

Module for Enhancing Sanskrit Learning Among the Upper Primary Students of Kerala – ‘Samskrutha Madhuri’

1. Introduction

Language, a system of conventional spoken or written symbols, by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express themselves. It is obvious that languages play an important role in various aspects of our daily lives. In the educational context, language is not only important for comprehension and making use of knowledge but also helps the learners for developing communication competencies, interpersonal skills, creative writings, interest in reading literary compositions, familiarise linguistic heritage, etc. Increasing globalisation has created a great need for people in the workforce, who can communicate in multiple languages. In addition to the vernacular languages, other languages also possess its own significance in the field of education. The Sanskrit language has been the traditional means of communication in Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, and Sikhism. Sanskrit literature holds the privilege, being used in ancient poetry, drama, and science as well as religious and philosophical texts. The language is believed to have been generated by observing the natural progression of sounds, created in the human mouth. Thus sound as an important element of language formation. This is one of the prime reasons for considering Sanskrit as rich in poetry. Its expressive quality of bringing out the best meaning through perfect sounds that are soothing to human ear. At present, there is provision to opt Sanskrit as the first language in government/aided schools of Kerala. The students who choose Sanskrit as second language felt difficulty in communication such as sharing ideas, creative writings, asking doubts in Sanskrit. Considering other languages, Sanskrit learning is limited for content transaction in classrooms. Hence it is necessary to identify the problems that are faced by the students and teachers in the classrooms for Sanskrit learning. Hence SCERT decided to develop a module – ‘Samskrutha Madhuri’ for enhancing Sanskrit learning among students at Upper Primary (UP) level.

2. Objectives of the study

- To develop the language competency and aptitude for learning Sanskrit among UP students.
- To enable the students in acquiring communicative competency through Sanskrit.
- To develop interest in reading literary compositions in Sanskrit.
- To acquire creative writing skills in Sanskrit.

- To familiarise linguistic heritage and culture of Sanskrit.

3. Methodology

3.1 Method

Sample Survey cum experimental method is adopted for conducting the study.

3.2 Sample

Ten Government and Aided Schools from 9 districts (Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta, Alapuzha, Idukki, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad and Kannur) were selected for the study. From these sample schools 325 students in the UP level were selected as sample.

3.3 Tools used for the study

- Self assessment Questionnaire for the students
- Questionnaire for teachers
- Module – ‘Samskrutha Madhuri’: It is prepared with the intension of developing language competency and aptitude in Sanskrit learning. Basic concepts in Sanskrit is presented in the form of Poems, Songs, Pictures, Worksheets, Games, Videos, and Dialogues. This is for developing interests in Sanskrit learning among students. Students were given opportunities for expressing their ideas, sharing opinions, creative writings, and communication through the medium of Sanskrit.

3.4 Statistical technique

Statistical frequency and Percentage analysis were used for analysing the data.

4. Major Findings

- It is found that 72% of the students had the ability to comprehend the Sanskrit language.
- While 70% of the students had improvement in reading comprehension in Sanskrit, 62% had the ability for communication and speech through Sanskrit.
- The study revealed that 78% of the students showed improvement in writing and 77% in writing by listening.
- It is found that 53% students have the ability in creative writings in Sanskrit.

- Majority of the teachers (80%) agreed that learning through the medium of Sanskrit is essential.
- All the teachers (100%) agreed that there is a need to equip the teachers for transacting the content through the medium of Sanskrit.
- More than half of the teachers (70%) opined that the existing learning procedure should be modified for effective transaction of Sanskrit in and outside the classroom. Also communication should be done between the students and the teachers through Sanskrit.

5. Suggestions

- More opportunities should be given in schools for enhancing Sanskrit learning.
- Importance should be given for students in writings in the teaching learning process.
- Introduce ICT through content transaction.
- Introduce 'Play way method' in teaching grammar.
- Steps must be taken for implementing 'Samskrutha Madhuri, state wise among the Sanskrit students of UP level.