



## **Rural Students' Attitude Towards English As Medium of Instruction In Higher Education – An Analysis**

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### **Abstract**

*Today's world is bind with Learning in English, there is no compromising and comparison with that. Learning in English is not a new thing and difficult thing for urban and city students. Because, they start learning in English at the age of 3 years old itself. But in the case of rural and first generation students, it is a tough task to study in English. In this study, the researcher studied about rural and first generation students' attitude and habit towards English as medium of instruction in higher education. Thus, the study gives suitable suggestion to overcome the problem of students who are studying in English.*

**Key Words:** English, Learning, Rural Students, Habits & Education System.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the globalized world, the importance of learning in English cannot be measured. In the academic, business, political and so on, without knowing English, it is risky to lead anything in smooth manner. Knowing English language helps to get many opportunities in the international markets and regions. Nowadays, English speakers can easily survive in this competitive world. There are so many of reasons for making compulsory to learn in English. So, every education institutions are training their students to make them communicate in English. This trend has been started before some decades and has given passion among urban students to learn communicative English. But, rural students are still struggling in learning in English and feel dilemma in learning in English. Thus, this

study made an attempt to know the rural students' attitude towards learning in English language.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Our education system is connected with learning in English language. Except language subject, all other major and main subjects are taught and learned by the students in English alone. English is a universal language accepted by majority of the countries in the world. Thus, thinking with long view, all the universities accept English as a standard and communicating language to learn. But the real problem is students are struggling with learning their subject through English. There are lot of reasons encountered by the students to face difficulties in learning their subject through English. One of the most important



reasons is their milieu. It affects the students' attitude in learning English. So, the researcher analyse the rural students attitude towards English language learning.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The following are the objectives focused in this study.

- ❖ To study the milieu of the rural students learning through English language.
- ❖ To identify the habit of learning in English language by the rural students.
- ❖ To know the preference of language used by the rural students to read dailies.
- ❖ To measure the rural students' attitude towards English as medium of instruction in higher education.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

The researcher used purposive stratified random sampling. The respondents are first year UG students from Colleges in Namakkal District. In this study the tools like percentage analysis, one way ANOVA and

#### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

paired sample t-test were used to analyse the attitude of the rural students towards English language learning

#### **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study covered Namakkal district. Namakkal district, these days, is better known for school education. Even though, it is famous for school learners, especially getting first mark in the state, the rural students still, are in the poor level. They lack in learning subjects through the medium of English. It was observed that English was the main reason for reducing students' performance in the college level. Thus, First year students of college goer have been chosen in Namakkal District.

#### **HYPOTHESES**

**Ho:** There is no significant difference between discipline and attitude of students towards English as medium of instruction.

**Ho:** There is no significant difference between discipline and the habit of learning in English.

**Ho:** There is no significant difference in mean score of habit of learning and overall attitude towards English as medium of instruction.

Milieu Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age of the Respondent</b>		
17 years	35	49.3
18 years	27	38.0
19 years	7	9.9



20 years	2	2.8
Total	71	100.0
<b>Gender of the Respondents</b>		
Male	31	43.7
Female	40	56.3
<b>Mother Tongue of the Respondents</b>		
Tamil	70	98.6
Other Language	1	1.4
Total	71	100.0
<b>School Last Studied</b>		
Government	40	56.3
Private	14	19.7
Government Aided	17	23.9
Total	71	100.0
<b>Medium of Instruction</b>		
Tamil	62	87.3
English	9	12.7
Total	71	100.0
<b>Discipline of the Respondents</b>		
Literature (B.A)	31	43.7
Commerce (B.Com)	10	14.1
Science (B.Sc)	10	14.1
Professional	12	16.9
Other Studies	8	11.3
Total	71	100.0
<b>Language Known by the Respondents</b>		
Tamil Alone	14	19.7
Tamil & English	51	71.8
Tamil, English and Other Language	6	8.5
Total	71	100.0
<b>Father's Occupation of the Respondents</b>		
Farmer	37	52.1
Coolie	10	14.1
Driver	9	12.7

Professionalist	7	9.9
Self-Employed	8	11.3
Total	71	100.0
<b>Father's Educational Qualification of the Respondents</b>		
Upto VIII Std	41	57.7
Upto X Std	18	25.4
Upto XII Std	5	7.0
Above XII Std	7	9.9
Total	71	100.0
<b>Mother's Occupation of the Respondents</b>		
Home Maker	45	63.4
Farmer	15	21.1
Coolie	6	8.5
Professionalist	5	7.0
Total	71	100.0
<b>Mother's Educational Qualification of the Respondents</b>		
Up to VIII Std	44	62.0
Up to X Std	11	15.5
Up to XII Std	10	14.1
Above XII Std	6	8.5
Total	71	100.0
<b>Annual Income of the Respondents</b>		
Up to Rs. 100000	65	91.5
Rs. 100001- 200000	6	8.5
Total	71	100.0

**Source:** Primary Data

From the above table, 49.3 per cent of the students belong to the age group of 17 years, 38 per cent of the students belong to 18 years, 9.9 per cent of the students belong to 19 years & 2.8 per cent of the students belong to 20 years. 43.7 per cent of the students are Male and 56.3 per cent of the students are female. 98.6 per cent of the students' mother

tongue is Tamil. 56.3 per cent of the students did their schooling in government school, 19.7 per cent of the students studied in private school and remaining students (23.9 per cent) were from government aided school. 87.3 per cent students studied in Tamil medium in schools and the remaining 12.7 per cent students studied in English medium. 43.7 per

cent of the respondents belong to literature, 14.1 per cent respondents are from commerce and sciences courses, 16.9 per cent respondents from professional courses and 11.3 per cent respondents belong to other higher studies. 19.7 per cent know Tamil alone, 71.8 per cent know both Tamil and English. 8.5 per cent know Tamil, English and other languages. 52.1 per cent of the students' fathers are farmers, 14.1 per cent of the students' fathers are coolies, 12.7 per cent of the students' fathers are drivers and the balance 9.9 per cent of the students' fathers are professionalist. 57.7 per cent of the students' fathers studied up to VIII, 25.4 per cent of the students' fathers studied up to X std, 7 per cent of the students' fathers studied up to XII std

and the remaining 9.9 per cent of the students' fathers studied above XII std. 63.4 per cent of the students' mothers are home maker, 21.1 per cent of the students' mothers are farmers, 8.5 per cent of the students' mothers are coolies and the balance 7 per cent of the students' mothers are professionalist. 62 per cent of the students' mothers studied up to VIII, 15.5 per cent of the students' mothers studied up to X std, 14.1 per cent of the students' mothers studied up to XII std and the remaining 8.5 per cent of the students' mother studied above XII std. 91.5 per cent respondents' family annual income up to Rs. 100000 and 8.5 per cent family has family income above Rs. 100000.

**Students' Habit towards Learning in English**

S. No	Habit of Learning in English	Yes	No
1	Receiving Help from Elders	40.8 (29)	59.2 (42)
2	Education of Neighbours	78.9 (56)	21.1 (15)
3	Habit of Reading English Dailies at Home	42.3 (30)	57.7 (41)
4	Habit of Reading English Dailies at College	81.7 (58)	18.3(13)
5	Habit of Hearing English News	35.2 (25)	64.8 (46)
6	Habit of Watching English Movies	67.6(48)	32.4(23)
7	Habit of Watching English Telecast	45.1 (32)	54.9 (39)
8	Habit of Reading English Magazines	21.1 (15)	78.9 (56)

**Source:** Primary Data

From the above table states that 59.2 per cent do not get any help from their elders. 78.9 per cent of the respondents' neighbours are literate. 57.7 per cent students do not have the habits of reading at home. 81.7 per cent of the students have the habits of reading at college, 64.8 per cent students do not have the habits of hearing English news, 67.6 per cent students watch English movies,

54.9 per cent students do not watch English telecast and 78.9 per cent students do not have the habits of reading English magazines.

**Preferable Language in Reading Dailies**

Language of reading dailies at home		
Not Reading Dailies	41	57.7
Tamil	22	31.0
English	2	2.8
Both	6	8.5
Total	71	100.0
Language of reading dailies at college		
Not Reading Dailies	13	18.3
Tamil	25	35.2
English	8	11.3
Both	25	35.2
Total	71	100.0

**Source:** Primary Data

57.7 per cent of students do not have the habit of reading dailies, 31 per cent students read only Tamil dailies, 2.8 per cent students read English dailies and 8.5 per cent students read both English and Tamil dailies at their home. It is found that 18.3 per cent of the students do not have the habit of reading dailies, 35.2 per cent students read only Tamil dailies, 11.3 percent students read English dailies and 35.2 per cent students read both English and Tamil dailies at college.

**Willingness and Improvement of learning in English**

S. No	Variables	Yes	No
1	Improvement after coming to college	97.2 (69)	2.8 (2)
2	Willing to learn in English	97.2 (69)	2.8 (2)

**Source:** Primary Data

Majority of the 97.2 per cent of the students have improved their language skill after coming to college, as they have the intention to learn in English.

**Ho:** There is no significant difference between discipline and attitude of students towards English as medium of instruction.

Discipline	Mean	S.D	F-value	p-value
literature (B.A)	42.48	5.144	1.725	0.155
Commerce (B.Com)	40.30	3.302		
Sciences (B. Sc)	38.20	5.574		
Professional Courses	40.00	5.461		
Other Studies	40.38	3.583		

**Source:** Primary Data

Since p-value is greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis is accepted at 5 per cent level of significance. Hence, conclude that there is no significant difference among discipline of the rural students and their attitude towards English as medium of instruction. It shows that whatever may be the discipline (i.e. Arts, Science or Commerce, Professional & Other Studies) of the rural students' attitude towards English as medium of instruction is alike. Here, the locality and situation of the students living play very significant role in changing the attitude of the students towards leaning in English.

**Ho:** There is no significant difference between discipline and habit of learning in English language.

Discipline	Mean	S.D	F-Value	p-value
Literature (B.A)	11.4516	1.47961	2.985	0.025*
Commerce (B.Com)	11.5000	1.35401		
Sciences (B. Sc)	12.4000	1.89737		
Professional	13.0000	1.04447		
Other Studies	11.6250	1.40789		

**Note:** \* denotes significant at 5 per cent level

**Source:** Primary Data

Since p-value is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected at 5 per cent level of significance. Hence, it is concluded that there is significant difference among discipline of the rural students and their habit of learning in English. It shows that each discipline students are having diverse habit of learning in English. Because, the science students have to study most of the words and concept in English only but it may not be so in the case of Arts and Commerce disciplines.

**Ho:** There is no significant difference in mean score of habit of learning and overall attitude towards English as medium of instruction.



Particulars	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Overall Habit of Learning in English	11.87	1.539	<b>43.58</b>	<b>0.026*</b>
Overall Attitude of the Respondents	40.92	5.008		

**Source:** Primary Data

**Note:** \* denotes significant at 5 per cent level

Since p-value is less than 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected at 5 per cent level of significance. Hence, conclude that there is significant difference in mean score of habit of learning and overall attitude towards English as medium of instruction. Even though the students want to study in English, they could not study in English because of environment. Based on the mean score, the overall attitude of the rural students 40.92 is higher than overall habit of learning in English. Thus, they have intention to study, but they could not do it.

### CONCLUSION

In this competitive world, willing or unwilling students have to study in English, as English is the ruling language in the world. As environment plays major role in learning in English, it should be changed possibility and feasibility manner. Changing the attitude of the students is also very important for learning in English. Our educational system and teaching methodology should be changed. The way in which we teach should be practical oriented. Even as we do not teach, we practise the students to speak in English. Then only, we can make the students to speak English. Thus,

our rural students can easily speak English without any fear and hesitation and they never feel that studying in English is not difficult and so on.

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