

APTITUDE AND ACADEMIC TRAINING FOR TEACHER DEVELOPMENT IN ELT

¹ Samson. R. Victor ² Rajini S M

¹ Asst. Professor scholar, School of Education Christ University, Bangalore, India
samson.victor@christuniversity.in

² Lecturer, Leelavathi Shetty College of Education, Kavour, Mangalore, India
reshamarai@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to explore the two dimensions of teacher development: Aptitude and acquisition of appropriate proficiency level in English through academic training. The study focuses on the nature and extent of problems perceived by teachers in teaching English as second language at the secondary schools. The samples were 80 ESL secondary school teachers. The tools used for the study were: 'Battery of differential aptitude tests' by Bennett, Seashore and Wesman (1996) and 'Problems perceived by teachers teaching English as Second language'. The results indicated: that there is significant negative relationship between problems perceived in teaching content and grammar and their aptitude in language, teachers who had not opted for English methodology in B.Ed and teachers who had not undergone ELT training had perceived problems in teaching English. The study suggests that higher aptitude of the language will result in effective teaching and training is needed to improve the effectiveness of ESL teachers.

Keywords: Aptitude and Academic training

INTRODUCTION:

English has been playing an important role in Indian educational system. Every teacher is supposed to be a learner. To plan for professional development of English Language teachers there is a need for a comprehensive understanding of what skill and expertise language teaching consists of. People skills' is one of the most important skills that language teachers (or all teachers) must always strive to improve. Prof. Jack C. Richards in 'What a good English teacher is' mentions ten core dimensions of teacher development: acquiring appropriate proficiency level in English, acquiring content knowledge, acquiring teaching skills, acquiring contextual knowledge, acquiring a repertoire of techniques and routines, developing learner-focused teaching strategies, developing cognitive skills, theorizing from practice, joining a community of practice and becoming a language teaching professional. Professional development is



paramount! Even though these are all core dimensions of professional development, the very first one is what will allow for the development of the others. Language proficiency is the one thing teachers should try their best to acquire even before they start teaching. It's the one thing that will allow for the development of all of the other skills. Language proficiency is also the yardstick against which many learners measure their teachers'. Teachers should aim at being facilitators of learning to help students acquire knowledge.

NEED & RATIONALE OF THE STUDY:

Language aptitude refers to the potential that a person has for learning languages. This potential is often evaluated using formal aptitude tests, which predict the degree of success the candidate will have with a new language. Aptitude tests vary but many include evaluation of ability to manage sounds, grammatical structures, infer rules, and memory. In the classroom, Language aptitude may be fixed but there are many things teachers can do in the area of learner training to improve the learner's ability. These include helping learners identify their preferences for learning; thinking about learning styles, and then looking at how these can be developed; and developing learner autonomy by teaching learners how to study effectively. Teachers who are academically qualified and those that are professionally qualified are employed to carry out instruction in the classroom. While professionally qualified teachers, are teachers who get professional teacher training that gives them professional knowledge, skills, techniques, aptitude as different from the general education. This forms standards of emulation to enhance teachers' methodological competencies in secondary schools. Specifically, this study is designed to evaluate the extent to which teachers with academic qualification and those with professional teaching qualification teach effectively.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

To find out;

1. The relationship between the problems perceived by teachers teaching English as a Second Language at Secondary level and their Aptitude in English Language

2. The relationship between the problems perceived by teachers teaching English as a Second Language at Secondary level and the academic training through B.Ed
3. The relationship between the problems perceived by teachers teaching English as a Second Language at Secondary level and the academic training through ELT done at RIE or CIEFL

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:

1. There is no relation between the aptitude in English Language scores of ESL teachers and their problems perceived in teaching English
2. There is no significant difference between teachers who had been offered English methodologies in B.Ed and who had not with respect to problems perceived in teaching English
3. There is no significant difference between ELT trained and untrained teachers with respect to problems perceived in teaching English

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY:

Sample selection was done in two stages (1) Selection of schools: Eighty Secondary schools were randomly selected (2) Selection of teachers: From each school around 1-2 teachers were chosen. A total of 120 teachers were administered the tool, but only 80 completed questionnaires were analyzed.

TOOLS USED FOR THE STUDY:

Two tools were used for this study. (1) To measure Aptitude in English language a standardized tool was used - Battery of Differential Aptitude Test (Language Usage - Spelling, sentences) by Bennet, Seashore and Wesman (1959). (2) To measure nature and extent of problems perceived

by teachers teaching English as second language, researcher modified Original tool by Prakasha. G.N (1999).

FINDINGS:

Testing of Hypotheses

1. Hypothesis-1: There is no relation between the aptitude in English Language scores of ESL teachers and their problems perceived in teaching English

Table-1: Indicating Pearson Correlation test results for the relation between the aptitude in English Language scores of ESL teachers and their problems perceived in teaching English

DAT	Content & Grammar	Method of Teaching	Influence of Mother Tongue	Teachers Activity	Students Activities	Language Skills	Total
Language usage – Spelling	- 0.824(**)	- 0.374(**)	- 0.768(**)	- 0.471(**)	- 0.820(**)	- 0.721(**)	- 0.846(**)
Language usage – Sentence	- 0.693(**)	- 0.154(NS)	- 0.730(**)	- 0.447(**)	- 0.724(**)	- 0.635(**)	- 0.707(**)

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

From the above table it is evident that:

- There is a significant negative high relationship between problems perceived in teaching Content and grammar and their aptitude in language both in spelling and sentence.
- There is a significant negative low relationship between problems perceived in Method of teaching and their aptitude in language in spelling and no significant relationship in sentence.
- There is a significant negative high relationship between problems perceived in Influence of mother tongue and their aptitude in language both in spelling and sentence.
- There is a significant negative moderate relationship between problems perceived in teachers' activity and their aptitude in language both in spelling and sentence.
- There is a significant negative high relationship between problems perceived in Students Activity and their aptitude in language both in spelling and sentence.
- There is a significant negative high relationship between problems perceived in Language Skills and their aptitude in language both in spelling and sentence.
- There is a significant negative high relationship between problems perceived and their aptitude in language both in spelling and sentence.

We could conclude that as the aptitude in English Language increases there is a decrease in the perception of problems in teaching English.

2. Hypothesis-2: There is no significant difference between teachers who had been offered English methodologies in B.Ed and who had not with respect to problems perceived in teaching English

Table-2: Indicating the mean, standard deviation and t-value regarding to the results of independent samples 't' test for problems perceived in teaching English of teachers with B.Ed and without B.Ed.

Formal Training	Mean	S.D	't' Value	Sig/ NS
With B.Ed Training	134.54	12.62	16.151	S**
Without B.Ed Training	238.20	38.13		

From the above table it is evident that there is a significant difference between teachers who had been offered English methodology in B.Ed and teachers who had not offered English methodology in B.Ed at 0.01 level with respect to their problems perceived in teaching English. This implies that teachers who had been offered English methodology in B.Ed had perceived fewer problems than teachers who had not offered English methodology in B.Ed.

3. Hypothesis-3: There is no significant difference between ELT and untrained teachers with respect to problems perceived in teaching English

Table-3: Indicating the mean, standard deviation and t-value regarding to the results of independent sample's 't' test for problems perceived in teaching English of teachers with ELT trained and ELT untrained teachers

Formal Training	Mean	S.D	't' Value	Sig/ NS
With ELT	121.08	14.23	4.749	S**
Without ELT	199.41	56.54		

From the above table it is evident that there is a significant difference between teachers who had ELT and teachers without ELT at 0.01 level with respect to their problems perceived in teaching English. This implies that teachers who had ELT had perceived less problems than teachers who had no ELT.

CONCLUSIONS:

From this study conclusions were drawn that there is a high negative co-relation between Aptitude in teaching English language and the problems perceived in teaching English language, there is a difference between teachers with English methodology in B.Ed and teachers without English methodology in B.Ed with respect to their problems perceived in teaching English language and there is a difference between teachers with ELT and teachers without ELT with respect to their problems perceived in teaching English language

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY:

Following implications are drawn from the present study

- While employing English teachers with the necessary degrees an aptitude test also to be conducted and evaluated to check their aptitude in teaching English, as not all teachers who have content knowledge of teaching English could be effective.
- Those who teach English language should have Methodology of English as one of the areas of specialization in B.Ed. Preferably only such teachers to be employed to teach English. For the teachers already employed without B.Ed have to be given an opportunity to upgrade their qualification through correspondence or regular B.Ed course.
- All B.Ed trained English teachers to be given ELT as part of in-service training as it makes teaching more effective and lesser problems are perceived in classroom teaching.
- Crash courses and in-service programmes especially in grammar could be conducted to improve the efficiency of English teachers.
- Workshops on Methods of Teaching English could be conducted to make the English teachers aware of the different methods in teaching English like bilingual methods, structural approach, translation method, discussion method etc.
- Workshops on Phonetics could be conducted so that teachers whose mother tongue is not English could enhance their speaking and listening skills.

- Attending of programmes organized by CIEFL and RIE could be made compulsory.
- Like the Science and Math Laboratory even English Language Laboratories to be established in all Secondary schools for the benefit of teachers and students. Equipment like digital recorders, language Software, audio video kits, reading workbooks etc could be made available.

CONCLUSION:

Teachers work with students in all age groups and help them learn content and critical thinking skills. They plan lessons, teach in classrooms, assign projects and grade assignments. Educational requirements for teachers depend on the chosen specialty, which can be in areas including special, secondary, vocational or preschool education. States offer alternative education programs to professionals who have already earned their degrees and would like transition into teaching. Alternative certification programs are common for high-need areas like teaching of languages but are available for various levels and subject areas.

References

- Agnihotri, R. K. and Khanna, A.L. EI English Language teaching in India issues and innovations
- George K Bennett, Harold G Seashore and Alexander G Wesman(1996) <http://www.talentlensindia.com/dat.html>
- Paul Verghese. C. Teaching English as a second language, Sterling publishers Pvt Ltd, New Delhi.
- Mudrock, George. Language development provision in teacher training curricula, ELT Journal Volume 48/3 July 1994© Oxford University Press 1994
- Bunting Carolyn E. Dimensionality of Teacher Education Beliefs: An Exploratory Study, Campbell University
- Goodman, Gay. New Dimensions in Competency Based Teacher Education, Improving College and University Teaching Vol. 25, No. 4, Teacher Education Looking Down and Looking Up (Autumn, 1977), pp. 244-246.
- Gupta, Deepti. ELT in India: A Brief Historical and Current Overview, Asian EFL Journal Volume 7. Issue 1, Article 12.
- Haslam, L. Wilkin, Y. and Kellet, E. Teaching Children English as an Additional Language: Meeting the Challenge in the Classroom, Routledge 2008, 116 pp.,
- Scott, C. Teaching English as an Additional Language: A Programme for 7–11 Year Olds, Routledge 2009, 208 pp
- Crosse, K. Introducing English as an Additional Language to Young Children. Paul Chapman Publishing 2007, 186 pp
- <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/think/knowledge-wiki/language-aptitude>

