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Effects of Direct Teaching Method in the Academic Achievement of Students in English at the Elementary Level

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Abstract

The main objective of the study was to know the effects of direct teaching method in the academic achievement of students in English at the elementary level. Intelligence test was administered to determine the level of each student and to equalize the students of two groups. Experimental group was taught by direct method while the Control group was taught by traditional method for a period of four weeks. At the end of teaching, a post-test was administered and scores of pre-test, post-test and intelligence test served as data of the study.

Applying t-test and analysis of variance indicated the significance of difference between the scores of groups at 0.05 levels. Experiment was the basic step. The Pre-test Post-test Equivalent – Group Design was used for the analysis of the data. The students of Federal Government schools of Islamabad were the population of the study.

The students of Elementary School Badhana Kalan, (FA) Islamabad were taken as a sample for the study. Obtained data was analyzed, interpreted and concluded that direct teaching method was more effective as a teaching-learning technique for English. Students in the direct teaching method outscored the students working in traditional learning situation.

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Low achievers in direct teaching presented noteworthy superiority over low achievers learning English by the traditional method.

In the light of the results it was recommended that direct method should be used in all levels to teach English for better performance of the students.

Introduction

Education is essential for human development. Modern age is the age of science and technology. Education gives people expertise and skills for different fields to keep them abreast with the changing realities of life. The development of education depends upon the language, which is a unique tool granted to human beings for communication.

Education is carried on through the use of language at various levels. While Pakistani languages are taught in various levels of education, the prominence of English continues to grow as means of communication in various fields. English is becoming the preferred medium of instruction in Pakistan.

At present, in the field of Economics, English has helped us a great deal. There is a strong demand for English-speaking doctors, teachers, and engineers in countries like the United Kingdom and the United States. A large number of Pakistani doctors, teachers, and engineers are serving abroad and are earning a large amount of foreign exchange. This foreign exchange is like a backbone to our national economy (Govt. of Pakistan, 1982).

There are people who are afraid of losing their Pakistani culture if English is retained as the medium of instruction. Today, surely, we can speak of international culture and no nation can claim to have its own exclusive culture. As long as people are poor, uneducated, and lead an isolated life, they can speak of having their own culture. We have the example of China before us. As long as they lived in isolation, everyone spoke of Chinese culture. But now, with their growing international contacts, they are also giving up their familiar Chinese dress and beginning to wear Western dress. In fact, there is no such thing as Western or English dress; it is a universal form of dress which people all over the world are adopting in spite of their linguistic, religious, and political differences (Aslam, 1990).

For generations we have followed some traditional methods of teaching English, which involved grammar, translation and memorization. This teaching helped us to write English somewhat effectively, but not speak it effectively. Almost every method currently suggested for the teaching and learning of English involves direct teaching.

All the syllabi of English were modeled on the same pattern GTM was the basic element of the educational policy of the British Empire. GTM introduced English to numerous generations in the British Raj, and the entire corpus of cultural, intellectual and mental evolution was the outcome of this exposure. GTM played a pivotal role in synchronizing English language with teaching demands of in the Sub-continent (Mansoor, 1993).

This paper tries to compare and contrast the results of two methods of teaching English: Traditional and Direct Teaching Methods.

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Research Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of direct teaching method in the academic achievement of students in English at elementary level. In order to test the relative effectiveness of independent variable, i.e. an instructional paradigm (Direct teaching), the choice of most suitable design for this experiment was the basic step.

The Pre-test Post-test Equivalent –Group Design was used for the treatment to test the reliability of the posttest scores obtained by the students who formed the sample of the students. In this design one group is given pre-test and then it is divided into two groups randomly in such a way that both the groups have almost equal mean score on pre-test.

Where	R	=	Randomly Selected	
	E	=	Experimental Group	(Treatment)
	C	=	Control Group	(Traditional approach)
	O	=	Observation or Measurement	T= Treatment

The experimental treatment to which a group is exposed i.e. independent variable.

This is the strong and true experimental design, but there may be the possibility of the influence of the effect of testing and the interaction with the experimental variable (Farooq, 2001). However, in order to eliminate the influence of the effect of testing and the interaction with the experimental variable, a post-test parallel to the pretest was used to measure the achievement. Pretest was used only to equate the control and experimental groups.

Population

The aim of this study was to investigate the relative the effects of direct teaching method in the academic achievement of students in English at elementary level. Therefore, students studying at elementary level considered the population of the study.

Sample

Students of 8th class of Federal Government Boys elementary School, Badhana Kalan, (FA) Islamabad were taken as sample of the study. Sample students were further divided into two groups, i.e. the experimental and the control groups. Both the groups were equated on the basis of pre-test scores. Each group comprised 20 students.

Two English teachers having equal qualification, equal teaching experiences, and considerably equal teaching potential, were selected to teach the control and the experimental groups.

Research Instruments

In order to equate the control and the experimental groups, a teacher-made pretest was administered before the allocation of students to the experimental and the control groups.

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Immediately after the completion of the period of experiment-teaching was over, a teacher-made posttest was administered to subjects of both the experimental and the control groups. The purpose of this test was to measure the achievement of the students, constituting the sample. The researchers constructed these both the tests after a thorough review of the techniques of test construction and related units of English. Consent of the class teachers and experts was weighed in the construction of tests.

Data Collection

The experiment continued for four weeks. Soon after the treatment was over, posttest was administered to measure the achievement of the sample subjects. Finally, there were 20 students in the control group and 20 students in the experimental group. Pretest scores of the sample served as data to equate the control and the experimental groups, while posttest scores served as data to measure achievement of the students as a result of treatment.

Analysis of Data

Raw scores obtained from pretest and posttests were presented in tabular form for the purpose of interpretation. For the manipulation of data, the means, standard deviations, and differences of means were computed for each group. Significance of difference between the mean scores of both the experimental and control groups on the variable of pretest scores, school record and post test scores was tested at 0.05 level by applying t-test.

Conclusions

In the light of statistical analysis the following conclusions were drawn.

- 1 It was determined that direct teaching method is more effective as a teaching-learning method than the traditional method.
- 2 The weaker students in direct teaching showed momentous difference over low achievers learning English by the traditional method. Therefore direct teaching was seen to be a more active method for teaching English to the weaker students.
- 3 The weaker students who were taught English by direct method retained more material as compared to weaker students taught by traditional method. Thus direct teaching seemed to be more effective teaching learning technique for weaker students
- 4 Most of the English textbooks written for direct teaching were taught through traditional method. This did not offer good results, because teachers were not familiar with the direct method.

Recommendations

In the light of conclusions of the study, following recommendations were made.

- 1 The government should strengthen the pre-service and in-service training. Educational conferences and seminars should be arranged from time to time. Refresher courses at

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the local level, sector level, and district level as well as mobile teams should be established.

- 2 Teachers should be trained to use the Direct Method of Teaching English effectively.
- 3 All the four skills should be given equal weightage to learn English effectively.

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