



RACIAL DIFFERENCES AMONG STUDENTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

The study is intended to explore the English language proficiency of tribal and non-tribal students at secondary level. It also studies the differences in relation to English language proficiency of tribal and non-tribal students. In reading pronunciation, punctuation and comprehension components are taken care of whereas in writing thematic, grammar use and comprehension components has taken care off. Relevant scoring sheets were used to record the performances of the students during reading and written test. It is found that non-tribal students are better in reading proficiency compared to tribal students. In writing proficiency non-tribal students are better than tribal in grammar use and comprehension. The study does not explore in relation to racial differences as the highest and lowest scores in each of the reading and writing components matches a lot.

The population of Odisha has a high concentration as well as the greatest variety of tribes. It has 62 tribal communities and their population constitutes approximately 23% of the total population of the state and 13.34% of India's total tribal population. The 62 tribal communities used many languages and a number of dialects for their communications. They expose to English language during schooling. It is being observed and proved by the researches that tribal students has been confronting a number of challenges at the time of learning English language compared to Non-tribal students. Many initiatives have been taken by govt. and development organizations to improve the English language proficiency of tribal students. The present study intends to find out the status of the English language proficiency of both tribal and non-tribal students studying in secondary schools of a tribal dominated district i.e. Nuapada of Odisha. As teacher played vital role in English language learning of students at Secondary level, thus their perception has also been studied towards English language learning of tribal and non-tribal students. The flagship programs like DPEP, SSA and RMSA has undertaken a number of training, orientations and workshops for changing the perception of teachers towards English language proficiency of tribal students and improving the efficiency level of English language teaching.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Ghosh (2017) compared the achievement of urban and rural students in English and founds rural students are weaker than urban students. Racca (2016) studies the relationship between English language proficiency and academic achievement in Science and Math and found significant relationship exists. Sharma (2017) studies the relationship academic achievement of class VII students in English with psychological variables and found self-concept and personality factors are responsible for the poor achievement in English. Bandy K&Halder M(2019) compares the achievement of Tribal & Non-Tribal students in language and social science in Bnaka district of Bihar and found significant differences.

Singh A (2014) Studies the role of local culture in academic achievement of English of Tribal students and found that local culture has positive role in language achievement. Sharma H (2016) studied students interest in English and M. Yadav (2014) studies role of Mother Tongue in second language learning Dura (2018) studied about students writing skills in English and Sirnivas (2017) studied the characteristics of Effective writing skills in English. The above review shows that studies are conducted on the variables like location, culture, race, psychological factors and found significant relationship with achievement in English language, but there no such study has been conducted to study the differences exists in English language proficiency of students in relation to their racial differences.

Research Questions:

1. What is English language proficiency of tribal students at secondary level?
2. What is English language proficiency of non-tribal students at secondary level?
3. What are the differences in English language proficiency among tribal and non-tribal students?

METHODOLOGY:

Descriptive survey method was used. The random sampling procedure was adopted to select four high schools of Kamna Block of Nuapada district of Odisha From each school 20 Tribal and 20 non-tribal students were selected ran-

domly for study.

The language proficiency of a student was tested through Reading and writing test. Reading test is comprised with three components such as pronunciations, punctuation and comprehension which was recorded in a record score sheet. Each component has equal weightage of 5 marks. Writing test also had three components such as theme, grammar and comprehension and each component has equal weightage of 5 marks and the performance scores were recorded in a well designed score sheet. A questionnaire was developed to record the perception of English teachers of those four schools. The perception scale was include the items relating to interest, pronunciation, punctuation, grammar, comprehension, interest, vocabulary, listening and body language in English of high students. The scale was a five point scale.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

The researchers recorded the performance of the students in the score sheets. Attempt has been made to analyse the reading and writing performance of the students in relation its components. Descriptive statistics has been used to analyse the performance and to compare the performances. Performance of the Tribal and Non-tribal students has been compared in relation to the highest and lowest score, average performance of the groups and frequency of the obtained scores.

Comparison of Highest and Lowest Score in Reading Proficiency of Non-Tribal and Tribal Students

Table No. 1: Comparison of Highest and Lowest Score in Reading Proficiency

Category	Pronunciation	Punctuation	Comprehension
Non-Tribal	Highest-4 Lowest-2	Highest-4 Lowest-2	Highest-4 Lowest-2
Tribal	Highest-4 Lowest-2	Highest-3 Lowest-2	Highest-4 Lowest-1

Table No.1 shows in pronunciation both tribal and non-tribal students has the same highest and lowest score. In punctuation the tribal students' highest score is lesser than non-tribal. In level of comprehension tribal students had the lowest score compared to non-tribal.

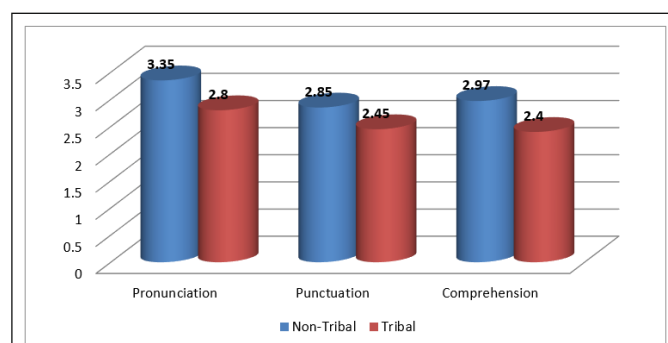


Fig. 1: Comparison of Reading Proficiency of Non-Tribal and Tribal Students

Fig. No-1 shows that the average performance score of the tribal and non-tribal students in pronunciation differs and tribal students are obtained lower average score than non-tribal students in three components of the reading proficiency test. It is also noticed the average score of reading proficiency of non-tribal students is not constant rather it decreases slowly as first pronunciation then comparison and lastly punctuation. That fluctuation in average score of tribal students in three components also exist. One more thing noticed both tribal and non-tribal students score in pronunciation better than other two components of reading proficiency.

The comparison of highest and lowest score of tribal and non-tribal students in each of the three components like theme, grammar and comprehension do not show any differences. In each component the highest and lowest score is 4 and 2 respectively.

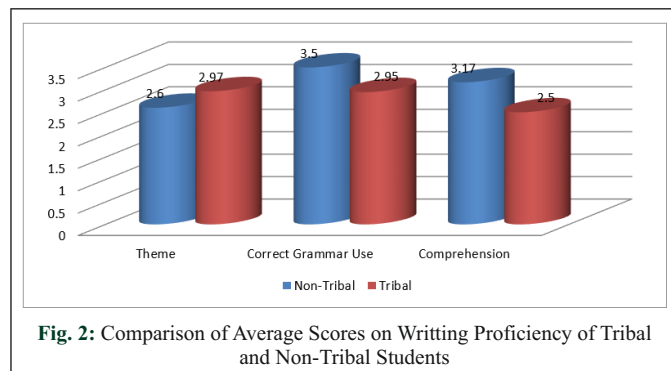


Fig. No-2 shows tribal students obtained higher average performance in thematic writing. In other two components such as grammar use and comprehension of writing proficiency, the tribal students obtained lower average scores than non-tribal students. It is also noticed that non-tribal students shows better performance in comprehension, then grammar use and then thematic writing whereas tribal students shows better performance in thematic writing, then grammar use and then comprehension.

It is clear from the analysis that non-tribal students are better in reading proficiency compared to tribal students. In writing proficiency non-tribal students are better than tribal in grammar use and comprehension. But in thematic writing tribal students are better than non-tribal students. The overall performance of the non-tribal students is better than tribal students in reading and writing proficiency. The analysis of highest and lowest score does not show any remarkable differences except reading comprehension. It means among tribal students there are also students having same highest and lowest marks as non-tribal. Thus, the differences exist may not be due to racial rather due to factors relating learning input and practice.

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