Study of Professional Qualification: Impact on the Use of Competency Based Teaching Methodology

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Abstract

The professional qualification is often supposed to enhance one's abilities in respective fields. Language learning is a skill requiring both knowledge and practice. It therefore demands competency based teaching that has substantial support throughout the world. This study examines the impact of professional qualification (B.Ed., M.Ed.) on the use of competency based teaching methods in Govt. Colleges for Elementary Teachers (GCETs) of Punjab. It was a qualitative descriptive study. Data was collected through purposely designed sixteen item questionnaire having five point Likert Scale (1to 5). The data was collected from randomly selected 799 students out of 24 GCETs .The number of participating teachers was 24 as each GCET had only one teacher for the subject of English. The number of B.Ed teachers was 12 and number of M.Ed. teachers was also 12 .One sample t-test was used to explore colleges using competency based teaching methods. Mann Whitney's U test was applied to explore the impact of professional qualification on the use of competency based methodology. The findings revealed that there was no professional qualification wise significant difference on the use of competency based teaching methods and in majority of GCETs (63%) teaching was not competency based.

Introduction

There is an increasing concern regarding the teaching of English in a meaningful way and to make it a task/competency oriented actively. In Pakistan English has been introduced as a language subject right from grade one and also as a medium of instruction across the curriculum for various subjects. The National Curriculum Committee for English Language (Grade I-XII, 2006) has mentioned the aims of language development as the provision of opportunities that are quite helpful to develop students' language skills both for communication and comprehension in an academic and the social context. It is also meant to make them lifelong learners so that they could be better able to adjust in an ever changing society and world around them.

Thomas and Collie in their research on "The Teaching Learning Methods" proved that classes using such techniques as problem-solving and discovery learning through the thematic experiences provided students with a social setting for a natural language acquisition along with side by side cognitive developments (Thomas& Collier,1995).Cummin supported the concept that through content based use of language in a planned way different levels to language proficiency can be achieved (Cummins, 1989). Brinton advocated the use of theme-based language instruction that is also a form of competency-based instruction where the aim for teaching English is language acquisition Brinton (2003). Douglas(20000) and Ford (1999) are of the view that the thematic content stretches over several weeks of instruction, providing rich input for lessons that are language-based with a focus on listening, speaking reading, and writing. In such an environment students can successfully and purposefully acquire language

Ausubel suggests in his "Cognitive Learning Theory" that in human beings learning takes place through some meaningful process of relating new events or items to already existing concepts or propositions, Ausubel (1978). Joyce &Calhoun (1999) are of the view that professional training may play pivotal role in enhancing quality education and same is the opinion of

Maria(1998). According to John Foystar the use of traditional "school│ model" for training is inefficient (Foystar, 1990). Norton believed that in competency-based training courses participants should learn in an environment that duplicates the work-place Norton (1987). Delker, in a study of "Basic Skills Education programmes in Business and Industry" found that successful training programmes were competency-based Delker (1990). One of the primary advantages of competency-based teaching is that focus is on the success of each participant of the programme Bruce & Weil (1992). Watson (1990) supports the use of competency-based language instruction which is also a task-based. He is of the view that the task based language lessons are required for successful language acquisition and may provide the rich input with a focus on listening, speaking reading, and writing. In such an environment students can successfully acquire language skills. It is, thus quite clear that there is a need for competency-based teaching and learning of any language so that the learners would be able to perform language skills to the required level of performance.

To achieve these aims the planning and use of competency-based teaching methods is required. These can make language learning environment more interesting, meaningful, task oriented and interactive as is clear from the above cited references The Identification of required competencies (the competencies to be developed) and the proper teaching learning processes are thus crucial to achieve the targets of English language teaching in Pakistan. The professional qualifications in the field of education (such as B.Ed. and M.Ed.) are supposed to play an important role in improving the performance of teachers from an average to the superior level. "Trainings if effectively planned and conducted can bring long term success" Krashen (1985.) Aggarwal says, "If we are interested in raising the quality of education, a trained teacher can be a great help" (Aggarwal, 2007p.415).

Researches thus prove that competency based teaching methods can play an important role in an effective teaching learning of English and successful achievement of the desired

teaching training outcomes. Further, the professional training if properly achieved and used can help to improve the level of achievement and quality of education. This study shows contradictory results that there is no professional qualification wise significant difference in the use of competency based teaching methods and that in majority of GCETs (63%) teaching of English is not competency based. Therefore further study and investigation is needed to explore the underlying reasons.

Research Hypothesis

Null Hypotheses:
There is no professional qualification wise significant difference in the use of competency based teaching methodology in GCETs of Punjab.
Alternative Hypotheses:
There is a professional qualification wise significant difference in the use of competency based teaching methodology

Null Hypotheses:

There is no competency –based teaching in majority of GCETs of Punjab.
Alternative Hypotheses:
There is competency –based teaching in majority of GCETs of Punjab.

Methodology

The study was aimed to explore the impact of the professional qualification of teacher trainers of GCETs of Punjab on the use of competency based teaching methods .It also aimed to explore whether the teaching of English in GCETs of Punjab was competency based.

Population of the Study

In this study the population included all Government Colleges for Elementary Teachers (GCETs) of the Punjab

province. The total number of GCETs (as per information provided by University of Education, Examination Branch) was 33 Colleges. GCET of Kot Lakhpat Lahore was excluded as pilot testing of instrument was done in this college. The data could be collected from 24 colleges as response was shown by only 24 colleges. The total number of subjects in these colleges was 2405. One third students (randomly selected) from each institution were requested to participate in the study but response could be got only from 799 students that was the sample size. The number of responding teachers was the same as the number of colleges showing response that is 24(as each college had only one teacher to teach the subject of English).Out of these twenty four teachers professional qualification of twelve12 (50%) teachers was B.Ed and the number of M.Ed teachers was also twelve 12 (50%).

Instrument of the Study

In order to collect information based on the objectives of the study a 16 item five point rating scale developed by the researcher was used. To make instrument authentic opinion was taken from three Ph.D experts.

Pilot Testing

The pilot testing of the scale was administered in GCET Kot Lakhpat Lahore. It was administered on 175 students. This college was not included in the sample. The researcher personally administered the pilot testing and changed the words/terms that students found to be ambiguous.

Reliability

To check validity and reliability of instrument, pilot testing was done in GCET Kot Lakhpat Lahore. For this purpose internal consistency of the scale was determined by applying Cronbach's alpha test. 0.834 value of internal consistency showed that it was highly reliable and could be used for data collection.

The Cronbach's alpha test was used to determine the internal consistency because this test is generally used to measure the

internal consistency or reliability of a psychometric instrument. It determines the average correlation of a set of items that is assumed to be a more accurate estimate pertaining to a certain construct. Thus it helps to measure how well a set of variables or items are uni-dimensional (one-dimensional).

The formula of Cronbach's alpha;

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N-1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

Where N is equal to the number of items, C-bar is the average inter-item covariance among Items and v-bar equals the average variance.
(Value of alpha above 0.7 is taken as good and below 0.5 is taken as poor indicator of reliability).

Data Analysis

Data was collected personally from Govt. College for Elementary Teachers, Rawalpindi. From other colleges it was collected through mail. Data was collected through purposely designed sixteen item questionnaire having five points Likert Scale (1to 5). On the basis of competency score it was decided that which colleges used competency- based teaching methods. The score of competency scale was in between one and five. One represented strongly disagree and five represented strongly agree. Those colleges which had score below three (the midpoint) were declared as the colleges having no competency –based teaching and the colleges having score above three were declared as institutions having competency- based teaching of English. The decision was made on the basis of average score of competency scale that was calculated by applying one sample t- test. Results are shown in the form of following table.

Competency	GCET Gujarat	Bahawalpur	RangeelPur Multan	Bahawalpur (Male)	Sahiwal	Narowal	KotAddu	Chinnot	D.G.Khan(Women)	Kamalia	Kasur	NawanShaher Multan	Lala Musa	Kamalia (Women)	Chistian	Khan Pur	Sargodha City	Talagang	Mianwali	Rawalpindi	Sharaq Sharif	Multan Boson Road (Male)	ShahpurSadar	Ghakhar
1	N	N	√	N	N	N	N	X	√	N	N	N	N	N	√	√	N	N	√	N	√	N	N	N
2	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	√	N	X	N	N	√	N	N	N	N	√	N	X	N	N	N
3	X	N	N	X	N	N	X	√	N	N	X	X	X	N	X	N	N	N	√	N	N	N	N	N
4	X	N	√	N	X	N	N	√	N	N	N	N	X	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
5	√	N	N	N	√	N	N	N	√	N	√	N	N	√	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
6	N	N	N	√	N	N	N	N	√	N	X	N	N	√	N	N	N	N	N	N	X	N	N	N
7	N	X	N	N	N	√	√	N	√	N	X	N	N	N	N	N	N	X	X	N	N	N	√	N
8	N	N	N	N	√	N	N	√	N	√	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	X	N	N	N
9	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	√	N	√	N	N	N	√	N	N	√	N	N	N	N	N	N
10	N	N	N	N	N	N	√	N	N	N	N	N	N	X	N	X	N	N	N	X	N	N	N	N
11	N	N	X	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	X	N	N	N	√	√	N	N	N	N	N	X	N	N
12	N	N	√	N	N	N	√	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	X	N	N	N	N	N	N	√	N	N
13	N	N	N	N	N	N	√	N	√	N	X	N	√	X	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
14	N	N	N	N	X	N	√	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	√	N	√	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
15	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	√	N	X	N	N	X	X	√	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
16	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	√	√	N	N	N	X	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

X= Level of competency below 3,   N= Level of competency at 3, √= Level of competency above 3

One-sample t-test compares a sample to a defined population. All t-tests estimate the population standard deviation using sample data. T-test was used as it gives neutral results/values.
The formula of one sample t- test:

$$ t = \frac{\overline{X} - \mu}{S} \sqrt{n} $$

Where t = one sample t-test value, μ= population mean, S = Standard deviation
X-bar = Sample mean, n = number of observations in sample (sample size)

To explore the impact of demographic factor (professional qualification), Mann-Whitney U was applied. Results were shown in the form of the following table

Comparison of B.Ed teachers and M.Ed teachers
on use of competency based methods
(Professional qualification wise comparison)

Professional Qualification	N Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	Mann-Whitney U	p-value
B.Ed	2 13.33	160.00	62	.564
M.Ed	12 11.67	140.00		

Mann-Whitney U test is used to compare the difference between two independent groups when the dependent variable is either ordinal or continuous but not normally distributed.

Formula of Mann Whitney U test is:

$$U = N_1N_2 + N_1(N_1+1)/2 - R$$

Where U is the Mann-Whitney statistic, N1 and N2 are the number of cases and R is the sum of the ranks for the sample.
Note: Data analysis was done using the software SPSS.

Findings
The results of data analysis showed that out of twenty four colleges in fifteen colleges(that is in GCETS of Gujrat, Bahawalpur(W) ,Bahawalpur(M), Sahiwal, Narrowal, D.G. Khan, Kamalia (M), Nawan Shaher Multan, Lalamusa, Kamalia (w),

Khan pur, Sargodha, Rawalpindi, Boson Road Multan and Ghakhar) teaching of English was not competency-based, in seven colleges that is GCETs of Kot Adhu, Cinniot, kasur, Talagang, Chistian Mianwali and Shah Pur sadar it was partially competency-based and in only Two colleges (that is GCETs Rangeel Pur Multan and Sharkpur Shareef it was competency-based. Thus the percentage of colleges using competency based teaching methods was only eight (08) percent, the percentage of colleges partially using competency based methods was 29% and the percentage of colleges not using the competency based methods was 63 percent.

The data analysis for the impact of demographic factor showed that there was no professional qualification wise significant difference on the use of Competency-based-teaching method .Both B.Ed and M.Ed teachers used same traditional methods (that is the lecture and teacher centered methods).
(The value of Mann-Whitney U was 62 and p was 0.564).

Discussion

The previous researches/ studies prove that competency-based teaching is specifically more fruitful when students are required to attain certain level of performance Watson 1990), Rivers (1964), Reigeluth (1983), Rubin (1994), Oxford(1997). Fries (1945).Competency-based approach towards learning is thus the need of present age to meet the existing challenges to teach and learn English language effectively and to achieve the target outcomes. Results of the present study also explored that there was no professional qualification wise difference in teaching methods. Both B.Ed and M.Ed teachers used the same methodology (teacher centered methods). It confirms that there is need to revise the existing teacher training programs to bring the positive change. The researches like Anthony(1963), Krashen & Terrill(1983), Richard and Roger(1986), Stevick (1980), Adanson(1993), Douglas(2000) and Ford(1999) prove it. The results of the present study will thus provide data which will be useful for both the teacher educators as well as Elementary School teachers for teaching the subject of English The trainee teachers of

Elementary colleges are supposed to teach in primary, Elementary and high schools on completion of their training. Thus ultimate benefit of study will go to the school students (at primary, elementary and secondary levels).The study would thus help to bring improvement in the existing classroom teaching and learning process. It is to be explored what are the underlying reasons for the lack of difference of performance regarding professional qualification wise difference in GCETs.

Recommendations

On the basis of findings of study following are the recommendations

1. In-service and pre-service teacher training programs may be revised to train teachers so that the use of competency based methods especially for teaching the subject of English could be made possible. The Directorate of Staff Development (DSD) may in this regard.

2. The principals of Elementary Teacher Training Colleges may ensure the use of competency based teaching of English in their colleges. They may provide some incentive to promote this attitude.

3. Content of textbooks for professional teacher training courses (B.Ed, M.Ed) may be revised and improved. Comprehensive and interesting activities based material with examples (for promoting competency based teaching) may be included. The National curriculum wing may make necessary changes in syllabi regarding this issue.

4. Services of British counsel and such other institutions may be hired for training of English language teachers of government teacher training colleges.

5. . Assessment should be criterion referenced and not norm-referenced for the subject of English language.

The examination conducting bodies may make such changes.

Recommendation for further research

- As in majority of Elementary Teachers Training Colleges of the Punjab, teaching of English is not competency based, thus further study is recommended to explore its reasons.

- As there is no professional qualification wise difference in the performance of teacher trainers in GCETs; further study is recommended to explore the underlying reasons.

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