

Executive Summary of the Findings of the UGC funded Minor Research Project titled
*‘Efficacy of an Intervention Programme for Developing Syntactic Skills in English of
Graduate Teacher Trainees of Kottayam District’*

Submitted by

Latha Joseph

Assistant Professor, St Joseph’s Training College, Mannanam, Kottayam

It is an undeniable fact that English assumes a prominent role in today’s world. English in India is now no more a foreign language. It plays many prominent roles as the intranational and international link language, the means of technological and modern knowledge in all disciplines, the interpreter of India to the world, the means for the world to communicate with us and the passport to individual and social success and progress.

As a modern, fast developing nation India needs to exploit English for its utilitarian values. It would definitely be in our national interests to educate our wards in the global language. This presupposes a thorough knowledge of English by our teachers who are to shape our future generations. Minimum levels of English skills are to be seen as mandatory for the new age teacher, irrespective of the subject taught. However that is not the case. We perceive a steep decline in English language proficiency levels of teacher trainees in general. This lack of English language skills not only affects the individual career prospects of teacher trainees, it also has deep psychological, social, economic and social relevance in the present context. Considering this scenario, it was decided to study the existing levels of syntactic skills in English of graduate teacher trainees of Kottayam district. An intervention programme to enhance their syntactic skills was also designed and experimented.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the syntactic skills in English of graduate teacher trainees
2. To develop an intervention programme for deficiencies in syntactic skills in English
3. To compare pre-test post-test scores of syntactic skills in English of the experimental group

4. To compare the pre-test post-test scores of syntactic skills in English of the experimental group based on their subsamples for gender, learning styles and socio-economic status.
5. To analyse the experience of the remedial programme of the experimental group
6. To prepare a reflective self-analysis of the experience of transacting the remedial programme by the investigator

Methods Used in the Study

The present study consisted of an initial survey of syntactic skills in English of graduate teacher trainees of Kottayam district followed by an experimental study using pre-test post-test single group design.

A random sample, consisting of 477 graduate teacher trainees was taken for the initial survey. The experiment was carried out on a purposive sample of 120 graduate teacher trainees.

Mixed methods of analysis were used for the study. Data from the initial survey and experimentation was treated using quantitative data analysis techniques viz., t-test, paired t test, ANOVA and Scheffe's post-hoc test. The feedback of the teacher trainees during the process of remediation and the reflective notes of the investigator were utilized for qualitative analysis.

The following tools were used for the study:

- A Test of English Syntactic Skills developed by the investigator
- An Intervention Programme for developing syntactic skills in English of graduate teacher trainees developed by the investigator
- Kolb Learning Style Inventory developed by David A. Kolb.
- Socio-economic Status Scale developed and standardised by A. S Nair (1978) and modified by Dr. T.C. Thankachan (2010)
- Student Feedback Form
- Reflective Journal Writing by the investigator

Discussion of Results

The initial survey found that graduate teacher trainees of Kottayam district show only average level of syntactic skills in English. Average scores may look positive but on close

observation and thought one can understand that in today's educational scenario teachers are required to have a good command over English. High scores in English syntax can be the only norm for acceptance.

With regard to the subsamples no significant difference in syntactic skills in English was found between the gender subsamples. However, significant difference among optional subject subsamples was established. It points to the inter-subject variations in English skills among the teacher trainees which need to be addressed.

The effectiveness of the intervention programme designed during the experimental part of the study was proved by the significant difference in the pre-test and post-test scores of syntactic skills in English of the experimental group. All the subsamples with regard to gender, learning styles and socioeconomic status also showed significant gains in their post-test scores of syntactic skills in English. This proves that the intervention programme is effective for all, irrespective of their gender, learning style or socio-economic status. In a country with wide demographic differences and gender disparities, this finding proves positive and hopeful.

The student feedback proved the receptive attitude of graduate teacher trainees towards the intervention programme. They were highly appreciative of various elements of the program such as the content, duration, teaching – learning materials used, teaching techniques employed and teacher quality.

The reflective journal entries of the investigator helped in exploring the pros and cons of implementing an intervention program. Time restraint within the busy schedule of the B.Ed. program was the major challenge experienced. Apart from it the process of designing and implementing an intervention program in English syntactic skills was a highly satisfying and fruitful learning experience.