

CHAPTER 5 : CONCLUSION

5.0 Conclusion and Implications

One of the aims of this study is ' Is the acquisition of the English language at an earlier age an asset to the students in the national schools ?' The findings of this Research between the Indian students in Remove Class and Form One students, indicate that the Form One students have fewer errors than the Remove class students, thus the acquisition of the English language at an earlier age is an asset to the students in the national schools.

The Form One Indian students were from the national primary schools, where the medium of instruction was Bahasa Melayu. This group of students learn English in Standard One. The Remove class students were from the National Type primary school where the medium of instruction was Tamil. This group of students learn English only in Standard Three. As such, the Form One students have 6 years of English when compared to the Remove class students who only study English for 4 years.

The disparity in the performances of these two groups of students can be seen in the Standard Six Assessment examination where the Form One students fared better in English when compared to the Remove class students results as shown in Table below.

Table 31: Standard Six Assessment test: A comparison of the percentage of passes in Remove and Form One classes.

Class	A	B	C	D	E	% Of Passes
Remove	12%	20%	32%	36%	0%	100 %
Form One	28%	24%	36%	0.4%	0.8%	92 %

In this test, 28% of the Form One students got a grade A for English compared to 12 % for Remove class students. 24% of Form One students got a grade B compared to 20 % from Remove class. 36 % of Form One got a grade C compared to 32 % from the Remove class. For the English results, the majority of Remove class students got a grade D i.e. 36 % when compared to only 4% of Form One students.

The disparity in the performances of these two groups is reflected in the composition the students have written. The Form One students wrote an average of 131 words while the average number of words of the Remove class was 64 words. The longest composition in Form One classes was 290 words while the shortest was 46 words. In the Remove class, the longest composition was 136 words while the shortest was 6 words. This is an indication that the Form One students had a wider range of vocabulary and a greater exposure to the language in the primary school. According to this study, the learning of English at an earlier age is an advantage to the student.

The second aim of this study is 'To what extent is the student from the national type school proficient in the English language, as compared to his peers from the national schools?' The researcher is of the opinion that the Remove class students are not as proficient in the English Language when compared to the students in Form One. The students in the Remove classes had a higher frequency of errors compared to the students in Form One.

'Is a strong foundation in Language One, for example Tamil/ Mandarin an aid in acquiring language Two or language Three since Bahasa Melayu is Language Two' According to this research, for the students in Remove classes a foundation in Tamil and Bahasa Melayu is not as aid in acquiring a proficiency in the English Language.

The next question is ' how much influence has Bahasa Melayu words on English composition?' In this study, the researcher found that the Form One students, used a number of Bahasa Melayu spelling in the composition (72 %) when compared to 20 % of students in Remove classes. This indicates that the interference of Bahasa Melayu has a greater impact on the Form One students. This is probable because Bahasa Melayu is the medium of instruction in the National schools, while Tamil is the medium of instruction in the national type schools.

Yap Soon Hock's (1973) findings showed that word forms and spelling errors stood out prominently in the English and Malay medium classes. This study indicated that for the students in Form One, the most frequent error is word form error category and structural errors, followed by spelling

errors. For the students in the Remove class, the most frequent error is also in the word form category. However, the second most frequent error is spelling errors followed by structural errors.

5.1. Recommendation for Remedial Work.

The following suggestions are directed at students with low writing abilities. Teachers can adopt and adapt these exercises to suit students in their respective classes.

1. Problems of punctuation, spelling and grammar.

At the mechanical stage of writing, students are often hindered by poor punctuation, spelling and weaknesses in grammatical items, all of which discourage the students from writing. It is of no use trying to teach higher standards of writing like creative writing when students are frustrated at the mechanical level. Before giving them further exercises to write longer stretches of writing, teachers should spend some time helping students to overcome these mechanical problems.

To overcome punctuation problems, students should be given short but regular exercises requiring punctuation of unpunctuated sentences.

Teachers should plan a systematic approach to help students with spelling. Teachers should identify and note spelling errors. The teacher can use these as a basis for short weekly or even daily spelling tests. Words which are frequently spelled wrongly should appear regularly in the spelling tests. Students should be made aware of words wrongly spelt, given the list of words to learn and be tested on the following lesson.

2. Dictation tests.

Teachers should also give short dictation tests to students, especially from the textbooks itself. Students will thus consciously learn the spelling of these words. Dictation exercises should be carried out, especially for the students with low English proficiency level.

There are different types of dictation exercises, out of which only two will be discussed here.

One is the traditional dictation. Here the teacher can give the students a sample paragraph to study. In the next lesson, the teacher dictates while the student writes out the dictation exercise. This is useful because as the student learns to construct sentences, he also learns to check the spelling and punctuation.

The second dictation exercise called, 'Dictogloss,' is suitable for all levels of English proficiency. In this exercise, the teacher reads out a text or short paragraph. The students in their group write out the main key points of the passage. Then the students in their groups, try to reconstruct the passage, that was read. Here the students are exposed to different styles of writing and this exercise teaches the student to listen, comprehend and write out the composition.

3. Writing sentences to match pictures

Students with low English proficiency will gain confidence when given pictures in a series. After selecting a series of pictures, the teacher can pin them up on the blackboard. Teachers can start with a brain-storming session,

where students in a group come up with Vocabulary words and phrases to describe each picture.

Then the teacher may begin by getting students to write out these words on the blackboard. A discussion is carried out and students learn orally how to construct short sentences.

Then, students in their groups re-construct the sentences and develop new sentences. Teachers can supervise, facilitate and help out with basic grammatical sentences. Then each group is encouraged to read or write out the sentences on the board. Students can copy out these sentences in their books. Group Work encourages students to interact and they are encouraged to speak out in class. The teacher continues the whole series of pictures. Finally the student is confident of writing out the composition.

4. Writing sentences from words.

Teachers may begin to combine writing practice with a revision of syntax. The teacher writes out a small selection of words that can be combined to make short sentences, for examples articles, verbs, nouns, pronouns etc. About 20 to 30

words would be sufficient. Teacher writes them on the board or a worksheet.

The student objective is to write as many sentences as possible from the given words. For example the teacher gives the following words:

the	he	in	cycled	town
your	near	quickly	students	our
study	my	school	from	girl
to	a	they	mosque	ran

Examples of sentences that students could produce are as follows:

- i. He cycled slowly to my school.
- ii. They ran quickly to the mosque.

Students can be given special praise for grammatical accuracy, length of sentences and originality.

5. Expansion of sentences.

Students can be encouraged to add 'quality' and to write longer sentences. This will instill confidence in the student to experiment with complex sentences. The teacher writes out a sentence on the board. Students in groups, have to expand the sentences by adding a word or phrase. For example the teacher writes:

- i. The girl walks to school.

Examples of sentences that a student can produce:

- i. The small girl walks to school.
- ii. The small, poor girl walks to school.
- iii. The small, poor girl walks slowly to school.
- iv. Every morning, the small, poor girl walks slowly to school.

6. Building a paragraph using comprehension questions.

Students learn to write longer sentences and develop them into writing paragraphs. To prepare the writing exercise, the teacher selects a reading passage, for example, on the process of making a kite. The passage should be within the student's ability level. Then the teacher proceeds to discuss the passage and gives a series of comprehension questions related to the passage. The answers to these questions would form the basis of a paragraph. The teacher then introduces sentence connectors, for example, then, next, later, consequently etc. The students will then be able to write out the final product.

7. Introduction of Journal-Writing

Journal-writing or writing in a diary should be encouraged in all schools. Students could write a short article

on any topic of interest to him, for example a festival, a funeral, his outing, his friends or his opinion. The teacher merely looks at the contents of the articles and write a single comment. The teacher does not mark the article for grammatical accuracy. The aim is to encourage students to experiment with the language and to gain confidence to write in English. Students should be encouraged to write at least once a week and the work is to be passed up to the teacher for her comments.

These are some of the suggestions for remedial work that can be carried out in the classroom.

5.2. Recommendation for further Research.

This study is focussed on one school and limited to Remove classes and Form One classes. The selected school is basically a semi rural school and thus the students may not be proficient or do not have a positive attitude towards English as their peers in the urban schools. Thus the researcher recommends further research in the following fields

- i. A research study of errors by Indian students in an urban area.
- ii. A comparative study of errors made by Indian students in a rural school to errors made by Indian students in an urban school.
- iii. A comparative study of errors made by Chinese and Indian students from National Type schools.

5.3. Conclusion

Students from Remove and Form One classes made common errors. This study finds that students in Remove classes make more errors than the students in Form One classes. The recommendation for remedial work, as suggested by the researcher, have been tested and carried out in selected schools. The researcher recommends that teachers make an attempt to try out these suggestions.