Interest in Learning Tamil of the Higher Secondary Students in Thanjavur Taluk.

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Abstract

Excellence in Education is the need of the hour. The number of students produced at various levels is progressively increasing to meet the demands of education. The entire process of education is formed and moulded by the human personality called teacher, who plays a essential role in any system of education. Teachers create the future architectsof the nation. Particularly higher secondary school teachers should carefully mould the future students with all development components by their effective teaching. Now a days creating interest in learning in Tamil among students is vital. So, first of all, teachers have to understand students" nature and use a variety of teaching methods in the classroom. This is possible when teachers first identify the students learning difficulties in biological science learning. For that teachers should know the level of leaning interest of the students. Then observe the learning styles of the higher secondary students. Learning Tamil Language plays on important role in the academic achievement of the students. Some students have good language skills, some students have poor language learning which may be due to several factors. Individual differences also play a vital role in learning a language of students. Learning mother tongue may vary from student to student and they also differ among high, average and low achievers. In this context the investigator considers learning interest is more important and related to know the learning difficulties of the higher secondary students. Learning is not only to know the subject matters but also understand the concepts and utilize for human beings welfare. That is the true learning. The researcher feels that the future of the nation lies in the language teachers and students. Therefore students must analyze realize their leaning interest in Tamil through which they can overcome their learning difficulties in Tamil.

Key Words: Tamil Language, Learning, Interest, Teaching, and Skills.

Introduction

Language plays an outstanding role in human life. The study of Tamil brings behavioural changes, cultural needs in the learner and enriches his character of thinking and constructive imagination. The need and significance of mother tongue education was gradually felt and people began to evince intense and enthusiasm in the learning of Tamil. Constant and steady advances in all the scientific and technological research have resulted in the growth and greater application of Science in contemporary society. Especially studying Tamil literature and grammar, students learn more informed decisions about their own cultural and about significant historical backgrounds.

Present Education Scenario

The present educational system of India is an implantation of British rulers. Wood's Dispatch of 1854 laid the base of present system of education in our Nation. Before the arrival of British in India, education system was classified one. With the introduction of Wood's Dispatch recognized as Magna Carta of Indian education, the whole set-up changed. The main reason of it was to arrange Indian Clerks for running restricted administration. Under it the school educations were the dialect languages while the higher education was granted in English only. British government started giving funds to aboriginal schools in need of assist and thus slowly a number of of the schools became government-aided.

Learning Interest in Language Tamil Subject

Interest is a psychological state of rendezvous, experienced in the instant, and also a predisposition to connect repeatedly with particular ideas, actions, or objects over time. The necessity of interest in knowledge does not only mean that somebody has an interest in learning about incredible. It also means that when someone has an interest in something it becomes simple and even pleasant to learn about that subject. An example from a 1990s movie features a girl who is struggling to recognize a math concept. When her brainy sister explains the math problems to her and substitutes spike polish into the story problem instead of creation materials she becomes interested in learning how to solve the math problems. This is a comical instance, but it can be applied to the way all public learn. Most kids in elementary school expand an extreme interest in a convinced subject like horses or dinosaurs. Because they are interested in that subject they routinely have an interest in learning more about those things. A few kids can recite the complicated names of dinosaurs before they can even study or write and they may even be motivated to carry out reading books about dinosaurs. This shows us that our brains are competent of learning, particularly when there is an interest in learn about something.

Students learn better when they have an interest in the subject material it seems that educators should begin by helping students develop interest. If a student previously has an interest in a convinced subject, perhaps that topic can be referred to when teaching math concepts. Onthe other hand when learning about events in history the challenge is for the teacher to present the information in a way that sparks the students" interests. Some ways to develop and generate students' interest in the teaching learning process are given below.

Curiosity is an elementary form of interest. Its importance in teaching and in learning is recognized by many educators. Curiosity is a precious agent in education when it is rightly appreciated and employed. Curiosity is highly important because it is a starting point of interest. It directs attention to bright colors, moving objects, new things or objects- anything that involves sharp contrast. Attention can be held only by arousing the interest of the children in the activities at hand. Curiosity enlarges also the circle of interest. When rightly valued and utilized, curiosity and attention can be made valuable agents in education. Curiosity and attention are important to teaching and learning. Education is facilitated by the fact that the child is endowed with certain social drives and tendencies that can be utilized in learning situations.

Curiosity is one of the important innate tendencies that underlie learning. ecause of curiosity, the child may manipulate things with the aim to gain new experiences. The teacher must endeavour means and ends sufficiently meaningful and attractive to command attention of the pupils for a considerable period. Learning takes place best under conditions of clear and individual attention. The phenomenon ofattention is closely related to that of insight. The inattentive pupilsconfronted with any learning problem are far more likely to drift through a trial-and-error series than is the pupil who is highly attentive. Pupils work hardest when the problem to be solved is one that has realmeaning, interest, and value to them. This readiness for specific kinds of activity is evidenced by their interests.

One further point about interest as a motive might be kept in mind. Interest is a powerful incentive and, as such, should be used forall it is worth, but not with a disregard of other possible factors in the situation. The inclusion of facts and principles in a course should depend upon what value they have, not upon their momentary appeal. In short, teachers should teach worthwhile material in a way that will interest students, but they should not try to teach only what isinteresting.

Mc Dougall (2011) has very cogently said, "Interest is dormant attention and notice is interest in action." It is the interest which determines one's attention. Interest is always hidden in the act of attention. It is a fact that there is close relation between attention and interest. Each of our interests may be regarded as a powerful stimulus to draw our attention to a particular thing, person or an activity.

Making the teaching-learning process interesting, students must follow suggestions given below.

(1)   The child has certain normal or innate urges, drives and instincts. He will be interested in those matters in which his instincts or natural urges are satisfied. Hence, in the teaching effort, the child's psychological needs and interests are given importance.

(2)   The child's interest change at different stages of his development. The teacher must be acquainted with these changes and supply learning experiences according to their needs and interests. For example, in childhood there is interest in creative plays and activities, in childhood there is interest in group behavior and in adolescence, in love and adventure. The teacher should provide suitable subject matter and activities according to these unique interests, so that pupils can learnand gain adequately.

(3)   The methods of teaching should be adopted according to the corporal conditions and natural interests of students. For example, at the Nursery and Kindergarten stages, the teacher should arrange imaginative plays and utilize toys for teaching. In the primary stage stories may be told and group activities be organized for teaching a variety of lessons.

(4)   The Subject matter to be taught to kids should not be too complicated nor too simple. It should be within the range of understanding of the students concerned. When, the students locate the lesson too difficult or too simple, their interests" flag and the problem of inattentiveness crops up.

(5)   With a view to making students interested in education, the goals and objectives should be made obvious to them. The well-defined aims and objectives will motivate them and create original interests. This will help them to learn further.

(6)   In order to sustain the student's interest in the lessons, the teacher should convey new knowledge on the basis of old knowledge and practice. When the learner sees a connection between the old and the new knowledge, he can be attentive to his lessons.

(7)   The teacher should have love and fondness not only towards his subject, but also for his students. He should work with interest, eagerness and sincerity, so that his students will be helpful to his lessons.

(8)   The teacher should make his lesson interesting and appealing, introducing novelty and variety of approaches. This will facilitate the pupils to pay due attention to his teaching.

(9)   There should be sufficient use of audio-visual aids in the teaching-learning process. New media and materials like radio, television, films, slides, pictures etc. can help the teacher to make his lessons eye-catching and interesting. This will be useful for promoting learning efficiency to the same object, for some time we listen only to some aspects of it more clearly than to others. Attention is thus selective being limited to a narrow field. Bhatia (1988) has rightly said, "Most of our achievements in life are due mainly to this selection. If we try to attend to everything without restraining our range, we will not be able to achieve anything."

Teaching of Tamil

Tamil is one of the major languages of southern India. It is spoken principally in the state of Tamil Nadu (formerly Madras), located on the eastern coast and extending down to the southernmost tip of the Indian subcontinent. There are about 60 million Tamil speakers in India. In addition it is spoken by about4 million people in north-eastern Sri Lanka, about one million in Malaysia, and in smaller colonies in Singapore, and parts of East Africa. Tamil is the oldest and mostrichly developed of the Dravidian languages. The origin of the alphabet (Tamil script) is uncertain, though it is believed to be about 3,500 years old. "Curry" is a Tamil word that entered the English language. Other Dravidian languages like Malayalam, Kannada and Telugu have close affinities with Tamil. Tamil also has a substantial classical literature dating back to about the 7th century A.D.

Teaching Learning Process

We are passing a great transition. The old is becoming outdated and new isstill in the progression of emergence. The old ways of learning & teaching are establish tobe too inflexible and too out dated. A great chance of psychological principle is being truly demanded. It has been urged that the exercise of the young requires onthe part of teacher a deep psychological acquaintance. Teaching-learning process is the spirit of education. It is the most potent instrument of Education to bring about desired changes in the students. Teaching learning are associated terms. In teaching - learning process, the teacher, the learner, the curriculum and other variables are organized in a logical way to attain some pre-determined goal. Let us first understand in a nutshell about learning, teaching and then teaching-learning relation.

Learning

The learning of our mother tongue languages reinforces our civilizing identity, values and roots. It also gives one more world-view that complements the viewpoint of the English-speaking world. Our mother tongue allows us to connect with communities crossways Asia and the world to speak the language or contribute to the culture. This enables us to strengthen provincial and global ties. Teaching and using Indianlanguages as part of the curriculum for the Indian Diaspora frequently takes the role and position of heritage learning. However, in the case of the energetic and enthusiastic Tamil community in Singapore (and Malaysia), Tamil is an official languagewith an excellent carry base from the national governments as well as culture leaders. However as new generations who come into school, impacted by the global trend of using English even for interpersonal communication, people are losing their skills in their mother tongue. Situation calls for a essential review of the existing textbooks, especially the language style adopted, content introduced, classroom activities organized, and the goals of Tamil teaching and learning.

Language Teaching Methods

In India, the 'three-language-formula' was implemented for decades ago inorder to convey the national integration, intra-state, inter-state and international communication effectively.

According to 'three-language-formula', the language teaching has categories as follows:

(a) The first language to be studied must be the mother tongue or the regional language.

(b) The second language will be some other modern Indian languages or English for Hindi Speaking States, and Hindi or English for non-Hindi speaking States.

(c) The third language will be English or a modern Indian language, which is not studied as the second language for both Hindi speaking and non-Hindi speaking States Hence, it is clear that the primary language that is, the mother tongue or the provincial language should be given importance than that of other two categories.

(d) Every child's mother tongue or regional language has to be taught right from the first standard. Unfortunately, even about four decades after the implementation of 'three-language-formula', it is yet to be effectively implemented in true spirit.

(e) Despite all the changes in the socio-economic scenario, market pressures and the behavior patter of the Indian Youths, the 'three-language-formula' still remain relevant (NCERT, 2000).

Tamil is one of the traditional languages, which is a origin for other Dravidian languages such as Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam. It is considered as a regional language for southern states of India, especially for the native of Tamilnadu state. The Tamil language has its own traditional, Cultural, political and social effects. It has prosperous literature potentials, which are reflected over the lifestyles of Tamil native speaker. Due to inappropriate implementation of three-language-formula system, the Tamil language teaching is suffering a lot. Further, nowadays, the people of Tamil speakers are extending all over the world. Though several steps havebeen taken by the centralized government and the Tamil language research Institutions, there is a hurdle to advance the quality of Tamil language and the rate of Tamil language acquisition is decreasing. Further, with the present infrastructure, size of the group, accessibility of teacher, training of teacher etc., itis complex to achieve the objectives of Tamil language teaching. Since the objectives are multi-dimensional in nature, multiple methods are to be used in anintegrated fashion for their achievement.

Learning Spoken Tamil

Like English, the Tamil language contains a innumerable of spoken forms. The diversity of dialects is based on geography, social class, and a numeral of other factors. It would be far too difficult to envelop all the different ways of speaking Tamil. Luckily, the huge majority of spoken Tamil can be derived directly from written Tamil. Every student studies his mother tongue language for as long as possible and to a level he

is capable of. We should, however, distinguish that not allstudents have the same natural ability, home background and motivation in learning and using their mother tongue languages. We should, therefore, assume a differentiated approach to cater to the abilities and backgrounds of our students, and encourage each student to develop the language capability to a level he or she can realistically achieve. Those students who do not already don't know how tospeak in grammatically will start by speaking in Tamil. It may sound funny to hear someone speaking in formal Tamil all the time, but it's a grand way for the learnerto practice using the grammar. Usually the rules for converting grammatical Tamil to spoken Tamil are fairly plain, involving the deletion of certain syllables or changing of sounds. As learners gains more and further speaking experience and listen carefully to how others speak, they will learn how to "translate" the formal, grammatical Tamil to colloquial, spoken Tamil.

Classification

Tamil is a member of the Tamil languages group of languages, along with Irula, Kaikadi, Betta Kurumba, Sholaga, and Yerukula. The Tamil languages are a subgroup of the Tamil-Malayalam languages, which in turn is a subgroup of Tamil- Kodagu languages, a subgroup of Tamil-Kannada-Telugu languages. The Tamil- Kannada-Telugu languages are a subgroup of the Southern branch of the Dravidian language family.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Tamil is spoken mainly in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka. Tamil is also spoken in Singapore, Malaysia and Mauritius.

Learning Tamil

i. University of Pennsylvania's web based courses for learning and teaching Tamil

ii. Tamil virtual University has the largest collection of digitized Tamil literary works and web based courses for learning and teaching Tamil

iii. Daniel Bell - Learning is modification due to energies of organism and environment impinging on the organism itself.

iv. Gates -Learning is modification of behavior through experience.

v. Crow– Crow - Learning involves the acquisition of habits, knowledge and attitude.

vi. Ruch-Learning is a process, which brings about changes in the individual way of responding as a result of contact with aspects of environment.

vii. Skinner – Learning as acquisition and retention.

viii. Encyclopedia of Education Research - Learning refers to growth of interest, knowledge and skills and to transfer these to new situation

Purposeful use of Information and Communication Technologies in Teaching and Learning.

It is vital for teachers to use inventive teaching methods whichinstill in students an interest in the Tamil Language. Teachers are not simply facilitators of learning but are also ambassadors of the Tamil culture and heritage. Teachers need to be outfitted with innovative practices that will help them improve their pedagogical repertoire and face the challenges of teaching a generation of learners instinctive into the digital era.

Information and Communication Technology tools are very much a part of the teacher's toolkit. With the purposeful use of Web as an enabling tool, our students can better learn to team up, create, and communicate, all of which are essential attributes for the future. Internet opens up fresh possibilities such as the use of interactive content, task of individualized tasks and the provision of different resources and activities to suit the different needs of students. Furthermore, web based method can supply individualized feedback to students for effective learning. We should, therefore, control on our students' expertise with and regular use of computer for mother tongue language learning.

Teachers are also becoming more tech savvy. With Internet, teachers can intend learning to be more authentic by providing affluent resources to improve listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in an interactive online environment.ICT also allows our teachers to use a wide range of innovative methodologies to employ their students in the learning of mother tongue languages. For example, in the classroom, students use various web tools such as blogs, discussion forums, X, Whats App,and, Face book. As digital natives, our students are familiar with these tools. This means the teaching-learning process is enhanced.

To remain appropriate and adaptable to changing times and needs, we need tolearn new skills and further enlarge our capabilities. It is no different for teacherswho must be equipped with relevant and useful resources and training so that theyhave the necessary skills to improve the teaching and learning process.

For instance, many Tamil Language teachers have been enrolling in training programmes at the Umar Pulavar Tamil Language Centre. They are completely using the professional development opportunities accessible at the Centre to update their repertoire of strategies and resources. This is commendable. The UPTLC takes on the role of a national professional development centre for Tamil Language teachers. It provides assorted training programmes in curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and the use of ICT as well as mentorship programmes for new and senior teachers. I strongly support Tamil Language teachers to enroll in the various training programme's offered by the UPTLC, State and Central universities like CIIL,so that you will learn to successfully infuse the use of ICT into your teaching and learning approaches and thus make lessons more interesting and engaging for students.

Web Assisted Learning and Teaching of Tamil (Waltt)

This site contains a number of different kinds of teaching materials proper for studying modern Spoken and Written Tamil with a teacher. The materials are as a result not self-instructional, but could be used for self-instructional purposes by a highly motivated learner, especially if feedback from a competent teacher is available.

Since the focus of these materials is instruction in modern Spoken and Written Tamil, students who are interested in learning classical, medieval or pre- modern Tamil should discuss with the Tamil Materials here are arranged in order of complexity, from easy to more difficult. We begin with lessons on Tamil alphabet, making syllables, simple conversational Tamil (spoken) and move to Tamil folk tales (Written; intermediate level) and then on to more complex spoken and written materials. Materials below are designed to instruct different *skills*. Tamil is alanguage with a very different spoken form than its written (literary) form, which is the form, used for the majority printed matter, literacy, religious texts, etc. The spokendialect we use is one that is used by most educated people in communication with other educated Tamilians; it is commonly found in film dialogue and in some other kinds of performance such as in radio plays, live drama, and some types of television broadcasting. Spoken Tamil (ST) is the variety that all Tamilians use to communicate with other speakers in face-to-face interaction; Written Tamil is not used for oral communication, although it does have a reading pronunciation (it canbe read unerringly from its written representation) and oral production of it is highly valued in the society. It may be heard in public speaking, incantation of religious texts and prayers, and in other formal contexts, such as in educational settings, the reading of news in radio and television broadcasting, some kinds of political oratory, and some others.

The skills we are currently able to teach over the web are the following:

i. Spoken Tamil comprehension, i.e. listening. Materials that are specifically Spoken Tamil (rather than Written Tamil) will be marked with the symbol, and whenever materials are given in both ST and WT, we will mark each utterance with the symbols for Spoken and for Written.

ii. Written Tamil comprehension, i.e. reading.

iii. Written Tamil production, i.e. writing in the literary dialect of Tamil.

iv. Introduction to the Tamil Alphabet This module can be used to apply making the various characters that make up the Tamil alphabet.

v. Preliminary Lessons this module provides lessons starting from extremely basic Tamil sentences to complex sentences regularly introducing all the frequentlyoccurring vocabulary items.

vi. Some simple Conversational Exchanges (Beginning level) this module presents mini-lessons at a beginning level in both spoken and written Tamil. The lessons consist of short conversations such as one might hear between two mother-tongue speakers of Tamil.

vii. Tense formation in Tamil - Beginning level - It contains a series of multiple choice tests with in sequence on how to make tense forms of Tamil verbs.

Tamil verbs are classified into six different groups based on how they form tense. This section can be used to test your knowledge of Tamil tense markers.

viii. A Grammar of Spoken Tamil by Harold F. Schiffman This is a reference grammar of Spoken Tamil, with examples given in Tamil script and in transliteration. It is not a pedagogical grammar; it can be useful in looking up matters of grammar about which you might have questions, but it does not provide a step by step program for the acquisition of Tamil grammar, which should instead be done using our pedagogical modules.

ix. Tamil - English vocabulary search engine .This is a module which can be used to search for vocabulary items, grammatical material, and other information such as grammatical paradigms of verbs etc.

x. Vocabulary Drill in Beginning Tamil and Enjoy some jokes with pedagogical aids

xi. Tell A Tale for Beginning and Intermediate Tamil learners, Learn some of the differences between spoken and written forms of Tamil This module gives a number of contrasting pairs, showing some of the differences between Spoken and Written Tamil.

xii. Cloze tests for proficiency in use of Tamil verb forms for Intermediate level students.

xiii. Indian Folk Tales for reading comprehension (Intermediate level). These short, simple folk tales are in Written Tamil, but because of some of the grammatical forms used, must be considered to belong at a low-intermediate level. Proficiency test is at Intermediate level.

xiv. Modern Short Stories for reading comprehension. This module will eventually contain a number of modern short stories by Tamil writers, and each will be provided with grammatical notes, a glossary, and some exercises to complete. For now, this module contains one story by Jayakanthan, an importantmodern writer. He writes in a rather difficult style, but his stories address real-life issues and contain some spoken material in authentic dialect form. You can read the story, which is provided with an English translation, a glossary, and grammatical notes. Complete the exercises, and send them to your teacher. Answer questions based on your comprehension of the story.

Suggestion for Further Research

The following are the some of the suggested research problems for future researcher and for healthy research outcomes on this present theme.

1. A study could be made on school environment and learning interest in Tamil of high and college students.

2. A study could be conducted on learning interest in Tamil and their effective communication skills in schools.

3. A study could be conducted on the impact of learning interest in Tamil in the achievement scores of students studying at various levels.

Conclusion

The learning interest of higher secondary students is average level. So, the present condition should be maintained and it is recommended to other district those who scored less than the average level. There is a significant difference between the sub samples of locality, community, parental education, parental occupation and parental income with respect to learning interest in Tamil. So, the policy frame workers should consider these variables while constructing a curriculum on developing for school students.

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