

The Role of British Council Training Program English as Medium of Instruction in Training the Primary School Teachers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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Abstract

The present article focused to evaluate the objectives of the in-service training program by British Council English as Medium of Instruction for primary school teachers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The objective of the study was to evaluate the objectives of the training program. The primary school teachers who successfully completed grade III training English as Medium of Instruction in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were the population of the study. The study was delimited to male primary school teachers of the three districts namely Mardan, Peshawar and Swabi of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to lack of resources and cultural constraints. The target population was nineteen hundred and forty-seven (1947) male primary school teachers from which a sample of three hundred and thirty (330) primary school teachers were selected under L.R Gay sample selection table and the questionnaires were distributed among them. The data was collected through a self-developed questionnaire of five Likert scale from the randomly selected primary school teachers. The questionnaire consisted of items related to the objectives: activity-based teaching, students centered teaching and using English as medium of Instruction. The collected data were fed into the SPSS Version 16 and analyzed through percentage and chi-square. The results of the study illustrated that primary school teachers were satisfied from the grade III training under British in English as Medium of Instruction. The result showed that the training achieved its objectives. The study recommended that in-service trainings should be arranged for teachers to improve their teaching skills. The government should provide opportunities to all the teachers to attend trainings which would help them to make their teaching activity based and child centered.

Key Words: British Council, primary school teachers, english as medium of instruction, activity-based teaching, students centered teaching

Introduction

Teacher education is collection of all those planning and policies that are made to train and equip teachers with the contents, attitude and skills necessary for their job. Teacher's education does not only mean how

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to teach but to make the teacher dynamic and innovative in his approach to teaching. Trainee teachers learnt how to get maximum results through minimum use of energy, time and resources (Shahid, 2007). Similarly, Bennet (2000) noted that the teacher needs to be dynamic due to the rapidly changing modern world and the technological development. Teacher must be trained to be scientific and logical in thinking and sympathetic towards students.

Teacher is an integral part of the teaching learning process. Therefore, a dynamic and effective system of education is required to produce imaginative and reflective teachers who are professionally trained through ongoing refresher courses for professional development. Teachers transform and reform the teaching learning process through conscious thoughts and innovative ideas; therefore, they are called the torch bearers or the agents of change.

Tsui (2004) stated that English has become a global language the last twenty to thirty year and it has dominated the world market in general and the linguistic side in particular. Education is also one of the sectors affected heavily by this trend. English as Medium of Instruction is a burning issue for the world's leaders in non-English speaking countries in post-colonial world in Asia because it is a direct threat to their culture and society.

A system using English as a medium of instruction inside the classrooms is called English Medium Education. English has many functions and use in many fields (Manivannan, 2006). For many occupations and profession knowledge of English is must and compulsory therefore in many countries of the world English as medium of instruction is an integral part of their curriculum and institutions (Muhammad, 2009).

The KP government shows its interest in teachers' professional development which will ultimately improve the whole system of education. For the above mentioned propose the Elementary and Secondary Education Department (ESED) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and British Council Pakistan signed a Memorandum of Understanding to improve the quality of teaching and practices of all primary school teachers of KP. Dr. Shahzad Bangash Secretary ESED and Jim Booth Country Director British Council Pakistan at Peshawar signed the MoU.

The ceremony was chaired by the Minister of Education Muhammad Atif Khan and held at the Department of Education Peshawar. The ceremony was attended by the Director Education Rafiq Khattak and Special Secretary Education Qaisar Alam from Education Department and

Director English Pakistan Arzu Daniel and Head of English Pakistan Bilal Ahmad from British Council Pakistan.

The British Council will provide assistance to ESED for training nearly 83000 teachers of primary schools in KP in a three-year teachers' training program. The training program will specially focus teaching of English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies and to use English as Medium of Instruction. The British Council will select 480 master trainers from the 1500 teachers provided by the ESED through a transparent assessment test. The selected master trainers will be trained by the Lead Master Trainers of British Council for 45 days (15 days each year). The program will cost 568 PKR, the KP government will bear 70% and British Council will bear 30% cost of the training program.

The study would determine the significance level of the training program for primary school teachers in English as medium of instruction.

Literature Review

The governments all over the world are facing because the number of students is increasing rapidly in the international market. This rapid increase in the number of students who want to learn English forced the governments to increase the number of teachers who are competent enough to teach the students effectively (Boix & Jackson, 2011). Internationally, a large number of students start to learn English at primary level. Their working hours to learn English increased when take admission in high schools. In many case, it is observed that these students continue their journey of learning English in Universities also and particularly in those countries where signs of internationalization are evident in their education. English is becoming the lingua franca of the world and this scenario suggests that a large number will be needed to fulfill the needs of the students in these countries.¹⁰ This scenario creates a shortage of English Language teachers which need an urgent solution. Generally, the problem is not of the quantity of teachers but the quality of teaching is also weak.

British Council (2015) observed that many countries of the world have strong policies for English as medium of instruction but many do not have policies. Those countries which do not have policies for English as medium of instruction they are flexible in their approach. They change their policies according to their academic, political and social needs. As a result, a lot of differences are found in the quality of teachers in those countries. Similarly, if the quality teachers are recruited and trained accordingly but still there is an issue that some of the very good teachers

quit the job. A lot researches have been done on the same issue but still are areas that need research to reach a conclusion, especially the methods of recruiting teachers, professional trainings and the policy how to retain competent and professionally trained language teachers.

The teacher's competencies in speaking and using English as medium of instruction is directly linked therefore it is important to consider both making policy for English language teaching. The present situation the teachers of Pakistan are not in a position to use English as medium in the whole class due to lack of competency in speaking English (Tahir, 2007). Some problems like controlling the use of mother tongue in class, adopting new language habits, pronunciation issues and problem of accurate translation of language related to using English as medium of instruction teaching (Mansoor, 2004). Language experts have common opinion about the four basic aims of language teaching which are: ability to speak fluently, listen, read and write (Coleman, 2010). Velasquez-Ocampo (2003) observed that usually our teachers as well as our students do not get the chance to speak inside and outside the class. Our examination system most focused writing skills of students and speaking is not included in it. A lot practice and attention is required for speaking fluently. The teachers should use the natural way for learning a language to speaking which is listening and repeating the language. We all used the above-mentioned method while learning our mother tongue (Caton, 2007). Another, cause of ignoring the competencies of listening and speaking in Pakistan is that the teachers themselves are the product of the traditional systems and they are not competent in speaking English or teaching speaking in their classes (Mueen, 1992). In similar context, Fiorito (2005) stated that the shy and conservative teachers tried hard to speak confidently. The hard work makes their teaching better and they are able to teach language effectively. Pronunciation and grammar are must for language teaching without these two it will be difficult to teach effectively and accurately.

In the modern world, all the systems of educations are accepting and accommodating changes. Today, educationists are intellectually engaged in reforming education and professional education of teachers in particular. A good and professionally trained teacher is must for a good education system. Therefore, in Pakistan different government departments in collaboration national and international NGOs are working for improving the professional skills of teachers.

Objective of the Study

- To evaluate the objectives of the British Council Training program for Primary School Teachers in English as medium of instruction in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Hypothesis of the Study

H0-1 There is no significant relationship between the objectives and the achievements of the British Council training program.

Research Methodology

This study was descriptive in nature. In Social Sciences quantitative approach was used till the mid of 20th century (Creswell 2013). The present study evaluates the role of British Council program training program English as Medium of Instruction for primary school teachers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Population of Study

The population of the study is the 24000 (Annual School Statistics, 2017-18) primary school teachers who complete grade III training under British Council training program English as Medium of Instruction in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Due to financial and cultural constraints the study is delimited to three district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa namely Mardan, Peshawar and Swabi. The target population is 1947 male primary school teachers of district Mardan, Peshawar and Swabi who successfully completed their training under grade III training program of British Council in using English as Medium of Instruction in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Annual School Statistics, 2017-18). So, **1947** male primary school teachers were the target population for this study.

Random sampling technique was applied. In district Mardan 802, Peshawar 583 and Swabi 562 teachers successfully completed grade III training *English as Medium of Instruction* in 2017. The sample size of the above population is 330 according to L.R. Gay (1996). A close ended and self-developed questionnaire was developed on five Likert scale ranging from strongly agreed to disagree and it was finalized after consultation with the supervisor. The questionnaire includes fifty items, ten items each on the five objectives of the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data was collected through personal visits to the primary school teachers of district Mardan, Peshawar and Swabi on a five Likert scale self made questionnaire. The collected data was first fed into SPSS version 16 and then it was analyzed through percentage and Chi-Square test. The analyzed data was put into tables item by item and then it was interpreted below the tables.

Results

S.No.	Items	SA	A	UD	DA	DA	Chi-Square value
1	The training enabled me to use EMI in class.	131 39.7	182 55.2	5 1.5	4 1.2	8 2.4	433.48
2	My Skills to use Activity Based teaching in the class are improved.	148 44.8	181 48.5	13 3.9	2 .6	7 2.1	393.12
3	My skills to write correct English are developed.	134 40.6	162 49.1	16 4.8	8 2.4	10 3.0	346.06
4	It enabled me to read English with correct pronunciation.	139 42.1	164 49.7	9 2.7	9 2.7	9 2.7	373.93
5	My knowledge of using student centered approach of teaching in enhanced.	114 34.5	175 53.0	23 7.0	6 1.6	12 3.6	341.66
6	It enabled me to learn new vocabulary effectively.	146 44.2	155 47.0	16 6.8	4 1.2	9 2.7	362.23
7	I planned my lesson properly after the training.	145 43.9	156 47.3	16 4.8	4 1.2	9 2.7	362.63
8	I involved my students more in the teaching learning process after the training.	141 42.7	168 50.9	11 3.3	5 1.5	5 1.5	401.45
9	The training helped me to manage my class effectively.	143 43.3	158 47.9	14 9.2	5 1.5	10 3.0	362.93

10	It helped me to create learning environment in my class.	161	144	14	6	5	380.81
		48.8	43.6	4.2	1.8	1.5	

The data of the above table shows the analysis of ten items related to the objectives of the training. In item one 131 respondents strongly agreed and 182 agreed with cumulative percentage of 94.8 that training enabled them to use EMI in their classes and the chi-square value 433.48 also supports the statement. In item two 148 respondents strongly agreed and 180 agreed with cumulative percentage 93.3 that their skills to use activity-based teaching in their classes are improved and the chi-square value 393.12 also supports the statement. In item three 134 respondents strongly and 162 agreed with cumulative percentage 89.7 that their skills to write correct English are developed and the chi-square 346.06 also supports the statement. In item four 139 respondents strongly agreed and 164 agreed with cumulative percentage 91.8 that the training enabled them to read English with correct pronunciation and the chi-square value also supports the statement. In item five 114 respondents strongly agreed and 175 agreed with cumulative percentage 87.6 that their knowledge to use students centered approach in teaching is enhanced and the chi-square 341.66 also supports the statement. In item six 146 respondents strongly agreed and 155 agreed with cumulative percentage 91.2 that the training enabled them to learn new vocabulary effectively and the chi-square value 362.33 also supports the statement. In item seven 145 respondents strongly agreed and 156 agreed with cumulative percentage 91.2 that they planned their lesson properly after the training and the chi-square value 362.63 also supports the statement. In item eight 141 respondents strongly agreed and 168 agreed with cumulative percentage 93.6 that they involved their students more in the teaching learning process after the training and chi-square value 401.45 also support the statement. In item nine 143 respondents strongly agreed and 158 agreed with cumulative percentage 91.2 that the training helped them to manage their classes effectively and the chi-square value 362.93 also support the statement. In item ten 161 respondents strongly agreed and 144 agree with cumulative percentage 92.4 that the training helped them to create learning environment in their classes and the chi-square value 380.81 also supports the statement.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The training helped them to use English as medium of instruction in their class. They learned to use activity-based teaching methods and students centered approach of teaching. The respondents learned to write, to read correct English and to learn new vocabulary during the training. The

training helped the teachers to plan their lesson effectively and involved their students more in the teaching learning process. The training helped the respondents to manage their class properly and to create learning environment in the class for learners. The findings of the study revealed that the training program English as Medium of Instruction under British Council achieved its targeted objectives. The primary school teachers who get grade III training were the respondents of the study. The respondents were satisfied from the training in majority. Majority of the respondents were of the opinion that after the training they were able to use English as medium of instruction in their classes, activity-based teaching and students centered approach were also enhanced with the training. The teachers who attended the training their writing and reading skills were improved and they learn new vocabulary, planned their lesson properly and involved their students more in the teaching learning process. The respondents' opinions were also satisfied that the training helped them to create learning environment in their classes and manage their classes more effectively. The present study recommends that teachers need regular in-service trainings to teach effectively. In-service training in general and in particular trainings which help them to use English as Medium of Instruction, activity-based teaching, child centered approached of teaching and manage the class effectively are needed continuously for all teachers.

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