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Impact of Training Through Language Laboratory on Intonation and Retention of IXth Graders of Kashmir Valley

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Abstract

In today's competitive world nobody can afford to neglect the need and importance of recent technologies and innovations happening all around. Today besides possessing good qualifications in hand still a lot of youths are facing unemployment. The reason behind if thought properly, is that majority of them are not able to present themselves in a desirable manner. And the worst thing happening because of this is that a lot of misfits are being found at different profession, who had compromised to curb their unemployment. No doubt education is termed as one of the basic requirements on which great nations are built. It is also stated as an investment that takes its time to pay dividends and can generate the highest returns when compared to any other avenues, where resources can be committed. In developing countries, where a large population lives at subsistence levels, primary education is a major tool for enriching human capital. Now the question arises, has education been able to justify its functional nature and if the educators are equipping their students and future citizens of country with this indispensable skill of self expression in proper way? In this regard, computer studies or ICT (information and communication technologies) becomes immensely important as "diverse set of technological tools and resources are used to communicate, create, disseminate, store, and manage information."As a remedy for this problem in many countries language teachers have been using technological aids for many years, some of which have been around since the beginning of the 20th century. These include:

- Radio
- Television(terrestrial)

- Language lab
- Computer & internet
- Satellite television
- Mobile phone/personal digital assistant(PDA)

All of these devices and media can present **sound** and most of them can also present **video.** Sound is indispensable because teaching a language without offering the learner the opportunity of hearing native speaker's voices is unthinkable. Video offers additional opportunities for enhancing the learner's experience, ranging from presenting a "talking head" so that the learner can see how lip movements and gestures relate to the spoken language, to films on life and culture in the target language country (Hill 1999).Also extensive trend of using Language labs by foreign educators had proved that language can best be taught to students by following basic laws of linguistics through language laboratories. As such labs were initially perceived as a solution to the problem of teaching a language to a large number of learners in a short time, and undoubtedly were a worthwhile invention but in our Indian context it somehow failed specifically in small towns. The main reasons for the lab's failure to achieve expected outcomes, however, were:

- Lack of proper training for teachers wishing to use it,
- Lack of imagination in devising activities other than drills.

Nowadays the language lab is no longer seen as the panacea, but rather as one of the many technological aids that the language teacher can choose to use to enhance teaching and learning. But still its awareness among common people is very less. Therefore through this paper my intention is to present the condition of language laboratories in Srinagar, the summer capital of J&K state and its impact on developing various linguistic skills like Intonation which somehow ultimately affects the achievement & retention levels of the child.

Keywords: ICT, Language labs, Intonation, Achievement & retention levels

1. Introduction

The pronunciation of a language varies every six miles because of geographical and cultural reasons. The speaker of one and the same language will vary in the standard pronunciation. On the basis of their standards of education and living a villager may speak a different variety from a man from the city.

The pronunciation of English also varies from one geographical entity to the other, from one country to another. There are marked and distinct phonetic features associated with English spoken in the English speaking nations such as UK, the USA, Canada and Australia. Even within the UK, there are variation between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

GIMSON,

> "Great prestige is still attached to this implicitly accepted social standard pronunciation also called RECEIVED PRONUNCIATION to indicated that it is the result of social judgement and wide acceptance, but faulty pronunciation of the sound of English, replacement of English sound by their Indian equivalents, wrong accentual pattern, leaving important were unaccented in connected speech faulty rhythmic patterns, faulty division of a long ulterance into a tone group wrong location of the nucleus or the tonic syllable in a tone group are the main reasons of the unintelligibly of Indian English to foreigners".

Hence the investigator planned to study the impact of systematic technique of training in language labs on the pronunciation of IXth graders.

2. Objectives of the Study

1) To study the impact of learning through language lab on achievement in English grammar of ninth graders.
2) To study the impact of learning through language lab on intonation.
3) To study the impact of learning through language lab on retention of English grammar of IXth graders.

3. Hypotheses

1) Training through language laboratory does not yield higher achievement scores as compared to conventional teaching.
2) Training through language laboratory does not yield higher retention scores as compared to conventional teaching.
3) Training in intonation through language yields higher achievement scores than conventional teaching.
4) Training in intonation through language lab yields higher retention scores than the conventional teaching.

4. Tools

1) A criterion test, developed by the investigator to obtain information from the sample selected. The test was done for

   *INTONATION

   The test was used as pre-test, post-test and retention test.

2) An instructional programme for IXth graders pertaining to their particular deficiencies in pronunciation for intonation. The programme was developed by the investigator herself.

5. Sample

The sample was a purposive sample since the investigation demanded the schools be equipped with a language laboratory. A survey of Srinagar schools revealed that only two schools were equipped with the same these were:

→ Delhi Public School

→ Simin Rose Garden Montessori School

However, Delhi Public School was contacted and dates were finalized.

It was a convenient sample. Since the investigator had easy access to the school and also got cooperation of the principal and the language teacher.

Initially purposive sample 90 students was selected from three sections of IXth grade 45 students were selected for experimental treatment who were imparted the training in language lab and 45 were those to who no training was given through language lab. Taking up 45 students was imposing some problems. Thus for final experiment an intact class of 30 students was chosen. This constituted the experimental group.

For the control group sample, the students from the same school were finally not selected as every one of them had some access to the language laboratory and more over there was a fear of intermingling of students, thus the sample for control group i.e. another 30 students were taken from Simin Rose Garden Montesori School due to easy and early availability of dates. The final sample therefore consisted of 30 students each for experimental and control group.

6. Design

The design composed of achievement scores and retention scores as two dependent variables. The impact of training through language lab was studied. Training through language lab was the independent variable which was studied at two levels i.e. with training and without training.

7. Procedure

The students of the control group as well as the Experimental group were given a pre-test separately, and scored one mark each for every right response. They were then given a break for two weeks approximately. In the mean time the students of experimental group were

given two weeks training in the language laboratory while the students of the control group were not given any training. After two weeks the students of the experimental group as well as the control group were tested for the gains. The scoring procedure remained the same i.e., one mark each for every correct response.

After about four weeks the students of both experimental as well as the control group were tested on the same criterion test for the retention scores. The scoring procedure remained same.

8. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Following analysis was done to investigate the impact of learning English language through language lab:–

(i) t-test on gain scores separately on final achievement on intonation.

(ii) t-test on gain scores separately on final retention test of intonation.

(iii) For analyzing impact of training through language laboratory on achievement scores the t-test was used.

The analysis was done to test the following null hypotheses:

The table 8.1 reveals that the t-ratio for the difference in means experimental and Control group intonation was found to be significant at 0.01 level. Therefore, the H_o.1 was therefore not rejected at the specific level.

An examination of means of the two groups suggested that the students of experimental group showed higher intonation, achievement gain scores as compared to their counterparts in the control group. It may be concluded that learning intonation through language lab leads to higher achievement among IX^{th} graders.

The results were further confirmed through bar diagrams given in Graph-8.1 for experimental and control groups.

H_o.2: Training in intonation through language lab yields higher retention scores than the conventional teaching.

The table 8.2 reveals that the t-ratio for the difference in means of experimental and control group for retention score test of intonation was found to be significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore H_o.2 was not rejected at the specified level.

An examination of means of the two groups suggested that the students of experimental group showed higher retention scores on intonation as compared to their counterparts in the Control group. It may be concluded that learning intonation through language lab leads to the higher retention for IX^{th} graders.

Graph-8.2 support and confirm the above results.

9. Result

Analysis of gain scores on achievement test led to following conclusions:

- It was inferred that learning English pronunciation through language laboratory leads to higher performance for IXth graders.
- Higher retention scores were English pronunciation through language laboratory. A further probe into the results into the results was made by analyzing separately the scores for

*INTONATION

Analysis of gain scores on achievement test (INTONATION) led to the following conclusions:—

1) It was inferred that learning intonation through language lab leads to higher performance for IXth graders.
2) Higher retention scores were recorded for the students who learned intonation through language laboratory.

10. Educational Implications

The results of the investigation revealed that the students who were taught pronunciation through language lab performed better on both achievement as well as retention test. It may thus be inferred that if a proper care is taken to teach a language similar kind of achievement can be had throughout.

The scholars of CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF ENGLISH AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES HYDERABAD have put forward the following suggestions for the improvements of Indian English in order to make it internationally intelligible.

1) The consonants should be clearly articulated.
2) English vowels and dipthongs must be given correct length. . If (0:) and (e:) are used in place of (ou:) and (ei) respectively they, should be sufficiently long.
3) The voiceless plosives (p, t, k) should be aspirated at the beginning of accented syllables.
4) The reading of a set text should be done carefully with proper grouping of words.
5) The correct distribution of (S) and (Z) in inflexional suffixes should be maintained.
6) (m) before (b) is sometimes not pronounced when (b) happens to be the final letter of the words e.g. lamb, comb, bomb, tomb.
7) Such pronunciation is taught in the schools but results of present investigation reveal that training in language labs leads to far better performance of students as compared to conventional teaching. It may somehow be made a part of essential curriculum of

English language that all children get training in language labs. It may be suggested that the teachers should recommend to their respective organizations to establish language labs in their schools.

11. Suggestions for Further Studies

The researcher is well aware of the limitation of the investigation and the study was not a very comprehensive experiment to lead to very wider generalizations. Hence the investigator feels that:–

1) Studies with large samples should be conducted to arrive at some authentic generalization.
2) The students of primary classes should be given training through language labs and the results may be compared.
3) Gender differences in learning pronunciation should also be explored.
4) Students can make use of following websites and e-mail address to collect data and information regarding English language lab.
5) E-mail — info @ language lab.in

— language lab software @gmail.com

→ www.wiziq.com/public

→ www.study group.com/eng.USA

→ www.ipc.dk

→ www.orientav.com

→ www.acenindia.com

→ www.winta.com

→ www.robotel.com

→ www.centre44.com

→ www.sanako.com

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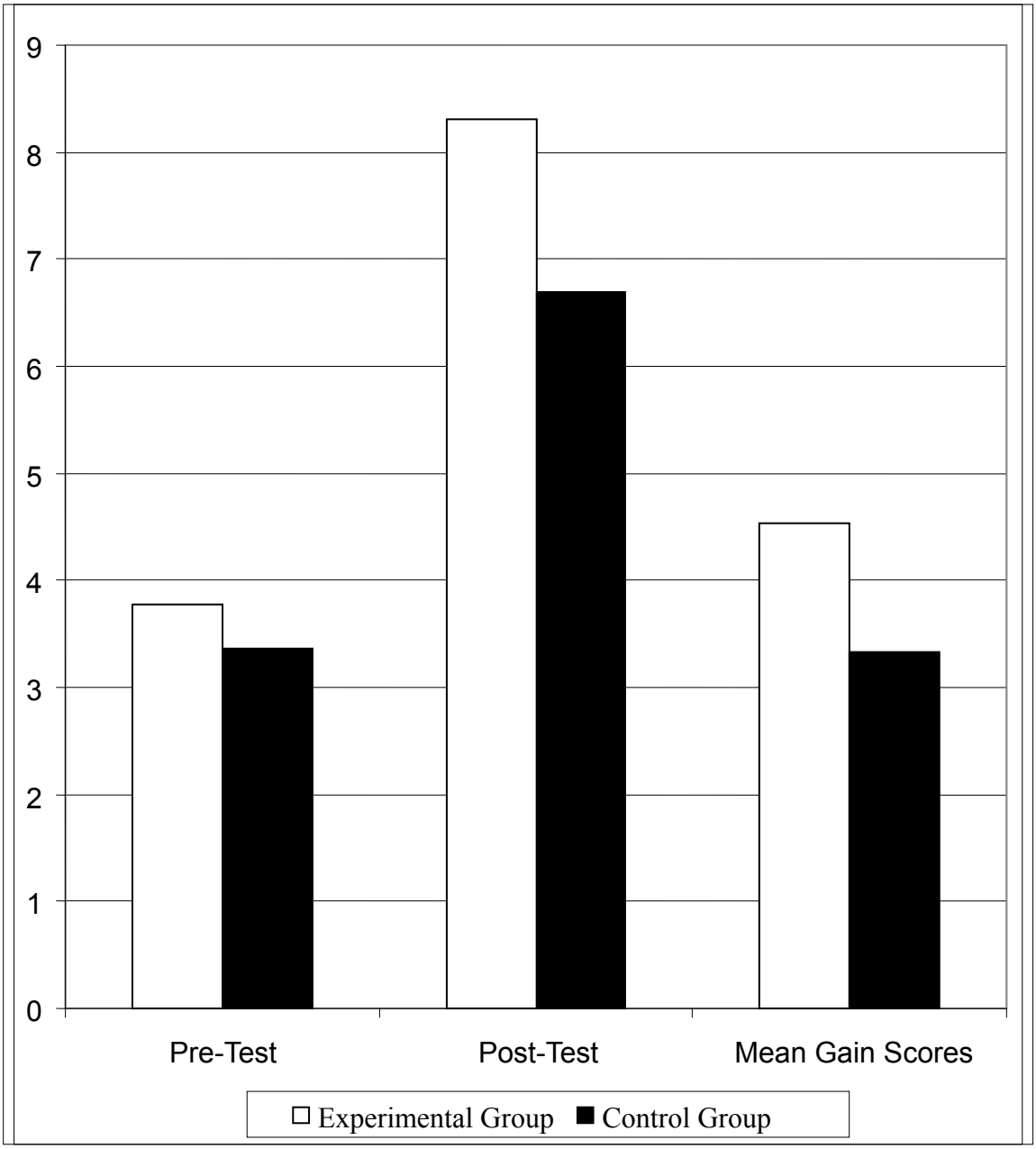
Word Net: A lexical data base for English language

Table 8.1. Mean, S.D.'S and T-Ratios for Experimental and Control Group on Intonation Gain

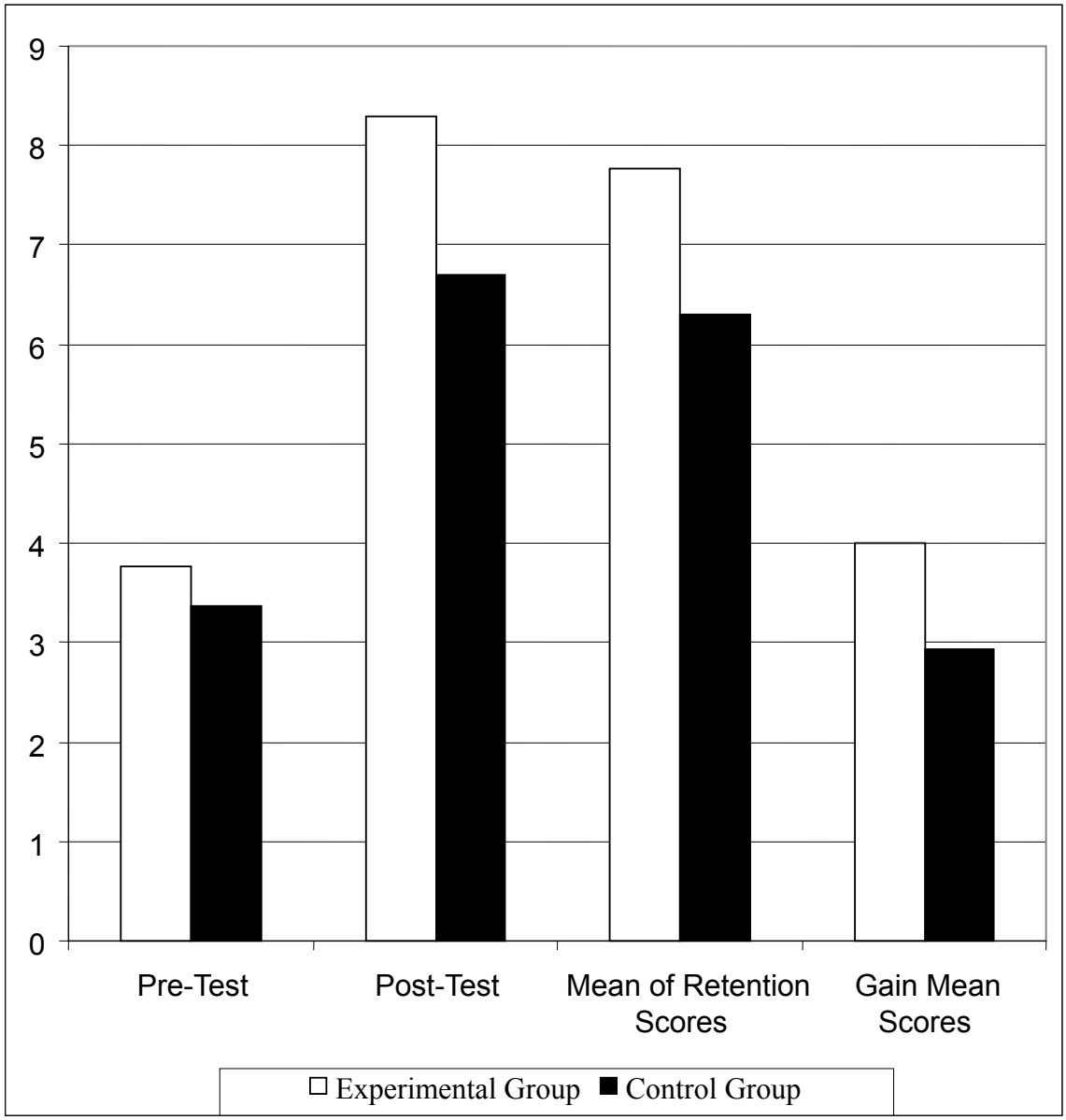
	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	**CONTROL GROUP**
PRE-TEST	3.767	3.367
POST-TEST	8.3	6.7
MEAN GAIN SCORES	4.533	3.33
S.D	0.9661	1.505
N	30	30
$SE_D = 0.326$		
t-ratio = 3.69		

Table 8.2. T-Ratio for Mean Gain Scores of Retention Test

	EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	**CONTROL GROUP**
PRE-TEST	3.767	3.367
POST-TEST	8.3	6.7
MEAN OF RETENTION SCORES	7.767	6.3
GAIN MEAN SCORES	4	2.933
S.D	1.671	2.08
N	30	30
$SE_D = 0.487$		
t-ratio = 2.190		



Graph 8.1. Graphical Representation of Gain Scores Achievement Test (Intonation) for Experimental and Control Groups



Graph 8.2. Graphical Representation of Gain Scores (Retention Test) for Experimental and Control Group (Intonation)