

## **“THE ROLE OF ENGLISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS IN PROMOTING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN KARACHI”**

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### **Abstract**

*The focus of this study was to determine the role of English medium schools in promoting English as a second language in Karachi. Mixed method research approach was adopted for the study. The stratified random sampling design was adopted because the population of the study was large and diverse. The subjects of the study were 80 teachers and 200 students from 20 English Medium schools of Karachi. Three null hypotheses related to methodology of teaching English, qualification and gender of teachers were formulated for the study. The main instruments used were a questionnaire and an interview protocol. The collected data was analyzed through simple percentage and ‘t’ test. The findings revealed that poor pedagogy, lacking of highly qualified teachers and students’ background were the major obstacles in the promotion of English language. However, the role of direct method of teaching, high qualification and female teachers were found more effective in promoting English as a second language. In the light of findings and conclusion, few recommendations were made.*

### **Keywords:**

English medium, Promotion and Second language.

## **Introduction**

Indeed, the British ruled over subcontinent for almost 200 hundred years, therefore, English language became the sign of power and status of the elite class including arm forces, judiciary, higher education, leading newspapers etc. After the independence of Pakistan, English became the official language. Several efforts and policies were made to replace English by Urdu but yet have failed. Despite, Urdu was declared to be the official language but all government documents; court documents; street sign and such other activities are used bluntly in English. English enjoys a high status than other languages in Pakistan. The dawn (27<sup>th</sup> March 2014), it was stated that English language in Pakistan has shifted from the classroom to the workplace. However, it was a common notion that English was not being taught as a language in the past but rather as a subject of 40 minutes class session, so far due to the efforts of English medium schools 49 percent population can speak English. Rehman (19996) stated that Pakistan is a state where 57 local and six main languages are being spoken. Except Urdu and English the remaining languages are gradually vanished because of the popularity of English and Urdu. Indeed, English is an official language in our country. Thus, both Urdu and English are simultaneously used in offices, corporate sector, education and media.

It has widely accepted that English language is the language of scholars and authors because a number of journals and books are published in this language. Moreover, in the modern world English has become the language of computer, science, trade, diplomacy, and tourism etc. Ahmed (1982) stated that English language took the place of international communication, as everywhere one can communicate and express his views in the said language. Therefore, our nation cannot afford to shut ourselves up in isolation because it is also useful for commercial relations with other countries. Indeed, it is effective tools for the promotion of international understanding and good will. Moreover, to know English language is helping us to understand the culture, rituals, customs and traditions as well as the main secret of the advancement and success of Western people both in commerce and industry (Ahmed, 1982).

Arkoudis (2003) concluded that the role of teachers (English teachers) is quite significant in making the students familiar with this foreign language in Pakistan. They enable them to listen effectively, read, write and speak to express themselves. English is taught as a subject in public and private schools, while in the elite schools of Pakistan in general and in Karachi is particular become the medium of instruction. It is widely accepted as a second language especially in the big cities of Pakistan. These schools have greatly promoted English language in the society; however, a large number of schools simply claim to be the English medium by name because they never bring any modification in the language (English) of the students. Shamim (2008) states that “schools in Pakistan differ not only in the extent to which English is used in the classroom but more importantly in the quantity and quality of resources, including human resources, allocated for teaching and learning” (p. 244).

Conversely, in the proper English Medium schools, students start to learn English as a language, right from the pre-primary and primary classes. Spolsky (1989) concluded that the learning requirements and significance of a second or foreign language would be wisely discussed before teaching to students. Gregg (1989) argued that to know the attainment of language competency, one should need to know the theory, syntax or grammar, of that language, for they could not comprehend the acquisition of something without knowing of what that something is.

### **Objectives of the Research Study**

1. To assess the role of English medium Schools in promoting English.
2. To understand the importance of reading English in Pakistan.
3. To comprehend the history of English in Pakistan.
4. To identify the interest of students in learning English.
5. English is used in bureaucracy, government offices, arm forces, trade and commerce, judiciary, higher education and other areas.

## Literature Review

Sapir (1949) concluded that language is human and non-instructive method of communicating ideas, desires and emotions according to a system of produced symbols. Moreover, he stated that any language can be considered as the mean of communication through which hidden ideas and potential of people can be analyzed. (Sapir, 1949). Generally, the learning of a language has two aspects i.e. to understand the structure of sentences and the proficiency in their proper use. The former aspect could be a science while the later will be an art which is learnt by regular exercise. Though, speaking, whether someone needs to reflect and find out the exact meaning of the words, his mastery of the language is incomplete and immature. The process becomes automatic only when people begin expressing themselves freely without any hesitation. It could be the habit of “unreflective right utterance” which may be helpful in the expression of ideas. Therefore, in the case of English, the process is not entirely unconscious. Thus, conscious efforts are to be made in forming new speech habits. Deliberate efforts are required to train students to use the second language unconsciously. It should be focused on the ideas rather than the way the students put them should receive priority. Practice and exercise in the proper use of language lead them to perfection and indeed, it is required in all the basic and fundamental skills and knowledge in language learning, in comprehending written and oral English as well as writing and speaking English (Ahmed, 1982).

Generally, in Pakistani classroom, whatever the students comprehend during the lecture, is required to write down. In these classrooms, reading is also practiced but more and more stressed is given to write. Though, the teachers have failed to realize the significance of an active skill i.e. speaking which is almost zero (Mueen, 1992). In addition, many researchers revealed the facts that language can be learnt through natural approach i.e. speech, therefore ‘Direct Method’ of teaching serves the primary goal by enabling the students to learn to communicate. Through this method, the students gain confidence in speaking, obtain higher education and obtain suitable employment in the long run (Mueen, 1992). Teaching aids and other materials are also important in language teaching because the students can be easily motivated by watching the actual image of a thing. Moreover, modern linguists had a clear view that all these activities

depend on the teacher. He can convert a boring and non-authentic text into attractive and interesting piece by the use of teaching aids (Wright, 1976). Therefore, the elite English Medium schools of Karachi facilitate their students and teachers with latest audio visual aids. Graff (1985) stated that learning of an international or second language (English) is difficult and perplex process, because language is not only to put some words together but in fact it needs intellectual, bodily and emotive response when someone sends or receives messages. Learning a second language includes a novice ethos, style of thinking, feeling and acting. Therefore, the student should be accurate, meaningful and fluent.

Abbas (1998) described that in spite of teaching English at every stage of education the result is extremely poor. However, English is a compulsory subject but pass percentage is barely 25 – 30% at college level. It showed the pedagogical flaws and other designed material for teaching of English. Majority of students cannot use English in real life when they complete matriculation from vernacular-medium government schools. Ashraf, and Kopweh (2012) concluded that educational policies of Pakistan did not fulfill the desires of the people. In fact, it has become acknowledged that English would be the medium of instruction for all the people but the quality of teaching between the public and private sectors is very much different in Pakistan. Therefore, a question arise among the people that they are the citizen of the same country then why they are not giving equal rights of quality education. Though, it has accepted that the contribution of private sector is tremendously higher than the public sector but a certain class of people are benefited from these elite schools which could be an intimidation for the country and social cohesion, however this trend clearly contradicts with the ideology of the state, based on Islamic norms and equality among the people.

Rehman (2010) concluded that English subject has been popular at all stages. Though, it is prevalent to be the medium of instruction. Moreover, he stated that English is growing to be the most authoritative and empowering language in Pakistan as it helps the people to find the most attractive jobs and bestows social dignity and prestige to those people who are good both in speaking and writing English.

Basically, the curriculum of the elite English Medium schools is quite different. Generally, they do not follow the Pakistani Text Book Boards till class IX. Even though, several schools do not let appear their pupils in Pakistani Examination (Matriculation). These pupils opt the British system of examination O'Levels and A'Levels. Therefore, these students only study those books which are written purely for the Western school children. Apparently, their medium of instruction is English, which is a prompt step in the development of second language in Pakistan. Iqbal (2006) concluded that the teachers of English medium schools use various teaching methodologies. The management of these schools provides more instructional materials for teaching. They regulate the size of the classes and arrange other linguistic activities for their students, such as speech competition, debate competition and other co-curricular activities.

Moreover, English language has already introduced the civilizations and cultures of the West, which are blindly adopted and practiced in our country. Kirkpatrick (2011) stated that English medium of instruction is spreading around the world but it is very dangerous for the national languages and cultures. Indeed, it has happened that mostly words of English are frequently used in daily communication.

Naturally, medium of instruction plays a significant role in teaching learning process. According to the research of Jean Piaget (1973) there is a close link between mother tongue and cognitive development in children. When learning is disseminated in the mother tongue, it's easier for the learners to understand the basic concept and build their own intellectual skills. *If you speak to a man in a language he understands, you speak to his head. If you speak to a man in his own language, you speak to his heart* (Nelson M., 2007).

## **Methodology**

The plan of research was mixed method study. The population of the study contained of all the elite English medium schools' teachers and students of Karachi. Stratified random sampling designed was taken up for drawing a sample. The total size of the sample was 80 teachers and 200 students from 20 English Medium schools of Karachi. Among the teachers,

58% were female and 42 % were male respondents. However, 65 % teachers were experienced and highly qualified. Similarly, students respondents were from different classes and were equally selected i.e. 50% boys and 50% girls. The data was collected through an interview and a self-administered questionnaire. A five point Likert Scale was used to assess the responses. The questionnaire was similar for both teachers and students. Raw score attained from questionnaire and interviews were presented in tabular form so that for a proper interpretation. The obtained data was analyzed through 't' test and percentage.

### **Hypothesis: 1**

No significant difference will be found between the direct method of teaching and translation method of teaching in promoting English as second language in Karachi.

### **Analysis of the Problem**

1.  $H_0 : \mu_1 = \mu_2$ , 2.  $H_1 : \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$ , 3.  $\alpha : 0.05$ , 4. Test Statistics:  $t - \text{test} = 2.34$

5. Decision: If the computed value of  $t \geq 1.99$  then the null hypothesis will be rejected.

6. Conclusion: According to table t, it is found that the tabulated value of  $t = 1.99$  with  $df = 78$  at  $\alpha = 0.05$  is less than the computed value of  $t = 2.34$ . Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the teachers who use direct method of teaching and translation method of teaching in English medium schools of Karachi.

From the assessment of the table, it is found that 'Direct Method' of teaching is very effective in promoting English as a second language as compared to 'Translation Method' of teaching in the English medium schools of Karachi. It was found in the current study that through 'Direct Method' of teaching, listening and speaking skills, pronunciation and fluency are developed, the participation of students in classroom is encouraged and eventually they are able to express their ideas without any hindrance, which may be the main objective of the subject.

### **Hypothesis: 2**

No significant difference will be found between the teaching method of more qualified and less qualified teachers in promoting English as second language in Karachi.

### Analysis of the Problem

1.  $H_0 : \mu_1 = \mu_2$ , 2.  $H_1 : \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$ , 3.  $\alpha : 0.05$ , 4. Test Statistics:  $t - \text{test} = 3.6$

5. Decision: If the computed value of  $t \geq 1.99$  then the null hypothesis will be rejected.

6. Conclusion: According to table t, it is found that the tabulated value of  $t = 1.99$  with  $df = 78$  at  $\alpha = 0.05$  is less than the computed value of  $t = 3.6$ . Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the highly qualified and less qualified teachers in respect of promotion of English as a second language in Karachi.

From the assessment of the table, it is concluded that highly qualified teachers are more effective as compared to less qualified teachers in promoting English as a second language in the English Medium schools of Karachi. The study revealed that highly qualified teachers are having transformative power in enhancing the students learning by various ways and techniques. Therefore, it was concluded that the performance of highly qualified teachers in promotion of English language in Pakistan has been tremendous.

### Hypothesis: 3

No significant difference will be found between male and female English medium school teachers in promoting English as second language in Karachi.

### Analysis of the Problem

1.  $H_0 : \mu_1 = \mu_2$ , 2.  $H_1 : \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$ , 3.  $\alpha : 0.05$ , 4. Test Statistics:  $t - \text{test} = 2.5$

5. Decision: If the computed value of  $t \geq 1.99$  then the null hypothesis will be rejected.

6. Conclusion: According to table t, it is found that the tabulated value of  $t = 1.99$  with  $df = 78$  at

$\alpha = 0.05$  is less than the computed value of  $t = 2.5$ . Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that there is a significant difference between the male and female teachers in respect of promoting English as a second language in Karachi.

From the assessment of the table, it is concluded that female teachers are more effective as compared to male teachers in promoting English as a second language in the English Medium schools of Karachi.

### **Conclusion**

The findings of the study led to the conclusion that 70 % English medium schools have opted their own English speaking environment which is suited to the individual students for improving their speaking fluency. Moreover, in these schools 'Direct Method' of teaching has been adopted for teaching English. During the survey, mostly teachers admitted that since they have joined those schools, their own English fluency has enormously improved. The researcher found English speaking environment in those English medium schools right from the gate keeper to the principal office. The principals elaborated that special emphasis is given on the improvement of English language in their schools. Therefore, the students and teachers are facilitated with the latest teaching aids, such as television screens, language CDs and printed materials. Conversely, some English medium schools were just English medium by name because they had purely Urdu speaking environment. Teachers of English subject or language were using 'Translation Method' of teaching. Mostly students were found shy and hesitant while speaking English. In addition, a greater part of respondents argued that the background of the students represent major problems for teaching English language. Hence, it was found that mother tongue also interferences in teaching of English. Moreover, lacking of qualified English teachers was another factor influencing on the speaking skill of the students. However, female English teachers were found more effective as compared to male English teachers in promoting English as a second language in the English Medium schools of Karachi.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the findings, it is recommended that the government should realize that only English medium schools are not sufficient for the promotion of English as a second language because these schools are few and every citizen cannot afford the high tuition fee of these schools. Therefore, the government should take prompt measures to upgrade its system of education by ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens to attain quality education. Recruitment or selection of English teachers should be subjected to basic knowledge of English and fluency. Political influences in the recruitment of teachers should be banned. The English language teachers should use 'Direct Method' of teaching because it helps the learners to express their ideas directly without translating the sentence from their mother tongue to English. Moreover, "Direct Method" of teaching enables the students to think in English rather than their mother tongue.

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