

Causes of rising failure of the students' in the subject of English at Secondary Level

Gulap Shahzada

(Corresponding & Principal author)
Institute of Education & Research
University of Science & Technology, Bannu, Pakistan
Gulap_786@yahoo.com

Dr. Safdar Rehman Ghazi

Institute of Education & Research
University of Science & Technology, Bannu, Pakistan
drsrghazi@yahoo.com

Dr. Umar Ali Khan

Director Institute of Education & Research
Gomal University Dikhan, Pakistan
Umarali89@yahoo.com

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Abstract Purpose of this research was to find out causes of rising failure of the students' in the subject of English at Secondary Level. This study was descriptive in nature. All the male secondary schools in district Bannu constituted population of this study. From 50 secondary schools 100 English teachers were randomly selected as a sample of the study. A questionnaire for secondary school teachers was developed to collect data. To analyze and interpret data, simple percentage was used. Results of the study showed that majority of the respondents approved that teacher of English are not qualified and well trained, teachers of English do not teach English in a proper manner, Audio- Visual aids are not used in English class, The course is not compatible to the present time, teachers of linguistics are not present in our schools, English is given importance in the annual progress of the students in school. It was recommended that Qualified and well trained teachers may be appointed for English, teachers of English may use modern teaching method instead of traditional methods, Audio visual aids may be used such as language lab, gramophone, English course may be made compatible to the present time, Teachers may be encouraged to get linguistics knowledge.

Keywords: English language, Audio, Visual aids, Communication, International

1. Introduction

The kind of Education, offered to their people by the countries of the world is always related to their progress and advancement. The more the people of societies are Educated, the more they are civilized and well disciplined. It is a fact –universally recognized, that Education is the prime key to moral, cultural, political and socio-economic development of a nation. Islam being a revolutionary faith made it obligatory on every man and woman to acquire knowledge and exerted them undertake long and tedious journey to distant land in search of it. Emphasizing the importance of Education and learning in Islam it is enough to note that the first revelation of the Prophet was "Read in the name of thy Lord who created". It is through Education that a person gets an insight to understand and resolve his problems as well as those of his society (Government of Pakistan, 1998).

Secondary Education is considered to be an important sub sector of the entire Education system. If it provides middle level workers for the economy on one hand, and on the other, it acts as a feeder for the higher level of Education. The quality of Higher Education depends upon the quality of secondary Education which is expected to produce high quality professionals in different fields of Social, Economic and Political life of the country. Thus Secondary level of Education therefore, requires to be organized in such a way that it should prepare young men and women for the pursuit of Higher Education, as well as make them able to adjust with their practical lives meaningfully and productively (Bhatti, 1987).

An excellent opportunity is, therefore provided by four years of secondary education to the Educators and Educationists to conceive and launch programs which initiate the learners in to proper forms of behaviour and attitudes, which leads to decent productive and peaceful life in future (Govt of Pakistan, 1998).

According to Encyclopedia Britannica (2005), a system of conventional, spoken or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, communicate is called a language. No nation on the globe can make progress in all fields of life, without having proficiency and good command of English. It is a great wonder that quality of instruction in English and results of the Examinations: in the subject of English were the lowest of all the other subjects. The medium by which we communicate our thoughts and feelings to our fellowmen, the tool with which we conduct our business or government, the vehicle in the Science, Philosophy, the poetry of the race have been transmitted is surely worthy of study. It is fact that most of the time and energy is consumed in teaching and learning of English. In spite of all these our students are weak in English. So the government realized the importance of English and has made it compulsory from the very first level.

According to Aggarwal (1995) command over English is a vehicle of thought and lack of command over it is bound to make thoughts inexpressible, only those who understand any language can express themselves in that language. This is the age of Science and technology, and no country can afford isolation from the social, Educational, Scientific and cultural movements profession like Engineering, Medicines, Agriculture and Industries.

After all English is the language of the greatest power of the world. It spread as the language of the colonies of Britain in Africa and Asian countries (Griffer, 2002).

The power of English will be increased by globalization, United States, World Bank, IMF etc. will control these jobs, which have started operating increasingly in English. This trend will increase the demand for English Schooling, which will make parents invest in English at the cost of their own languages (Skutnabb, 2000).

According to Nicholas (1998), in the teaching of English, the teachers generally use Translation Method which is an old Method of Teaching; therefore, our students cannot get command over English language, as evident from the fact that there are a large number of students who fail in English at Secondary level.

So, in light of the above mentioned facts the knowledge of English language is most important for a nation, but majority of the students fail in English because of lack of language learning Environment, Outdated curriculum, rigid Teaching Methods and incompetent English language Teachers in the Academic and professional Areas. Functional grammar is not taught and practiced, in the classrooms more importance is given to the teaching of English text-Books. For the study of English successfully, the teacher must help the students to acquire four Art skills in the language, namely; speaking, reading, listening and writing (Kolawole, 1998).

2. The Importance of English

The importance of the English language is an open secret. We see in our society that a little child whom we say the best philosopher is also in the struggle of learning the English language. Besides that we have remained the colony of the British Empire, therefore, we have the natural inclination towards the English language. The importance of the English language is naturally very great. English is the language not only of

England but of the extensive dominions and colonies associated in the British Empire, and it is the language of the United States spoken by over 260 million people, it is in the number who speak it the largest of the occidental languages. English speaking people constitute about one tenth of the world's population English, however, is not the largest language in the world. The more conservative estimates of the population of China would indicate that Chinese is spoken by about 450 million people. But his numerical ascendancy of English among European languages can be seen by a few comparative figures. Russian, next in size to English, is spoken by about 140 millions people, Spanish by 135 millions; German by 90 millions, Portuguese by 63 millions, French by 60 millions; Italian by 50 millions. Thus at the present time English has the advantage in numbers over all other western languages. But the importance of a language is not alone a matter of numbers or territory; it depends also on the importance of the people who speak it.

The importance of a language is inevitably associated in the mind of the world with the political role played by the nations using it and their fluency in international affairs; with the confidence people feel in financial position and the certainty with which they will meet their obligations i.e., pay their debts to other nations, meet the interest on their bonds, maintain the gold or other basis of their business enterprise and the international scope of their commerce; with the conditions of life under which the great mass of their people live; and with the part played by them in art and literature and music, in science and invention, in exploration and discovery. English is the mother tongue of nations whose combined political influence, economic soundness, commercial activity, social well being and scientific and cultural contributions to civilization give impressive support to its numerical precedence (Albert, 1983).

A study was conducted by Sabiha Mansoor of Agha Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan on culture and teaching of English as a second language for Pakistani students in the year 2008.

If we have to make, the teaching of English in Pakistan we need to reform and restructure the teaching of English in Pakistan, as this study reveals. Not only would this involve an understanding of the needs of the English Students, but also the place of culture both local and global in their language learning process. We would have to take in to account the sociolinguistic aspects of English in the Pakistani as well as the international context while redressing and restructure the English literature course. To make the learning of English interesting and useful for the learners, Pakistani English teachers will have to take cognizance of the relationship between language and culture. If local culture is included in to the curriculum, methodology and teaching materials of TESL, it would make, learning easier and more meaningful for Pakistani students. Vocabulary the most obvious influence of language and culture on thought. The researcher pointed out that presently the material used for teaching, Family background is the most important and most weighty factor in determining the academic performance.

A study was conducted by Shafiullah Khan of university of science and technology Bannu on the causes of failure in the subject of English at secondary level in district Bannu, in the year, 2007.

The major findings of the result related to this area of study were given as under:

1. Majority of the respondents reported that untrained teachers are one of the causes of student's failure in SSC.
2. Majority of the teachers agreed that overcrowded class room is the cause of student's failure in English.
3. Majority of respondents approved that SSC students are overcrowded and it is the cause of failure.
4. Majority of the teachers accepted that old system of examination is the cause of failure.
5. Majority of the respondents approved that English is the difficult subject.

Keeping in view the importance of the problem this study was designed to know the causes of the rising failure in the subject of English.

3. Statement of the Problem

The problem under the study was to investigate the causes of rising failure of the students in the subject of English at secondary level.

4. Objectives of the Study

Following was the main objective of the study.

1. To find out causes of the rising failure of the students in the subject of English among students at secondary level.
2. To give suggestion for the improvement of the situation.

5. Significance of the Study

Education plays a vital role in the progress of any country of the world. Those nations who have equipped themselves with better education enjoy their prestigious status amongst the world. Today is the age of English language. English language is being taught as a compulsory subject in Pakistan. Being a foreign language, the teaching and learning English is a problem not only for the students but also for the teachers too. This study will be significant for the following reasons for both the teachers and students and curriculum developers.

1. The study may be helpful in finding the causes of rising failure in English.
2. The study may be helpful for the teachers in order to equip themselves with modern methodology and techniques regarding the teaching of English
3. The study may be helpful in developing the proper curriculum for English.

6. Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to all the male English teachers at secondary level in district Bannu.

7. Research Methodology

This research was aimed to find out causes of the rising failure of the students in the subject of English at Secondary Level. This study was descriptive in nature. The following methodology was used:

7.1 Population

All the Govt. secondary schools in of district Bannu constituted population of this study.

7.2 Sample

One hundred English teachers of secondary level were selected from 50 secondary schools as a sample using simple random sampling technique.

7.3 Research Instrument

A questionnaire was developed with the help of research expert. It was administered to 30 students as pilot run in order to remove any ambiguity in the statements.

7.4 Data Collection

The questionnaires were personally among the 100 teachers who were randomly selected. The researcher personally remained there in order to remove any misunderstanding in the questionnaire.

7.5. Analysis of Data

The data collected were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted in the light of the objectives of the study. Simple percentage was used for analysis of data.

8. Findings

1. 0% teachers are strongly agree, 0% teachers are agree, 0% teachers are somewhat agree. 39% teachers are disagree and 61% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that "Teachers of English are qualified and well trained".
2. 0% teachers are strongly agree, 0% teachers are agree, 0% teachers are somewhat agree, 64% teachers are disagree and 36% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " Teacher of English teaches English in a proper way".
3. 45% teachers are strongly agree, 54% teachers are agree, 1% teachers are somewhat agree, 0% teachers are disagree and 0% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " Teacher of English takes his class regularly".
4. 52% teachers are strongly agree, 42% teachers are agree, 2% teachers are somewhat agree, 4% teachers are disagree and 0% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " Teachers of English explain difficult words in an easy way".
5. 46% teachers are strongly agree, 36% teachers are agree, 10% teachers are somewhat agree, 8% teachers are disagree and 0% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " Teachers of English comes with full preparation for his lesson".
6. 12% teachers are strongly agree, 11% teachers are agree, 2% teachers are somewhat agree, 29% teachers are disagree and 46% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " Audio-Visual aids are used in the teaching of English".
7. 5% teachers are strongly agree, 5% teachers are agree, 3% teachers are somewhat agree, 37% teachers are disagree and 50% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " Syllabus of English is lengthy".
8. 3% teachers are strongly agree, 7% teachers are agree , 14% teachers are somewhat agree, 20% teachers are disagree and 66% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " syllabus of English is difficult".
9. 3% teachers are strongly agree, 6% teachers are agree, 0% teachers are somewhat agree, 40% teachers are disagree and 50% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " The course is compatible to the present time".
10. 27% teachers are strongly agree, 13% teachers are agree, 5% teachers are somewhat agree, 20% teachers are disagree and 35% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " There are suitable number of English periods in timetable".
11. 19% teachers are strongly agree, 31% teachers are agree, 20% teachers are somewhat agree, 10% teachers are disagree and 20% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " The length of time of an English period is suitable".
12. 43% teachers are strongly agree, 34% teachers are agree, 8% teachers are somewhat agree, 10% teachers are strongly agree and 5% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " Tests are taken regularly in an English class".

13. 12% teachers are agree, 8% teachers are strongly agree, 0% teachers are somewhat agree, 43% teachers are disagree and 37% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " teachers of linguistic are present for teaching English".
14. 40 % teachers are strongly agree, 35% teachers are agree, 10% teachers are somewhat agree, 8% teachers are disagree and 7% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " Headmaster asks about performance from our teacher".
15. 36% teachers are strongly agree, 28% teachers are agree, 6 % teachers are somewhat agree, 20% teachers are disagree and 10% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " Head master takes interest in our English Lesson".
16. 30% teachers are strongly agree, 21% teachers are agree, 8% teachers are somewhat agree, 21% teachers are disagree and 20% teachers are agree to the statement that " duration of the period is reasonable".
17. 30% teachers are strongly agree, 37% teachers are agree, 7% teachers are somewhat agree, 20% teachers are disagree and 6% teachers strongly disagree to the statement that " Monthly tests are given at school".
18. 38% teachers are strongly agree, 40% teachers are agree, 5% teachers are somewhat agree, 10% teachers are disagree and 10% teachers are disagree to the statement that " period of English lesson begins in time".
19. 43% teachers are strongly agree, 33% teachers are agree, 4% teachers are somewhat agree, 10% teachers are disagree and 10% teachers are strongly disagree to the statement that " English is given importance in the annual progress of the student in school".
20. 30% teachers are strongly agree, 15% teachers are agree, 30% teachers are somewhat agree, 10% teachers are disagree and 15% teachers strongly disagree to the statement that " The method of setting English paper is correct".

9. Conclusions

1. Teacher of English are not qualified and well trained.
2. Teachers of English don not teach English in a proper manner. They are teaching through traditional (grammar translation) method.
3. Teachers of English take their classes regularly.
4. Teachers of English come to class with preparation.
5. Audio- Visual aids are not used in English class.
6. The course is not compatible to the present time.
7. Teachers of linguistics are not present in our schools.
8. English is given importance in the annual progress of the students in school.

10. Recommendations

1. Qualified and well trained teachers may be appointed for English. Teachers who have command over pronunciation, functional grammar and vocabulary.
2. Teachers of English may use modern teaching method instead of traditional methods. Direct method of teaching English may be used because it is a natural method of teaching a language.
3. Audio visual aids may be used such as language lab; cassette player, computer and English talking dictionary are very helpful in teaching a language.
4. English course may be made compatible to the present time. Native literature should be included in the curriculum instead of foreign, in order to arouse interest of the students.
5. Teachers may be encouraged to get linguistics knowledge. They may be trained in phonology and phonetics.

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Causes of rising failure of the students in the subject of English (N0=100)

Strongly agree =SA, Agree =A, somewhat agree =SWA, Disagree =DA, strongly disagree= SDA

		SA	A	SWA	DA	SDA
1	Teacher of English is qualified and well trained.	0%	0%	0%	39%	61%
2	Teacher of English teaches English in a proper manner.	0%	0%	0%	64%	36%
3	Teacher of English teaches his class regularly.	45%	54%	1%	0%	0%
4	Teacher of English explains difficult words in an easy way.	52%	42%	2%	4%	0%
5	Teacher of English comes with I preparation for his lesson.	46%	36%	10%	8%	0%
6	Audio-visual aids are used in the teaching of English.	12%	11%	2%	29%	46%
7	Syllabus of English is lengthy.	5%	5%	3%	37%	50%
8	Syllabus English is difficult.	3%	7%	14%	20%	66%
9	The course is compatible to the present time.	3%	6%	0%	40%	50%
10	There is suitable number of English periods in timetable.	27%	13%	5%	20%	35%
11	The time of an English period is suitable.	19%	31%	20%	10%	20%
12	Monthly test are taken regularly in an English class.	43%	34%	8%	10%	5%
13	Teachers of linguistic are present for teaching English.	12%	8%	0%	43%	37%
14	head master asks about our performance from our English teacher	40%	35%	10%	8%	7%
15	The Head master takes interests in our English class	36%	28%	6%	20%	10%
16	duration of the periods is reasonable	30%	21%	8%	21%	20%
17	The 1 st quarter, 3 rd quarter and annual examination are given in School.	30%	37%	7%	20%	6%
18	the periods begin in time.	38%	40%	5%	10%	7%
19	English is given importance in the annual progress of the students in school.	43%	33%	4%	10%	10%
20	The method of setting the English papers is correct.	30%	15%	30%	10%	15%