

## EFFECT OF ASAP FOUNDATION COURSE ON THE ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS IN NORTH KERALA

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### Abstract

*The government of India initiated the skill development programmes through digital technology to the youth to make them employable in 2017. But the government of Kerala began the project christened ASAP [Additional Skill Acquisition Programme] in the year 2013 to make the educated youth employable just after their course completion. It is clear that communication in English is a must for better career. Even after the fifteen years of academic years, learners have not much command over English. Even though they learn English from class 1 onwards, they are not fit to face the interview board. Moreover, the marginalised sect of society face this issue at large because of many reasons including social, educational, genetical and so on. This study looks into the effectiveness of the programme for the acquisition of language in higher secondary school.*

**Keywords:** ASAP, English language acquisition.

### Introduction

Language is an integral part of human life and it facilitates communication, thought and also it enables human being to express their belief and opinion. In the present global scenario, there is a need of a global language. Undoubtedly, the opportunity goes to the English language. There are many reasons we can find out behind the emergence of English as an international language. As we all know, world is shrinking into a village and people become global. The technology decides our politics, economy, culture and even our destiny. Of course, information technology has an inextricable relationship with the English language. Both go hand in hand.

The English language has domineering power in the highly sophisticated post IT glob. As David Crystal says in my ideal world, everyone would have fluent command of a single language. English is the successful language and its charisma spreads every nook and corner in the world. But the query is how we master English Language skills.

In the post modern world, people should develop competency in the English language that helps them to get easy access to the surroundings. And also it opens before us the amazing world resource which presents us unending possibilities. Keeping this in mind, Higher education, General education of Kerala state government in India jointly launched additional skill acquisition programme (ASAP) as part of state skill acquisition programme to enhance the employability of students passing out of higher secondary schools and Arts and Science Colleges in the Kerala state. Kerala model

educational revolution paved way for overall development of the state. The state supplied skilled human resources exceeding the boundary of the nation. The recently released survey revealed the fall of employability skill by 25 per cent, (ASAP, 2013). ASAP programme is of 300 - 330 hours, out of which 180 are devoted to foundation course that contains modules on communication skills in English and Information Technology. The other 120-120 hours are devoted to the skill sector chosen by the students for specialisation. It is considered that ASAP is the effective remedy for enhancing their calibre, particularly in communicative English

The research scholar has decided to evaluate the curriculum, class room transactions, methodology, soft skills, weightage given to each skills, evaluation process etc. , of the foundation course among selected students studying for additional skill acquisition programmes in the higher secondary schools in Kozhikode, Kerala. The selected students are studying for second year higher secondary course in the regular stream and final year students in the Kozhikode district.

The research scholar makes an attempt to find out the way the course reach into the level of acquisition of English in the higher secondary students. Initially, the scholar conducts a pilot study on the selected ASAP students studying in the higher secondary schools in Kozhikode, Kerala to know their ability in listening, speaking, reading and writing. And also intends to assess their family, educational background, cultural ambience etc.

What the researcher intended to do here is the effect of the module for acquisition of English language skills.

### Review of Literature

This research aims at studying the academic factors at higher secondary schools and colleges in ASAP classes that helps for language acquisition. The study, firstly, identifies good practices in the teaching learning process. There are many approaches practise in the language classrooms in different states. Reviewing such approaches may make the ASAP classroom more dynamic and learner friendly. The thesis also studies the course structure of the ASAP, objectives, methodology, features of the content, funding agencies, duration of the programme, selection criteria, curriculum, etc.

The researcher reviewed and examined a few studies online journals and publications, books etc. , published in India and abroad. He interviewed the programme managers and the manager (training Division) and also collected annual reports and the other documents. The research scholar came into a conclusion that no research hasn't done so far in the area of acquisition in the English language among ASAP students. This encouraged the researcher to conduct a study on the issues, effects and frame of the communicative English module aimed at better English language acquisition.

### Need and Importance

Acquisition of the English language skills is the window to the world of opportunities. In order to achieve competency in a language, one has to pace up with basic skills, i. e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. The teachers in schools give more importance to writing skill. It results in somewhat good mastery of writing skill. When we think about the speaking skill, the students of Kerala, especially ASAP students don't come to the attained level. The SDEs don't give much focus on listening skill in a desirable way. Of course, reading skill has gained rather good track record in the course of schooling. In short, the language should be practised in its own pace by giving importance to skills from primary class to graduation or post-graduation. It is said that meticulous effort should be entertained to cope with the new era difficulties in the language learning process. We all know that in the era of post globalisation, English emerged as the powerful language and also retained the position as the international language.

The aim of the researcher is to study the effect of the module on the acquisition of English language skills in the ASAP classrooms across Kerala. The researcher also

studies the efficacy of the students in mastering the basic skills in the English language after the successful transaction of the foundation module. It is crystal clear that more attention and stringent effort is needed to help them to achieve proficiency in the target language. It is obvious that researchers from far and wide delve into this issue seriously and spend the meticulous effort to understand the quality of the module for the easier acquisition.

### Methodology

This study explores the effect of communicative skills in English among ASAP students for acquisition of the English language. After conceptual analysis of literature, a comprehensive questionnaire was prepared and used as a tool for conducting survey to know the following data from the selected SDEs. 1. The methodology used in the ASAP classes to transact the lesson effectively. 2. What are the strategies used to assess the proficiency of learners in the four basic skills. Secondly, the study assesses the language proficiency of the ASAP students studying in higher secondary schools in Kozhikode. The comprehensive questionnaire was distributed among 25 students in different schools in Kozhikode district to identify the proficiency level as a prelude to the study. With the help of District Managers and Programme Officers, the scholar collects data about ASAP foundation course in the prescribed proforma. It gives us the clear picture of the number of students, name of ASAP centres enrolled in the two yearlong ASAP course. The study also focuses on these students to get the obvious picture of the ASAP course and their efficacy in the functional English.

The scholar has taken survey as a tool to know the relationship between different variables. Interview and prolonged discussion with ELT experts are the other tools to make the study more reliable and authentic. A sample of 250 students and 10 SDEs and three Programme Managers are selected after communicating with them using available communication channels. These tools provide the accurate data on which the research keeps going.

The study involves the assessment of acquisition of English language skills (LSRW) and evaluate self-efficacy of the use of four language skills. All the tools are developed by the investigator to assess variables related to the study

The scholar has designed a comprehensive English Language Skills Test. It includes four skills i. e. Listening, Speaking, Reading, and writing. Self-Efficacy scale is the another step for assessing their skills. Another important

tool is the Questionnaire for SDEs and PMs. In short, the methodology enriched much for the smooth functioning of the research.

### **Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

After the meticulous study, the researcher has decided to form a focus group. The key objective of the formation of group is to discuss the issues exist in the area of communication. The focus group realised that there are many issues prevail in the teaching learning arena of foundation course, especially communication in English. It is come to realise that a multi-faceted curriculum package is a must for enhancing the calibre of learners in the English language skills. preparing an exclusive curriculum package for learners and SDEs make the learning process smooth and easier. The package consists of SDE training, orientation classes for parents, discussion. The study gives prime importance to how much improvement they attain in the English language area and also self-efficacy in the use of English language skills

### **Summary and Conclusion**

The English language aspirants in the corporate boom world are striving to secure positions. They realised mere certificate is not enough. Good command over

English is a must for obtaining better career. Most of the educated are pushed back at the time of interview. The key reason is the lack of employability skill. ASAP is the best answer. There is a great importance for learning English language worldwide today. Of course, English is the window for newer possibilities in and around the globe. As we all know, number of educated students passed out from college is very high in Kerala. It results a deep crisis in the Kerala society. Each and every study underlines the lack of employability skill and command over English. Communication in English is the toughest area most of them face in their professional life. After meticulous interaction and deliberation, the government of Kerala implemented ASAP for higher secondary and arts and science colleges. The most important feature of the programme is intensive communication programme in English. There was a laborious planning behind this. The key factors are curriculum framing, training programmes for SDEs, monthly evaluation, and summative online evaluation namely APTIS test designed by British Council.

### **References**

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