razali(2017). The objective of the research was to find out the students' attitude towards learning English as a second language in one rural school of Malaysian schools involving 6 students from 3 different classes. The result of the study shows that some students were found to have negative attitude as a result they have bad experiences in learning English, consequently, it has caused them to be more passive in the classroom avoiding speaking English and these students were also disturbing their classmates sitting near them in the class. On the other hand, some students made the experience as a motivation for them to work harder to improve their English language proficiency. They also made efforts to improve their proficiency by reading a lot of English books and listening to English music to enhance their vocabulary.

Speaking skill is an important aspect to acquire when learning a second language. Achieving fluency in oral communication is the main aim and the main motivation which a large percentage of the learners bring to language classes but achieving this fluency is not easy task, students are also demanded to know the knowledge of how to use the language as Hinkel(2005) claims, communication problems occur because the learners encounter the words they don't understand, the form of the word they don't know how to use, or find that they are handicapped to express their intended meaning.

Significance of the study:

In countries like India, where English is taught as the second language, students do not get that much opportunity to use their skills and when some of them try to use these skills they don't get proper feedback from their friends, relatives and teachers whether they are using these skills accurately and fluently. This

study hopes to be useful in two ways. This study will provide information about the problems faced by the students who study in rural areas schools of Rewari district of Haryana and practically the findings of the study are supposed to contribute ideas, feedback and suggestions to solve the problems.

Method:

. The Questionnaire Method has been most reliable tool to conduct any research. In keeping the significance of the research in mind Quantitative and qualitative methods have been adopted. Quantitative data are used to provide students' attitudes towards speaking problems, for this purpose students were asked to fill the questionnaire and then the filled information was analyzed using SPSS software. The questionnaire includes the questions: a. Do you speak English in class usually? b. Would you like to learn to speak English if some classes of spoken English made available to you at your school level? c. try to pronounce the given words; Etiquettes, ship and sheep, pronunciation, proficiency and humour and d. introduce yourself.

Table No. 1. Questions asked to the students and no. of students

	N	Yes	No	No answer
Do you speak English in class usually?	50	6	40	4
Would you like to learn to speak English if Spoken Classes are made available at your school level?	50	10	30	10
Pronounce the words: Etiquettes, Ship and sheep Pronunciation, proficiency and humour.	50	5	40	5
Introduce yourself.	50	2	43	5
	50			

Table No.1 shows that 50 students of rural based Government Senior Secondary Schools of Rewari District were selected for the survey. Students were asked some basic questions to investigate their speaking proficiency. Questions are mentioned in the table.

Findings:

The survey was conducted among 50 students of 5 Govt. Sr. Sec. schools of rural areas schools of Rewari district. Many students hesitated while taking the questionnaire, some of them tried to complete the questionnaire but with the help of their respective teachers only 5% of the students only reported that they can speak English and they can frame answers of the questions of their textbook in their own words, while on the other hand 95% students accepted the fact that they cannot speak as well as write English properly and they face a lot of problems while speaking this language. They even accepted the fact that poor textbook and teaching are the main reasons of imperfection. The researcher found that many of the students were unable to pronounce the words and strong influence of the mother tongue was completely visible while students tried to speak. Teachers themselves told the researcher that due to the rural background of the students and poor command over English language they have to use Bilingual method.

Table: 2. problems faced by the students

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Do you speak English in class usually?	50	1	3	2.64	.705
Would you like to learn to speak English if Spoken Classes are made available at your school level?	50	1	4	2.85	1.381
Pronounce the words: Etiquettes, ship and sheep, pronunciation, proficiency and humour.	50	1	4	1.49	1.018
Introduce yourself.	50	1	4	1.84	.674

The table shows us the mean of the problems faced by the students of the government schools located in rural areas. According to this table, the result collected shows that maximum students accepted the fact that they face a lot of difficulty while speaking in English although they are eager to learn English. The number of the students who are keen in learning English is also very low. Maximum students are found not to be able to frame their answers in their own words that means they have limited vocabulary. Even they pronounce the words ship and sheep in same manner the researcher found no difference between small and long vowel sound when they students uttered the above mentioned words. The pronunciation problem was noted at a large scale. Maximum students were failed to pronounce the words in exact manner.

Discussion:

From the above stated findings it has been found out that the students having rural background and poor access to proper teaching syllabus and aids face a lot of hurdles while acquiring English language speaking skills. The researcher finds that the students are having the fear of committing errors, they are hesitant in uttering the words, they have a little knowledge of grammatical structures and have a limited vocabulary. Besides these problems the researcher finds that they don't get an environment at schools as well as home that should be there to enhance their speaking skills. The researcher finds that there is no emphasis on improving students speaking skills, teachers and students both take English language as only as a subject and they pay focus on it only in keeping view of the examination. Neither teachers nor the students are keen to pay focus on the speaking skills. So it can be stated that there exists a gap between the objective of the textbook and its implementation.

Recommendations:

There are a number of factors relating to speaking skills to be considered for effective English speaking performance, some of them are pronunciation, vocabulary and collocations. These are to be emphasized in enhancing the skills. For this the Board of School Education Bhiwani, Haryana, may revise the syllabus. The planners may change the assessing ways of students' speaking skills besides reading and writing skills, marks may be allotted to the students for speaking and listening skills as well. For this students may have oral presentation. If 20 or more marks are allotted to the students for these two skills, the objective of language learning may be achieved. As far as teachers' role is concerned, their purpose should not be only completing the syllabus only as it is duty of teachers to improve the status of the students. He/she should adopt new techniques and teach their students effectively. They should be sincere to hone the skills of the students.

Conclusion:

In this cutthroat competitive world, it has now become almost impossible to achieve success without having a proper communicative competence. In spite of achieving success in some fields rural background students who especially complete their throughout study in Govt. schools located in rural areas, are lagging behind. In

speaking especially, they fail to get comprehensive success. And in order to get satisfactory result, proper planning, implementation and monitoring should be there, as without these success is incomplete. But as far as the speaking skills of English language are concerned there we feel a huge gap between the education planning policies and their implementations.

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