

**‘Pu’ Speakers Learning English in Middle Schools of
Car Nicobar (A&N Islands):
A Study in Error Analysis**

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Abstract

This study aims to explore and analyze the learning difficulties faced by ‘PU’ speaking-students in Car Nicobar the Union territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It is generally felt that learning of English varies in different context. Learners having background of ‘PU’ language differ on account of learning achievements. Similarly those who enjoy more English learning atmosphere may perform better than their counterparts. In order to carry out the study, three types of subjects were used. The study was descriptive-qualitative in nature, but quantification was also used to arrive at statistical inferences. The results indicated that most of the learner’s problems arose due to Mother tongue and L1 interference on second language learning process.

Keywords: English Language Teaching in Car Nicobar Island, ESL, learning difficulties, interference, Error Identification, Testing and Evaluation.

1. Introduction

Nicobar is one of the districts of Andaman Union Territory. ‘Pu’ is the language of the people of the Island of Car Nicobar, which is part of the Malay Peninsula. Car Nicobar is the northern most, most heavily populated, and a flourishing Island of the Nicobar group. Since the middle of the seventeenth century, the ‘Pu’ speakers have been in contact with the outer world. Portuguese sailors and French missionaries are the first recorded people to have stepped into the Islands. There are more than three tribal groups (namely, *the Nicobarese, Shompen* and *Karen*) living in Nicobar district. The local name of the Car Nicobar dialect is called ‘Pu’. It is considered as a standard dialect. The ‘Pu’ language belongs to Austro-Asiatic family. This language community lives in many Islands like Car Nicobar, Camorta, Katchal, Campbell Bay,

Tarasa, Rangat, Mayabunder and Port Blair. The medium of instruction in the schools of Andaman and Nicobar Islands is Hindi, English, Tamil, Telugu, or Bangla.

In the process of language learning, there are many troubles faced by the tribal students, especially in attaining basic language skills. Even though many other issues crop up while teaching language, and also a variety of teaching methods are engaged in the classroom situations, the problems are not yet fully rectified. So an attempt has been made to study the existing problems while learning and teaching language. Besides, the study identifies linguistic remedial measures so that the problems faced by these language students can be rectified.

The '**Pu**' community comes under the list of scheduled tribes. They are living in different places like Car Nicobar, Tarasa, Nancowry and Port Blair Islands of Andamans. These '**Pu**' tribes are living in rural as well as urban areas. According to the Census of India 2001, the total number of '**Pu**' tribes is 36,844 in the Union Territory population. The population of them in Car Nicobary is 17,841 (2014) There are 15 villages. There is no panchayatraj. There is only Tribal Council and 1 hamlet in Car Nicobar. The population mainly consists of scheduled tribes. According to RP Sharma (2013), the term *Nicobar* has been derived from the word '**nakkavaram**' which means hill and '**itam**' means place and is used to denote Chola's island. Nicobaries speak their own dialect of **Pu**. These people migrated from and to many islands. Karunakaran (1971) says, "The dialect of the Nicobar Tribes is a dialect of Nicobarese and is being spoken by 11020 people who live in Nicobar. Car Nicobar is situated in Nicobar district in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The total area of Nicobar is 1841Sq Km. the number of the islands is 19 in Nicobar group. The total number of villages in car Nicobar is 15. Car Nicobar is divided into 15 tribal council raj which comes under one Tribal Council Union. The main livelihood of the people of Car Nicobar is fishing and coconut plantations. They belong to the social community called "**Nicobaries**"."

The '**Pu**' speakers are a **Mon-Khmer** speaking people of Nicobar. Total population is divided into four groups although the majority of the people have competence in Car Nicobar dialect '**Pu**'.

Car Nicobarese speech also has become a sort of standard dialect amongst the Nicobarese. The reasons for giving preference to the dialect spoken by the Car Nicobarese are enumerated below.

2. Related Studies

The first and the most notable contribution towards the grammatical analysis of the Nicobarese was made by E.H. Man. But he mainly concentrated on the central group consisting of

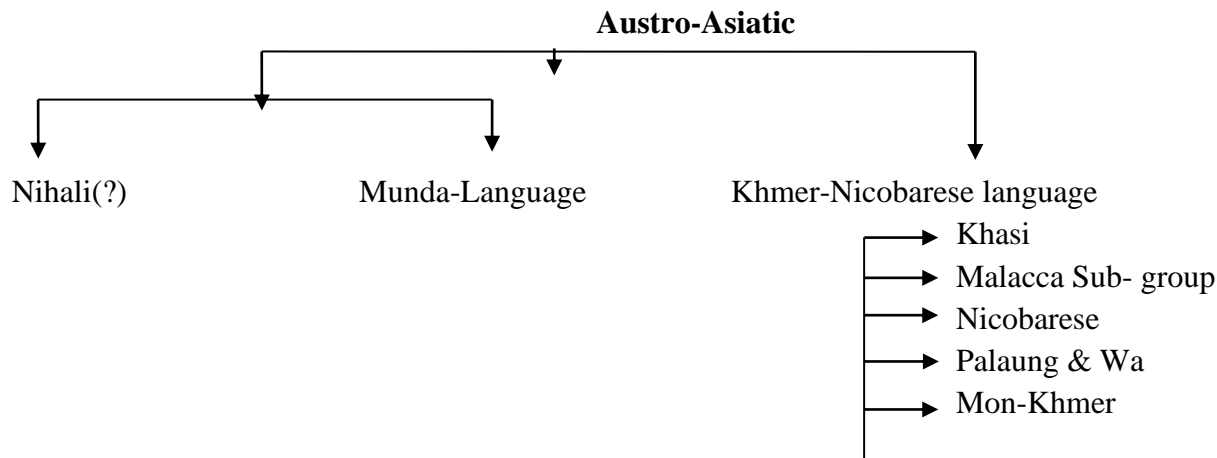
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Camorta, Nancowri, Trinkut and Katchal. It was G. Whitehead who made the most commendable attempt to frame formal grammar of the Nicobarese language. He concentrated mainly on Car dialect. However, he was not equipped with the methods of modern linguistics; his analysis became broad and required a re-survey. According to Grierson (1927, PP. 32f), Pater W. Schmidt grouped together and identified the Munda language, the Mon-Khmer languages and the Nicobarese languages as the Austro-Asiatic subfamily. This in turn was classed by him as a subgroup of the Austric family along with the Austro-Asian sub-family. In a publication on the subject, Pinnow in 1963 arrives at the following linguistics language family.



Source: Das. A.R. 1977 'A Study on the Nicobarese Language' Anthropological Survey of India Calcutta.

The data in this study have been collected in such a way that at least three generations were represented, the object being to note the gradual change of pronunciations. The first thing that strikes one who has read Whitehead and knew his comments about this language as slurred and indistinct, is that the pronunciation of the modern Nicobarese is much clearer than what it was in Whitehead's time. The Danish scientists, Dr. H. Rink, who visited the Nicobar Islands in 1846, wrote "I have heard many different languages spoken, but none of them had so disagreeable a sound as the *Nicobarian*. The great number of guttural and nasal sounds the uneducated drawing pronunciation becoming still different on account of the disfigured mouth, makes a very disagreeable impression". Man puts his view in the following way: It is only, right to mention that the difficulties, experienced to transliterations the sounds in this language, are chiefly due to the imperfect articulation which characterize the speech of the great majority of the natives, the result of the almost universal practice of excessive betel-chewing. But the present writer did not find much difficulty in understanding the pronunciation of the Car Nicobarese.

The present situation of having a clearer pronunciation may be due to the impact of English and Hindi with which they are in constant touch. Another reason may be due to the fact that the modern Nicobarese do not like chewing betel nut as they did in the days of Rink, Man and Whitehead. As the pronunciations changed through generations, so far my data is concerned, no significant structural difference was found, excepting some phonetic deviations, which are not significant from the structural point of view. The modern Nicobarese use a considerable number of English and Hindi loans in their conversation.

3. Linguistic Profile of the Region

Nicobary (*Pu*) belongs to the eastern group of Austro-Asiatic language family. It is majorly spoken in Car Nicobar and some neighbor Islands, as well as Port Blair. It is also spoken in Tarasa Island and in the District of North and Middle Andaman, Shompen has also found its way down Great Nicobar of the District of Car Nicobar and appears in the deep forest of the Islands, and the Natives Islands of Catchall and Camorta, where it is spoken along with Hindi.

4. Language Skills

In the teaching-learning process of a language, four language skills are developed among the students. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing (**LSRW**). So far as the first language is concerned, the first two language skills are acquired by the child to a certain level before it goes to school. But in the case of second language, all the four language skills are developed among them only in the classroom circumstances.

5. English Language Teaching in Nicobar

Teaching of English as a second language in the school is influenced by several factors which in a way can be considered as obstacles for proper language learning. The same language differs from place to place from social group to social group and from time to time. Teachers, who hail from different parts of Andamans, are influenced by their own dialects. Such influence is usual. Borrowing is another important factor through which a language innovates a new feature in pronunciation and vocabulary. There are several sociolinguistic attitudes which influence the adoption of borrowed features. In English, one can find a number of Hindi and other language usage which are found in the basic level and common in the day-to-day language use.

6. Error Identification through Testing and Evaluation

Testing and achievement are used for the measurement of the educational process. The purpose of this study is to test and assess the achievements in English language learning of middle school tribal students of the Car Nicobar in Nicobar district, Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Besides, mother tongue interference in English is also identified.

It is commonly approved that assessment is one of the most significant parts of the educational goals beyond the usual idea of official tests and examinations. Assessment provides essential feedback of each and every step of the teaching process. Students and teachers, the teaching, and learning procedure all are to be assessed. The results of assessment reflect how and what teachers teach, how and what students learn, and what happen during both the teaching and learning process. Usually, tests and examinations are the tools to assess the students' attainment. These days, assessment includes tasks such as projects and presentations when evaluating the performance of students. They provide a more comprehensive and objective view of students' presentation and skills. Such task-based work projects give confidence to the students to integrate their knowledge and skills in order to solve their problems and also to transfer their knowledge to others. It benefits the students themselves and their peers too.

7. Methods of Obtaining the Data

Selection of Participants

The participants in this study are *Pu* speakers learning English as a second language at the middle school level in Car Nicobar Island. The researcher conducted a test for students from these schools. 60 out of 120 students were taken from 4 schools out of 9. The schools selected for this study are Govt. Secondary School Tamaloo (1), Car Nicobar, and Govt. Secondary School Arong (2), Car Nicobar, Govt. Senior Secondary School Malacca (3), Car Nicobar and Govt. Secondary School Mus (4), Car Nicobar. Data were collected from 60 students randomly from each school (school 1 male (6) and female (2), school 2 male (2) and female (5), school 3 male (3) and female (11) and school 4 male (14) and female (17)) in 8th standard. The total number of participants, thus, were 60 students (male 25 + female 35).

8. Preparation of Questionnaire

Questionnaires prepared for students were based on their reading and writing skills in the schools and some questions about the importance of English language and its use. The questionnaire included reading comprehension questions based on reading and understanding of English language which contained 5 questions, 2 marks for each and the duration allowed was 10 minutes. The other section of the questionnaire included free composition like essay writing to judge their language aptitude. The questions sought to evaluate their English language learning ability, vocabulary, writing ability and mother tongue interferences. Questions were also included about their interest in learning English. The participants were asked to write 200 to 300 words. This question offered 20 marks and the time period was 20 minutes.

The given topics for Free Composition (Constructed Response) were not concerned with specific and unfamiliar content areas requiring any specialized and technical vocabulary. The

topics were chosen on the ground that they would elicit the students' personal experiences, impressions, and feelings, and thus they would have fewer problems expressing themselves.

9. Sampling Procedure

All the schools are Government schools in Car Nicobar Island. Schools in Tamaloo and Malacca are secondary schools and schools in Arong and Mus are senior secondary schools. All the four schools are following CBSE syllabus, CCE pattern and NCERT materials. The level of participants is same; all are 'Pu' speakers. Since all the participants are studying 8th standard, their age range is within 12 to 14. Average is 13 and standard deviation is 12.5. There are 60 participants from 4 schools. Number of students from each school varied: i.e. 8,7,14, 31. Similarly the male and female numbers also could not be equal number: 25+35 (male + female). Since all are Government schools following the same CBSE syllabus and materials, the teachers' qualification, etc. are also the same. We can club the data together as 25M +35F=60 in all.

10. Significance of the Study

This study will identify mother tongue interferences and the problems of learning and teaching English as second language in Car Nicobar schools. The method adopted for the present study deals with problems identified in learning and teaching English as a second language at different stages in Car Nicobar schools.

11. Data Analysis and Interpretations

The present study was empirical in **DATA** nature and the data inputs were both quantitative as well as qualitative. It was cross sectional and limited to four schools in four villages out of the 21 villages in Car Nicobar. The data was collected by using questionnaires for students. The Questionnaire had a brief demographic profile and a detailed Language Ability Test (LAT) (Selvaganapathy 2017).

Table 1
School Wise Participants List

Sl.No	SCHOOLS	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
1.	Government Secondary School, Tamaloo (1)	6	2	8
2.	Government Senior Secondary School, Arong (2)	2	5	7
3.	Government Secondary School, Malacca (3)	3	11	14

4.	Government Senior Secondary School, Mus (4)	14	17	31
TOTAL		25	35	60
<i>Source: Computed from primary data</i>				

12. Language Ability Test (LAT):

The Language Ability Test (LAT) used for the present study comprised of both cloze test (Gap fill exercises, MCQs) and Free Composition. The components of LAT were Reading Comprehension Test which required the students to write their answers for five short answer type questions (one or two sentences each) in free composition; an essay (200 words in free composition) and Grammar comprising of cloze test questions on Tense (Verb usage), Adjectives, Articles and Prepositions. The overall total score of LAT was 50 and the time allotted was 45 minutes. Based on the answers that the students wrote in LAT, Errors are identified, classified and analyzed.

The data from both the cloze test (Gap Fill, MCQs) and the Free Composition are compared and analyzed as well. Since the percentage of error for any objective type of cloze test is always calculated in terms of the total score for that particular question or item; and on the other hand percentage error in Free Composition is always with respect to the total number of errors committed. Their comparison cannot be done on a one to one basis. However, it gives an indication to ascertain the weak areas of the learners.

Table 2
Individual Participants List for Free Composition Errors

Sl.No	Student Code	Total No. of Words	Total No. of sentences	Word per sentence	Total No. of Errors	Total No. Error free sentences
1.	SA13F1T	103	19	5.4	102	1
2.	LA12M1T	87	15	5.8	55	1
3.	IG13M1T	96	18	5.3	94	-
4.	DA12M1T	61	10	6.1	61	-
5.	MI13M1T	60	9	6.6	38	-
6.	ES13M1T	83	14	5.9	72	-
7.	MA13M1T	97	16	6.0	82	-
8.	TA13F1T	95	19	5.0	55	-
9.	RA12F2T	128	20	6.0	89	-

10.	RA13F2T	79	14	5.6	63	-
11.	AN13F2T	88	15	5.8	56	-
12.	ME13F2T	72	14	5.1	60	-
13.	JA12M2T	77	14	5.5	56	-
14.	JE12F2T	61	12	5.0	58	-
15.	DO12M2T	76	14	5.4	65	-
16.	VA12F3T	31	11	2.8	28	-
17.	TH13F3T	144	10	14.4	26	-
18.	GI12F3T	68	12	5.6	25	-
19.	PE12M3T	129	10	12.9	38	-
20.	NA12F3T	97	19	5.1	26	-
21.	ZA12F3T	38	06	6.3	09	2
22.	OL13F3T	57	05	11.4	11	-
23.	HE12M3T	128	12	10.6	31	-
24.	WI12M3T	129	09	14.3	23	-
25.	CE12F3T	194	27	7.1	50	2
26.	SU12F3T	146	19	7.6	62	2
27.	SY12F3T	97	23	4.2	56	1
28.	SH12F3T	88	19	4.6	36	3
29.	JU12F3T	80	20	4.0	39	2
30.	SA13F4T	49	09	5.4	21	2
31.	ES12F4T	105	16	6.5	41	-
32.	OX12F4T	88	16	5.5	40	-
33.	LO12F4T	97	18	5.3	12	9
34.	GI12F4T	35	19	1.8	59	2
35.	SH12F4T	127	21	6.0	41	6
36.	BA12F4T	85	18	4.7	18	3
37.	RO13M4T	50	06	8.3	12	-
38.	LE12M4T	86	12	7.1	22	-
39.	AB12M4T	61	13	4.6	20	2
40.	AL12M4T	89	13	6.8	60	-
41.	GI12M4T	89	12	7.4	12	4
42.	BO12M4T	92	14	6.5	23	1
43.	MA12M4T	36	08	4.5	10	-
44.	GE12F4T	38	07	5.4	12	1
45.	PR12M4T	73	08	9.1	34	-
46.	GA12M4T	30	05	7.8	15	-

47.	JA12F4T	76	10	7.6	26	2
48.	SU12F4T	84	14	6.0	20	3
49.	ST12M4T	98	06	16.7	14	2
50.	MI12F4T	86	11	7.8	16	2
51.	SY12M4T	65	12	15.4	19	1
52.	NI12M4T	75	10	7.5	25	-
53.	GL12F4T	59	10	5.9	23	-
54.	SH12F4T	99	10	9.9	19	3
55.	FL12F4T	58	12	4.8	22	2
56.	SH12F4T	47	09	5.2	24	-
57.	CL12F4T	87	10	8.2	24	2
58.	ME12M4T	58	10	5.8	21	1
59.	AR12M4T	53	10	5.3	17	3
60.	SW12F4T	41	05	8.2	17	1

Source: Computed from primary data

Table 2 clearly shows that the participants fail completely in writing error free sentences. One participant had 9 error free sentences out of the total 18 sentences that she had written. The maximum number of words that any participant wrote was 194 and the minimum number of words was 30 in a Free Composition wherein the student participants were supposed to write an essay of about 200 words. The maximum number of sentences was 27 and the minimum number of sentences reported was 5. The highest number of errors by any single participant was 102 and the least number of errors was 9.

13. School Wise Free Composition Errors

Out of the four schools in Car Nicobar, namely Government Secondary School Tamaloo, Government Senior Secondary School Arong, Government Secondary School Malacca and Government Senior Secondary School Mus which participated in the present study, Government Secondary School Malacca and Government Senior Secondary School Mus participants displayed a better performance at 32.25% and 33.39% Errors respectively. Table 3. shows the relative performance of all the four schools in terms of Number of Words, Sentences, Errors, and their percentage along with the number of Error Free Sentences in Free Composition. Tamaloo and Arong participants did not perform well, and their Error Percentage was recorded at 84.89% and 76.93% respectively.

13. a. School-wise Participants /Demographic Profile

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The data was collected from four schools in Car Nicobar, namely, Government Secondary School Tamaloo, Government Senior Secondary School Arong, Government Secondary School Malacca and Government Senior Secondary School Mus. According to the 2011 census Tamaloo for tourists, is originally Tim-lö village which has about 379 households with a population of 1515 and 74.01% literacy rate. Arong for tourists, is originally Ha-ran having about 233 households with a population of 1194 and a high literacy rate of 87.73%. Malacca is the largest village in Car Nicobar, originally called U-rèk-ka (called "Malacca" only for tourists) and it has a population of 1637 with 368 households and 77.9 % overall literacy rate. Ha-nyôch (Mus) has about 365 households with a population of 1553 and 80.2% literacy rate.

The number of students from each school could not be the same. There were 8, 7, 14 and 31 participants from each of these schools respectively. Similarly the male and female numbers could also not be controlled. There were 25 male participants and 35 female participants (Figure 3.1) who participated in this study.

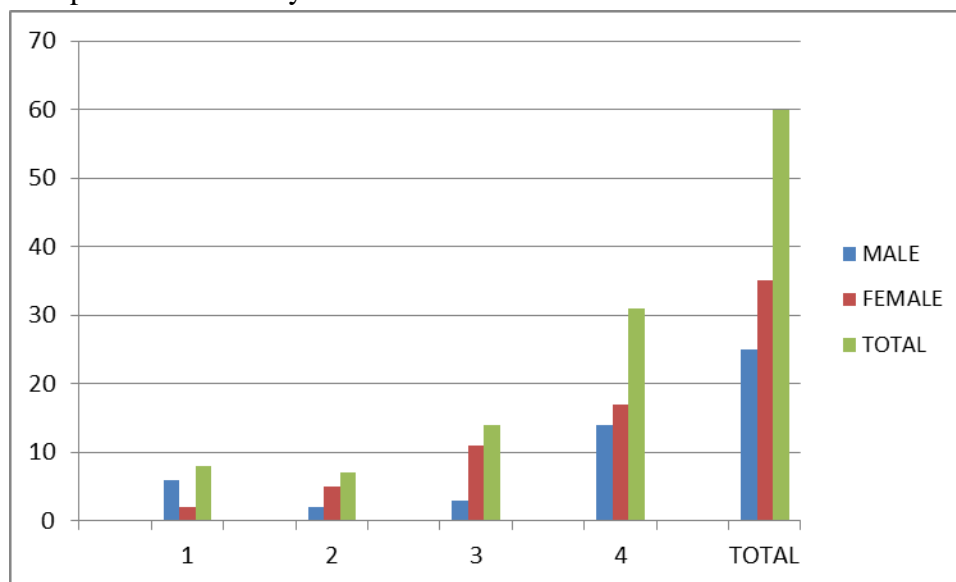


Figure 3.1: School-wise Participants

For tabulation, each of the participants was given a distinct seven digit alpha numeric code taking into account the initials of their names, age, gender, school and other language known.

Since all are Government schools which follow the same CBSE syllabus and materials and even the qualification of teachers are also the same, the data was clubbed together. The students ranged from 12 years of age to 14 years. Since all the students were from standard 8th, their age range is within 12to 14.

Age and School criteria though should not have much significance, but, wherever there is a marked difference in the performance of the participants on the basis of these variables, they are analysed in detail for the present study.

Linguistic Repertoire of ‘*Pu*’ participants

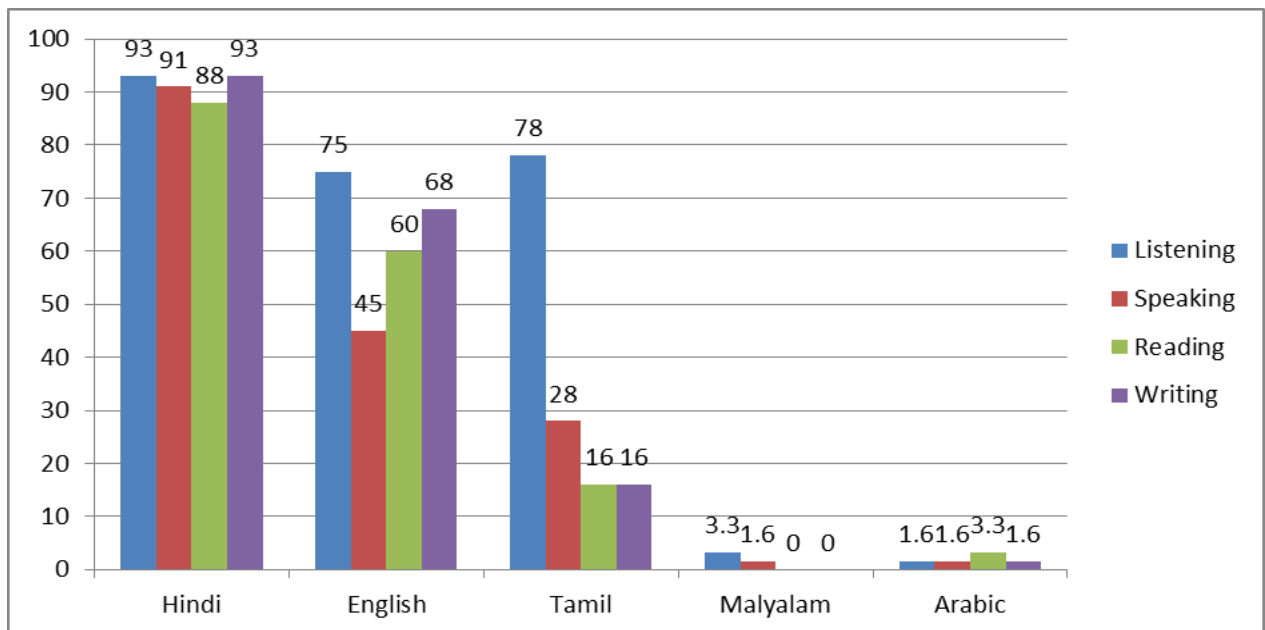


Figure 3.2: Linguistic Repertoire of *Pu* participants (60)

There were 60 participants, and their mother tongue is *Pu*. As Figure 3.2 depicts there are five major languages spoken in the area excluding their mother tongue and they are Hindi, English, Tamil, Malayalam, and Arabic. Five of the students did not respond for the question

regarding Tamil language. All of the participants responded for English and Hindi. More than 90 % of the participants were comfortable with Hindi in terms of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In English however, the participants claimed that they faced more problem while speaking and reading as compared to listening and writing. The participants were comfortable while listening to Tamil whereas only 28 per cent of them were comfortable while speaking; and only 16 per cent of them were comfortable reading and writing Tamil. As far as Malayalam and Arabic is concerned, very few of the participants were comfortable with them. No one was comfortable while reading and writing Malayalam and only 3.3 per cent and 1.6 % were comfortable while listening and speaking respectively. For Arabic also only 3.3 % of the participants were comfortable while reading and only 1.6 % were comfortable while listening, speaking, and writing Arabic.

Table 3.1: School Wise Free Composition Errors

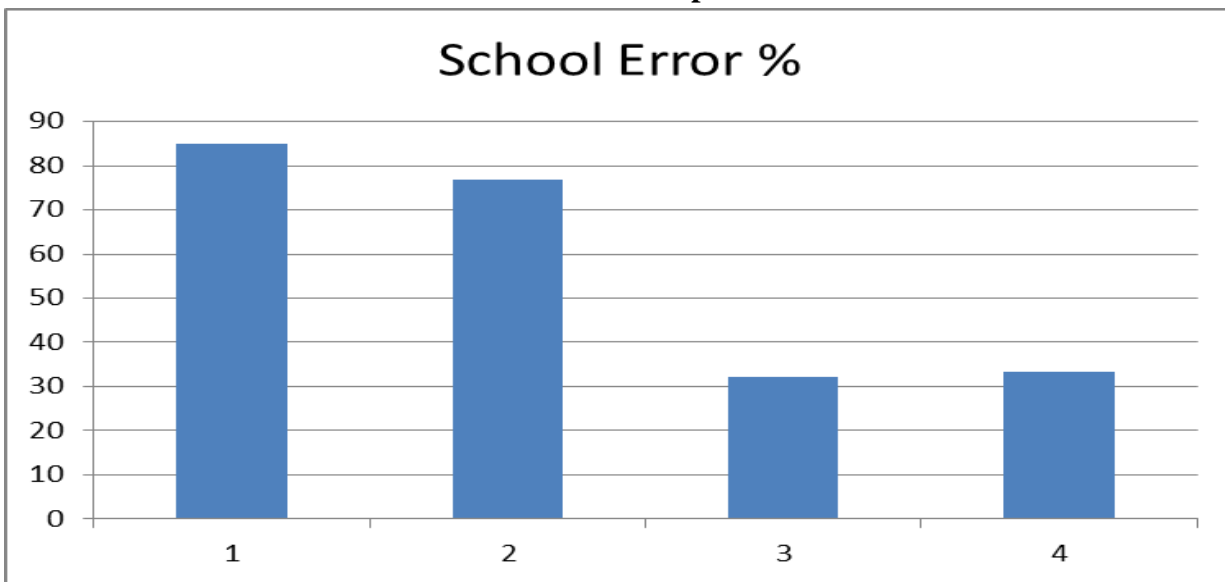


Figure 3.1 depicts very clearly that the participants from Malacca and Mus were far better than those from Arong and Tamaloo as far as their English learning was taken into account. Their Free Composition Error Percentage was less than half of those recorded by the Arong and Tamaloo participants.

Table 3.2. Free Composition Errors Male vs. Female

Table 3.3: Types of Error Categories	Total Errors MALE	%Errors MALE	Total Errors FEMALE	% Errors FEMALE	Total Errors	Total % Errors	
Nouns	217	23.61	275	21.2	486	22.04	
Prepositions	31	3.27	28	2.16	59	2.67	
Articles	37	3.9	89	6.8	126	5.71	
Verb	44	5.7	107	8.32	151	6.84	
Adverb	4	0.95	14	1.08	18	0.81	
Tense	12	1.26	10	0.77	22	0.99	
Adjectives	30	3.16	41	3.18	71	3.21	
Conjunction	27	2.8	54	4.19	81	3.67	
Spellings	50	5.27	57	4.43	107	4.85	
MT / Other words	94	11.19	140	10.88	234	10.61	
Semantics	35	3.48	39	3.03	72	3.26	
Punctuation	19	2.078	218	16.9	239	14.01	
A Study in Error Analysis	FULLSTOP	128	13.92	172	13.3	300	13.60
	COMMA	22	2.3	40	3.1	62	2.81

Figure 3.1: Free Composition Error Percentage across Schools

	MALE(25)	%	AVERAGE PER PERSON (MALE)	FEMALE (35)	%	AVERAGE PER PERSON (FEMALE)
Total No. of words	1978	-	79.12	2927	-	83.62
Total No. of sentences	294	-	11.76	588	-	16.8
Words per sentence	6.72			6.14		
Total No. of errors	919	46.46%	36.76	1286	43.93%	36.74
Total No. error free sentences	15	5.1%	0.6	51	8.67%	1.45

14. Free Composition Errors Male vs. Female

As reported in Table 3.4, the total number of errors in Free Composition by male

Sl.No	SCHOOLS	1		2		3		4	
		Error per person		Error per person		Error per person		Error per person	
1.	Total No. of students	8	Avg.	7	Avg.	14	Avg.	31	Avg.
2.	Total No. of words	682	85.25	581	83	1426	101.85	2213	71.38
3.	Total No. of sentences	120	15	103	14.71	202	14.42	232	7.48
4.	Words per sentence	5.68		5.64		7.05		9.53	
5.	Total No. of error free sentences	379	77.37	447	63.85	460	32.85	739	23.83
6.	‘Pu’ Speakers Learning English in Middle Schools of Car Nicobar (A&N Islands): A Study In Error Analysis	84.89		76.93		32.25		33.39	
7.	Total No. of error free sentences	2	0.25	-	-	12	0.85	52	1.67

participants (25) is 919 whereas the total number of errors by female participants (35) is 1286. However, per person error (as shown in Figure 3.3) for both male and female participants is almost similar at almost 36.

15. Types of Errors in Free Composition

Types of Errors in Free Composition are classified in Table 3.5 and depicted in Figure 3.6. Nouns as a category report the highest percentage of errors at 22.04% followed by Capitalization and Full Stop at 14.01% and 13.60%. The least number of errors are reported in Adverbs and Tense at 0.81% and 0.99%. However, the cloze test errors for Tense showcase a different picture (Refer Table 3.8 and Figure 3.9) wherein it is reported at 54% of the total score allocated for Tense.

i. Nouns: Total number of errors by male participants (25) in noun is 217 which is 23.61% of their total whereas female participants (35) committed 275 errors out of 1286. Female error percentage in noun is 21.2%.

ii. Prepositions: Total number of errors by male participants (25) in prepositions is 31 out of 919. Their error percentage of preposition is 3.27% whereas female participants (35) committed 28 total number of errors in preposition out of 1286. The female error percentage of preposition is 2.16%. The cloze test result show that per person average errors for preposition out of a total number of 5 prepositions is 0.55 which is 11% out of the total marks allocated. (Refer Table 3.8 and Figure 3.9).

iii. Articles: Total number of errors by male participants (25) in articles is 37 out of 919. The errors of articles by female participants (35) are 89 out of 1286. The error of articles percentage in male is 3.9% and that of female is 6.8%. The cloze test result show that per person average errors for Articles out of a total number of 5 Articles is 0.75 which is 15% out of the total marks allocated.

(Refer Table 3.8 and Figure 3.9).

iv. Verbs: Total number of errors by male participants (25) in verbs is 44 out of 919. The error percentage of verb is 5.7% whereas the number of errors by female participants (35) in verb is 107 out of 1286 with their error percentage of verb reported at 8.32%.

v. Adverbs: Adverbs as a category report the least errors. Total number of errors in adverbs by male participants (25) is 4 out of 919 with the error percentage being 0.95% whereas female participants (35) report 14 errors in adverb out of 1286. Their error percentage of adverb is 1.08%.

vi. Tense: Total number of errors by male participants (25) in tense is 12 out of 919. The error percentage of tense is 1.26% whereas female participants (35) commit 10 errors out of 1286. Their error percentage of tense is 0.77%. However, the cloze test result showcase an entire opposite picture wherein it is reported that per person average errors for Tense (Verb Usage) out of a total number of 5 is 2.7 which is 54% out of the total marks allocated. (Refer Table 3.8 and Figure 3.9).

vii. Adjectives: Total number of errors by male participants (25) in adjectives 30 out of 919. The error of adjectives percentage is 3.16% whereas female participants (35) in adjectives 41 out of 1286. The error of adjectives percentage is 3.17%. The cloze test result show that per person average errors for Adjectives out of a total number of 5 Adjectives is 1.05 which is 21% out of the total marks allocated. (Refer Table 3.8 and Figure 3.9).

viii. Conjunctions: Total number of errors by male participants (25) in conjunction is 27 out of 919. Their error percentage of conjunction is 2.8% whereas female participants (35) commit 54 errors in conjunction out of 1286. Their percentage error of conjunction is 4.19%.

xi. Spelling: Total number of errors by male participants (25) in spellings is 50 out of 919. The error percentage of spelling is 5.27% whereas female participants (35) make 57 spelling mistakes out of 1286. Their error percentage of spelling is 4.43%.

x. Mother Tongue/ Other Words: Total number of errors by male participants (25) in mother tongue and other words interference is 106 out of 919. Their percentage error of mother tongue and other words interference is 11.19% whereas female participants (35) made 89 errors in mother tongue and other words interference out of 1286. Their percentage error of mother tongue and other words interference is 6.8%.

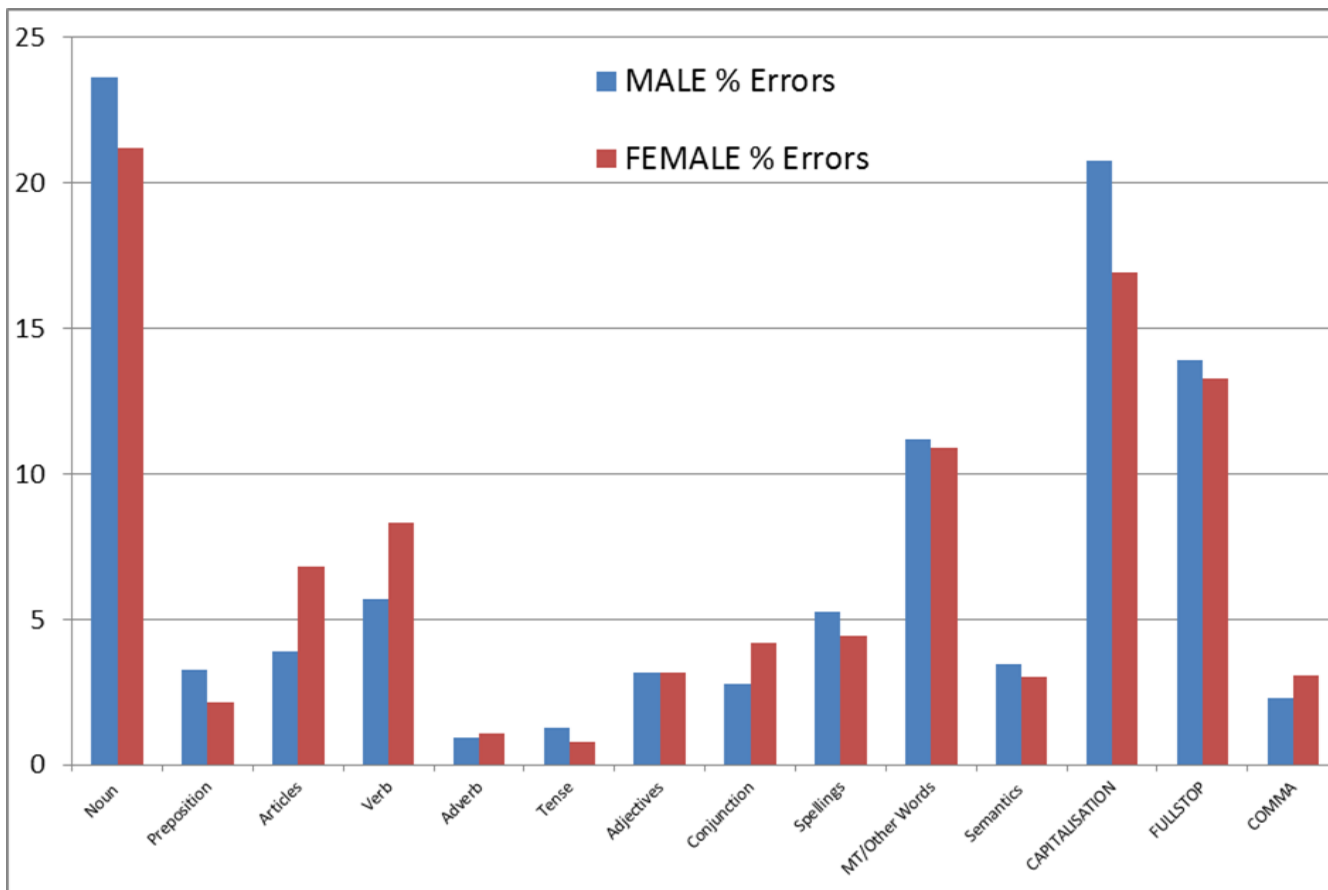
xi. Semantics: Errors in Vocabulary wherein the participants use an inappropriate word for lack of semantic knowledge are clubbed under this category. Total number of errors by male participants (25) in semantics is 33 out of 919. Their error percentage of semantics is 3.48% whereas female participants (35) commit 39 errors out of 1286. Their percentage error of semantics is 3.03%.

xii. Punctuation: Errors in Capitalizations, Full Stops and Commas are identified and clubbed under Punctuations. Total number of errors by male participants (25) in punctuations is 341 out of 919. Their error percentage of punctuations is 36% whereas female participants (35) commit 430 out of 1286 errors in punctuations. Their error percentage of punctuations is

33.3%. The maximum number of errors within this category is reported by Capitalizations followed by errors in Full stops. As depicted in Table 3.6 Errors of Deletion and Substitution outnumber the Addition errors across all grammatical categories.

Figure 3.7: % Error for Free Composition (Male vs. Female)

16. Error Hierarchy



The Hierarchy of Errors in Free Composition is depicted in Table 3.10 and Figure 3.10 & 3.11. As far as the Error Hierarchy in Cloze Test is concerned it does not hold much significance as the comparison is made only among the four grammatical categories; Adjectives, Articles, Prepositions and Tense.

Table 4.5: Error Hierarchy for Free Composition

Sl.No.	MALE	%	FEMALE	%
--------	------	---	--------	---

1	Punctuations	36	Punctuations	33
2	Nouns	22.9	Nouns	21
3	Mother tongue /Other words	11.19	Verbs	8.27
4	Verb	5.7	Mother tongue /Other words	6.8
5	Spelling mistakes	5.27	Articles	6.8
6	Articles	3.9	Spelling mistakes	5.25
7	Semantics	3.48	Conjunction	4.17
8	Preposition	3.27	Adjectives	3.17
9	Adjectives	3.16	Semantics	3.0
10	Conjunction	2.8	Preposition	2.16
11	Tense	1.26	Adverb	1.0
12	Adverb	0.95	Tense	0.77

MALE

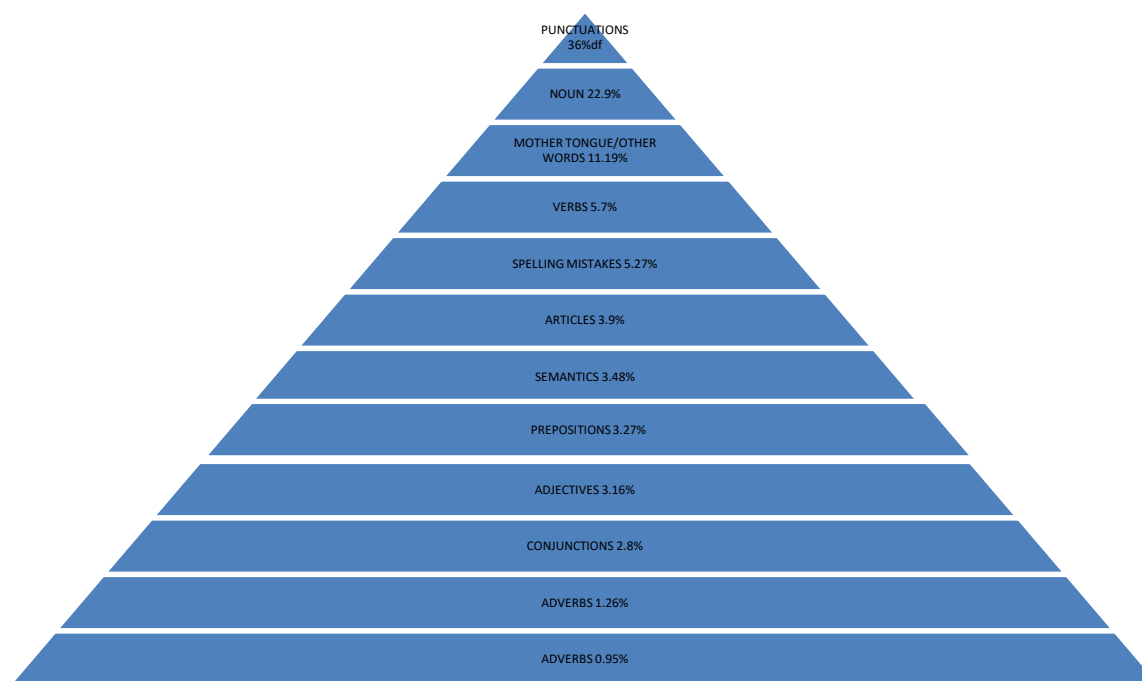


Figure: 3.10: Hierarchy of Errors in Free Composition MALE

FEMALE

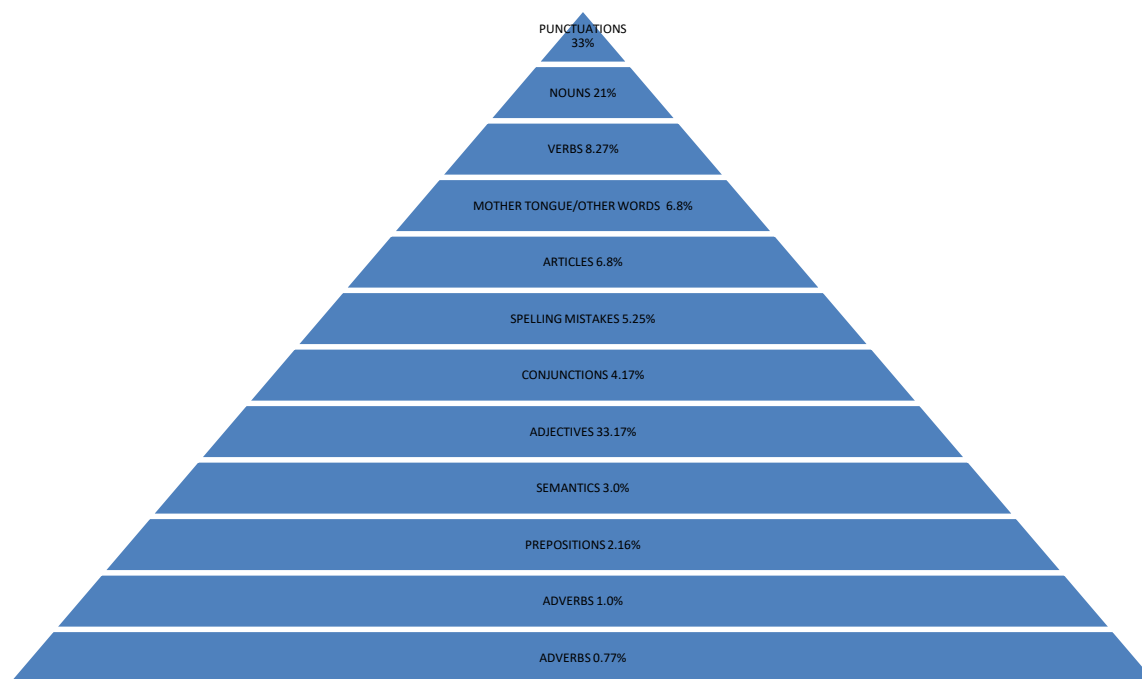


Figure: 3.11: Hierarchy of Errors in Free Composition FEMALE

The maximum number of errors by male participants (25) is in punctuations 36% whereas the female participants (35) also make most errors in punctuations 33.3%. Individual category-wise it is Nouns where they make the maximum number of errors followed by Capitalization and Full Stop.

The minimum number of errors by male participants (25) is in adverbs 0.95% whereas the female participants (35) make least errors in tense 0.77%.

17. Research Findings

This research was conducted to the students who are tribal students in middle school level of Car Nicobar Island. The mother tongue interferences of 'Pu' speakers learning English as a second language and the view of the students on the reading and writing skills were also sought and analyzed. Findings of the present research study may be summarized as follows.

- ✓ Students' achievement at word (lexical) level is high (91-94%).
- ✓ Students obtained highest scores at sentence level.

- ✓ In essay writing students commit spelling errors and grammatical errors in their writing; it could be dialect influence.
- ✓ Most of the students obtained the highest scores in grammar part.
- ✓ Some of the students obtained the lowest scores in dictation of words and also paragraph writing.
- ✓ Most of the students faced difficulties in writing paragraph.
- ✓ It was found that several students were not good in listening and speaking but good in reading and writing. Some students were not reading properly. They require more exercise for their development.
- ✓ They confuse the secondary symbols for the short and long vowels in reading and writing. In replacement process, a greater number of errors were committed by the students in relation to other processes.
- ✓ Female participants committed a smaller number of errors than the male.
- ✓ Comparatively the errors were less in semantics than in the lexical.
- ✓ In all the processes like addition, deletion, and substitution they confuse the sounds of /n/, /m/, /p/, /ph/, /t/, /d/, /ñ/, /ñ/, etc. in their graphemic representation: name -mame, father-pather or Pa, football-foodball, etc.
- ✓ Students committed errors in essay writing. In essay writing, errors like spelling errors, sentence errors, mother tongue or first language influence, word repetition, mirror image, analogical errors, illegibility, semantics, and lack of interest in writing are found.
- ✓ Students committed errors in paragraph reading or reading comprehension. In paragraph reading, errors of pronunciation are found. It could be due to their mother tongue influence. Most of the times, they utter nasal sound; it could be due to their shape of nose or nasal cavity.
- ✓ Most of the students' handwriting is not good and is illegible. Comparatively female students are better than male.
- ✓ The researcher finds mother tongue words are used frequently by participants.

Sl.No	'Pu' words	English words
1.	Fa or Pather	father
2.	Ma	mother
3.	Kar	car
4.	Oak	drink
5.	Ayom	grand parent
6.	Khanu-ha-hoo	Pig festival
7.	Kevidy	one kind of tree or native fruit
8.	Sabudhan	native cake (prepared by Kevidy fruit)

Tamil words are used by 'Pu' speaking students

Sl.No	Tamil words	'Pu' words	English words
1.	amma	ama	mother
2.	appa	apah	father
3.	ayya (Madurai dialect)	ayom	grandfather
4.	aaya (Tanjavoore dialect)	ayom	grandmother
5.	thanni	thani	water
6.	tampi	thambi	younger brother

• Hindi words are used by 'Pu' speaking students

Sl.No	Tamil words	'Pu' words	English words
1.	ma	ma	mother
2.	abha	abah	father
3.	maami	maami	aunty
4.	doodh wala	milkwala	milk man
5.	macchi	machi	fish

• 'Pu' speaking students coined some English words

Sl.No	Coined English words	Correct English words
1.	Bus man	bus driver
2.	Mathis	mother
3.	Big family	joint family
4.	House women /house lady	housewife
5.	Grand fa/grand man	grand father
6.	Grand women/grand lady	grand mother
7.	Shop man	shopkeeper
8.	Cleaning man	sweeper

Conclusion

To conclude, this research work shows that a few tribal students have high level of English proficiency because in Car Nicobar Islands. They speak 'Pu' language at home also. All the students have gained better language competency with more knowledge and language skills after

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Selvaganapathy, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D. Research Scholar

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A Study in Error Analysis

studying English as a compulsory course. Whatever the type of assessment was used, it was clear that monitoring the exam within a structured framework and blueprint was very significant information regarding the efficiency of their teaching as well as the achievements of their students. This study was undertaken with the aim of finding out the worth fullness of tests to evaluate the effectiveness of the middle school level education.

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