

ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPETENCE AMONG THE TRIBAL STUDENTS IN
JAMMU AND KASHMIR

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ABSTRACT

Jammu and Kashmir is a union territory recently re-constituted by the parliament of India which situated in Asian Continent. Tribe is considered as social group with common dialect, purpose, name and culture. The English language competence plays an important role in social, personal and professional life of an individual. It involves a bundle of cognitively controlled abilities or skills in using letters and words with accuracy and fluency. The present study was to study the English language competence of elementary school students among the tribes of Jammu and Kashmir , To compare the English language competence of elementary school students among the tribes of Jammu and Kashmir with respect to Seasonal Migration, To compare the English language competence of elementary school students among the tribes of Jammu and Kashmir with respect to Gender.

The present descriptive research, A sample of 600 elementary school students was collected from the district; Rajori of Jammu & Kashmir where the majority of the population is belongs to tribes and used to migrate seasonally. Stratified Sampling technique was used for the sampling technique. English language competency test developed by Kumar S (2018) was adopted and administered for the study. Percentage analysis techniques, Basic statistical analysis and mean difference analysis were carried out for analysis and interpretation. The study found that 20 percent the tribal sample (study under concerned) are falling under below average level of *English Language Competence*. The non migrant tribal students are possessing better *English Language Competence* than their migrant counterparts at elementary level. The female tribal students show dominance in *English Language Competence* than the male tribal students at elementary level.

Jammu and Kashmir is a union territory recently re-constituted by the parliament of India which situated in Asian Continent. Earlier it was a state in Indian federal system. The tribe is a social group of simple kinds, the members of which speak a common dialect, act together for common purpose and have a common name, a contagious territory, a relatively uniform culture or a way of life and a tradition of common decent. Here, the tribe is considered as social group with common dialect, purpose, name and culture. "Course of a socio-cultural entity at a definite historical stage of development, It is a single endogamous community, with a cultural and psychological makeup going back into a distant historical Past" (Bardhan, 1973). In this definition the emphasis is on the

cultural and psychological makeup. “A collection of families or group bearing a common name, the members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation and have developed a well assessed system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligation” (Majumdar,1961).

Article 366 clauses 25 of Indian Constitution defined the ST as Scheduled Tribes means such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this Constitution.

Language is the essential means of communication between the human being. Absence of language, communication will not possible. Language may be in the form of verbal, sign and symbol. Every human being has innate potential to learn language. Language competence is the ability of people to use language for communication in their day to day life. It is clear that every human being is able to use their mother tongue as they grown up in the community. But in global perspectives the English language is considered as the universal language, where people of any nation can interact with the people of rest countries. Language competence includes the people ability to translate, make sentences, vocabulary, naming vegetables, fruits, expressing their views etc.

The English language competence plays an important role in social, personal and professional life of an individual. It involves a bundle of cognitively controlled abilities or skills in using letters and words with accuracy and fluency. The language competence can be acquired through perfect practice in classrooms and through effective participation in social life even though every human being has innate potential to learn languages. Language competence is one of the important aspects of one’s personality.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the English language competence of elementary school students among the tribes of Jammu and Kashmir
2. To compare the English language competence of elementary school students among the tribes of Jammu and Kashmir with respect to Seasonal Migration

3. To compare the English language competence of elementary school students among the tribes of Jammu and Kashmir with respect to Gender.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. The English language competence of elementary school students among the tribes of Jammu and Kashmir will not be significant with respect to Seasonal Migration
2. The English language competence of elementary school students among the tribes of Jammu and Kashmir will not be significant with respect to Gender.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Mastery Learning in Language is very crucial. Among the Tribal Children 77 percent showed non-mastery in language competency test *Pathy, M.K. and Khandanga, Umesh P (1997)*. English is the mainly hard subject for tribal students because of the big contrast between their mother-tongue and English language. Home and local environment of tribal community cannot help to build a linguistic bridge between the mother-tongue and English language. The schools are not following feasible pedagogy which may help to enrich the English language of tribal students. Pedagogy followed is not feasible for learners. Reading deficiency has also identified among tribal students. It was also reveals that the learners were unfamiliar with text and symbols because of lack of script in the tribal mother-tongue (Varghese Ashitha & Nagaraj P 2013).

John Charlotte Regena (2014) found that Wide differences exist in the achievement in English among the children from different social backgrounds. Students from more privileged backgrounds achieved better results, made more progress in school than students from deprived background. Tribes took longer time to unfold their abilities as they are deprived of opportunities. It was also reveals that Locale has positively affected achievement in English among non tribal students where has no not affect on achievement in English tribal students.

The tribal students who are facing socio-psychological and language barriers of communication feel that the medium of instruction should be flexible enough to meet the

demands of tribal students (Behera S S 2015). Another study carried out by Panigrahi, Sarbani Sankar (2018) found that the factors like unsuitable home and school environment, lack of parental guidance background of the family and school, income, medium of instruction and defective method applied in classroom teaching have created problem in the learning of English among the tribal student of Odisha.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The present descriptive research, Investigator had collected the data through normative survey method. The whole tribes reside in the Jammu & Kashmir was the population of the study. The sample was collected from the district; Rajori of Jammu & Kashmir where the majority of the population is belongs to tribes and used to migrate seasonally.

The researcher had ensured the accurate representation of the sample from the respective population. Among the 30 government elementary schools 600 tribal students had been selected as the sample for the study. Stratified Sampling technique was used for the sampling technique. English language competency test developed by Kumar S (2018) was adopted and administered by the researcher to collect information regarding the English language competence of the tribal students. The complete data collected from the sample had processed and organized systematically and scientifically. Then the statistical techniques like Percentage analysis techniques, Basic statistical analysis and mean difference analysis were carried out for analysis and interpretation.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The present study was to investigate the *English Language Competence among the Tribal Students in Jammu and Kashmir*. The data were collected, organized and analyzed in accordance with the objectives and hypotheses of the study using SPSS package. Gender and Seasonal Migration were considered as independent variable. The comprehensive analysis of the study is discussed below.

Table 1

Statistical Constants of English Language Competence Test Scores of Tribal Students

Sample	N	Mean	Median	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Total Sample	600	21.00	22.00	08.76	-.44	-.95
Male	428	20.00	21.00	08.57	-.32	-.96
Female	172	23.00	26.00	09.07	-.78	-.65
Migrants	343	16.00	15.00	07.93	0.14	-.87
Non Migrants	257	28.00	30.00	04.75	-1.16	1.23

Table 1 illustrated that the mean, median, standard deviation scores of English Language competence Test of tribal students for total sample are 21, 22 and 08.76 respectively. The skewness and kurtosis shows the -.44 and -.95. The result showed the normality of the data. The mean and median score of male sample also shows as 20 and 21 with standard deviation score of 8.57. Hence it had also showed the normality of the data. The table also shows that the mean and median scores of other subsamples such as female (23:26), Migrants (16:15) and Non migrants (28:30) are nearby equal with lowly skewed.

Table 2
English Language Competence of Tribal Students- Percentages of Total Sample and Subsamples

Sample	N	Above Average	Average	Below Average
Total	600	24	56	20
Male	428	26	57	17
Female	172	12	65	23
Migrants	343	21	60	19
Non Migrants	257	03	78	19

The table 2 exhibits the *English Language competence of tribal students in Jammu and Kashmir*. The tribal students who fall under below average level of *English Language competence* are 20. 56 percent of sample fall under the average level and 24

percentages showed their share in above average level in *English Language Competence*. The percentage of Girls students (23%) shows more in below average level of *English Language Competence* than boys (17%) at elementary level. The percentage of boys' falls under the category of average level in *English Language Competence* is 57 while 65 percentage girls share in this category. The *English Language Competence* of migrant tribal students and non migrant tribal students are 19 percentage.

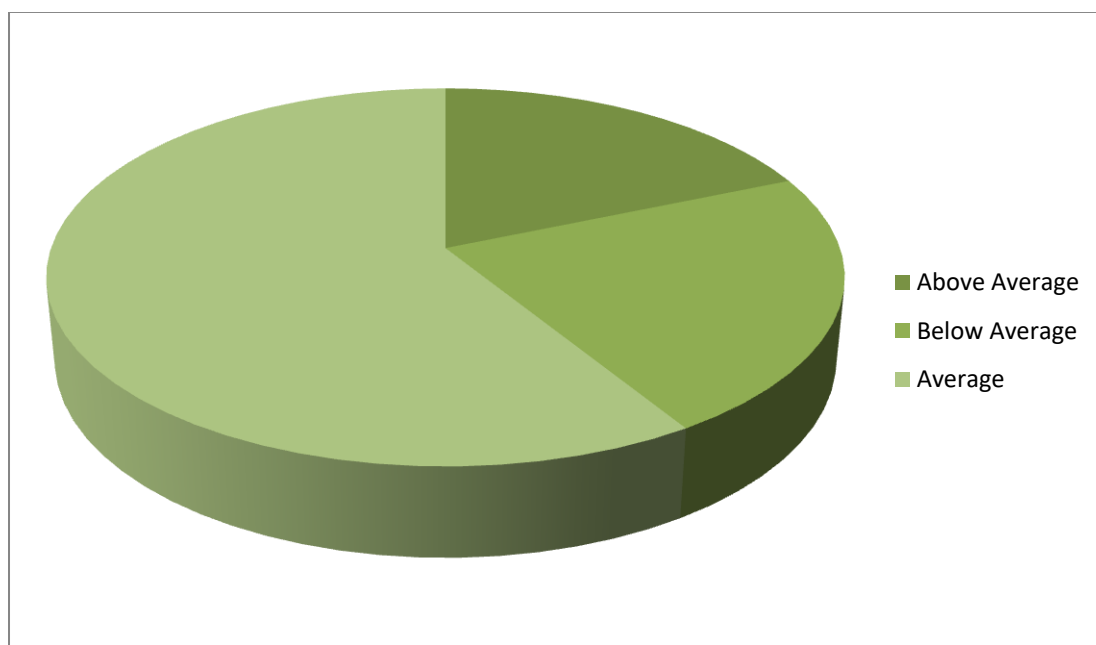


Figure 1

Pie Diagram of English Language Skill of Tribal Students- Percentages

Table 3

English Language Competence- Seasonal Migration

Data and Results of t test on English Language Competence

Subsamples	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	C.R	Level of Significance
<i>Migrants</i>	343	16	04.75	21.65	0.01
<i>Non Migrants</i>	257	28	07.90		

Table 3 illustrates that the critical ratio obtained for the mean scores of English language skill test of *Migrant and Non Migrant Students* are 21.65 with mean score of 16 and 28 for *Migrant and Non Migrant Students* respectively. The critical ratio obtained is

higher than the table value (2.58) at 0.01 level. It shows that the mean scores of English language Competence test of *Migrant and Non Migrant tribal Students* differ significantly. This indicates that the non migrant tribal students possess better English language Competence than their migrant counterparts at elementary level.

Table 4

Achievement in English language Competence -Gender
Data and Results of t test on English language Competence

Subsamples	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	C.R	Level of Significance
<i>Male</i>	428	20	08.57	02.72	0.01
<i>Female</i>	172	23	09.07		

Table 4 depicts that the critical ratio obtained for the mean scores of English language Competence test of *Male and female tribal Students* are 02.72 with mean scores of 20 for male students and 23 for female students. As the calculated value (critical ratio) is higher than the tabulated value (2.58) which is considered as significant at 0.01 level. It shows that the mean scores of English language Competence test of *Male and female tribal Students* differ significantly. This indicates that the female tribal students show dominance in English language skill than the male tribal students at elementary level.

Table 5

Achievement in English Language Competence - Seasonal Migration (Female)
Data and Results of the t test on English Language Competence

Subsamples	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	C.R	Level of Significance
<i>Non Migrant</i>	84	29	03.02	13.49	0.01
<i>Migrant</i>	88	16	08.42		

Table 5 depicts that the mean scores of *English Language Competence* of *Non Migrant female tribal student* is 29 and *migrant female tribal Students* is 16. The critical ratio obtained for the mean scores of *English Language Competence* of *Non Migrant and migrant female tribal Students* is 13.49. The difference in the mean score is significant as the calculated *t* value (13.49) is higher than tabulated *t* value (2.58) at 0.01 level . It shows that the mean scores of *English Language Competence* of *Non Migrant and migrant female tribal Students* differ significantly. This indicates that *Non Migrant female tribal students* are superior in *English Language Competence* than the *migrant female tribal Students*.

Table 6

Achievement in English Language Competence - Seasonal Migration (Male)
Data and Results of t test on English Language Competence

Subsamples	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	C.R	Level of Significance
<i>Non Migrant</i>	173	27	05.20	16.70	0.01
<i>Migrant</i>	255	16	07.78		

Table 6 depicts that mean scores of *English Language Competence* of *Non Migrant male tribal Students* and *migrant male tribal Students* are 27 and 16 respectively. The critical ratio obtained for the mean scores of *English Language Competence* of *Non Migrant and migrant male tribal Students* is 13.49. The calculated *t* vale (13.49) is higher than the tabulated value (2.58). Hence it is significant at 0.01 level. It shows that the mean scores of *English Language Competence* of *Non Migrant and migrant male tribal Students* differ significantly. This indicates that *Non Migrant male tribal students* are superior in *English Language Competence* than the *migrant male tribal Students*.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The study reported that 20 percent of the sample was in the category of below average level in *English Language Competence*, 56 percent of sample was in average level and 24 percentages was crossed the above average level. Girl students (23%) were

more in below average level than boys (17). The 57 percentage of boys was in the category of average level of *English Language Competence* while the share of girls was 65 %. The *English Language Competence* of migrant tribal students and non migrant tribal students was 19 percentage.

It had revealed that the mean scores of English Language Competence test of *tribal Students based on migration, gender* are differed significantly. Significant high mean scores were noticed for non migrant tribal students than migrant tribal students and among female tribal students than male tribal students. Hence it is established the superiority of non migrant tribal students over the migrant tribal students and female tribal students over male tribal students in English Language Competence. It reveals the negative impact of migration on education of the tribal students and the female tribal students are more interested or proficient in English Language Competence.

The reports of previous studies reveal the deficiency of English language skill and difficulty of learning English among tribal students. Studies like, Pathy, M.K., Khandanga & Umesh P (1997) found 77 percent of the tribal children among the selected sample revealed non-mastery in language competency test. Mondal and Mete (2012) suggested study books must be prepared in tribal language up to upper primary level. Varghese Ashitha & Nagaraj P (2013) found English as the most difficult subject for tribal students. Tribes took longer time to unfold their abilities in English as they are deprived of opportunities (John Charlotte Regena, 2014). Non tribal language is a major barrier in their regular communication process (Behera S S .2015).

The formulated null hypotheses such as (1) The English language competence of elementary school students among the tribes of Jammu and Kashmir will not be significant with respect to Seasonal Migration (2) The English language competence of elementary school students among the tribes of Jammu and Kashmir will not be significant with respect to Gender was rejected as the critical ratio of both t value was higher than the tabulated value.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- The 20 percent the tribal sample (study under concerned) are falling under below average level of *English Language Competence*
- The percentages of Girls tribal students (23) constitute more in below average level in *English Language Competence* than boys (17) at elementary level in Jammu and Kashmir.
- The *English Language Competence* of migrant tribal students and non migrant tribal students are 19 percentages.
- The non migrant tribal students are possessing better *English Language Competence* than their migrant counterparts at elementary level.
- The female tribal students show dominance in *English Language Competence* than the male tribal students at elementary level.
- *Non Migrant* female tribal students are superior in *English Language Competence* than the migrant female tribal Students.
- *Non Migrant* male tribal students are superior in *English Language Competence* than the migrant male tribal Students.

How a teacher can facilitate for Improvement of English Language competence among the Students

- Formulate literary clubs in schools
- Organize weekly literary functions
- Debate, panel discussion and seminar presentation should be the part of curriculum transaction
- Essay writing competition should be conducted on important aspects
- Each student has to conduct a book review in every month.
- News reading and listening session should be planned in classroom
- Period for Translation should be included in school time table
- Vocabulary games & competition should be organized in school

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