

‘Ente Malayalam’-Language Enhancement Programme at Secondary School Level

Introduction

It is language which equips people to identify the various trends in the world and also to intervene creatively in social life. Language is inevitable for knowledge acquisition and communication. Development of language in children is very much related to the development of knowledge and thinking process. Children should be able to participate in activities where their thinking skills like guessing, prediction, imagination, etc., can be employed creatively. The child should be given opportunities to maintain and acquire excellence in various fields like creative writing, vocabulary enrichment, comprehending a reading passage, appreciating a poem etc. The common approach that employed in the classrooms for language acquisition may not be beneficial for all the learners. The learning difficulties of each learner may vary. Many children are poor in language learning because of various reasons. Lack of basic linguistic, social, and economic reasons, lack of individual attention, lack of confidence in performing in other subjects etc may be the reasons for the backwardness in language learning. But this does not mean that they are not talented. Each individual has their own abilities, but due to lack of language acquisition, and confidence they are found to be backward. So, in order to bring these children to the forefront, it is necessary to develop innovative and scientific strategies in language learning. Interventions need to be carried out to increase confidence in other linguistic experience along with the interpersonal errors in writing and reading.

Keeping all these in mind, SCERT has decided to organize a Language Enhancement Programme, ‘Ente Malayalam’ in all the secondary level schools of Kerala. This project will help those who couldn’t excel in the acquisition of the vernacular language and through this they can acquire and excel more in Malayalam language. The project envisages a classroom which have an inspirational and enjoyable atmosphere, dedicated teachers and children who could really enjoy and immerse in the acquisition of the language.

Objectives

- To identify the problems of children who are backward in language acquisition.
- To develop a learning package for language learning.

- To ensure the practicability of the enhancement programme.
- To assess the effectiveness of the enhancement programme
- To provide suggestions for the extension of the programme.

Methodology

As part of the language enhancement programme a learning package named 'Ente Malayalam' was developed and experimental method was used to test the effectiveness of the package. Percentage analysis is the statistical technique used for analysing the data.

Sample of the study

Ente Malayalam programme was carried out in three educational districts such as Kannur, Kattappana and Alappuzha. 122 schools, 2440 learners and 244 teachers were taken as sample.

Tools

The tools employed are;

- Pre test
- 'Ente Malayalam' learning package
- Post test
- Guidelines for class observation
- Questionnaire for Teachers
- Questionnaire for Resource Teachers

Ente Malayalam – Language Enhancement Programme

The highlight of the Ente Malayalam programme is ensuring learning, activity oriented and process oriented type of curriculum approach. According to this programme classrooms need to be arranged in such a way that the children should be able to participate in various learning activities and it should also cater the interest of the learners. The curriculum also demands child

centered learning and Ente Malayalam programme has also focused on this approach. The module of Ente Malayalam has been prepared by considering the elements such as the method of learning, the classroom atmosphere, the lessons taken for teaching , planning for providing the activities, assessment of the activities, and the involvement of parents.

The activities which is to be given in the first five days are given in detail in the module of the Ente Malayalam . It ensured process oriented activities. In the first day of the training, seven activities are included. The activities which is to carried out are listed in the module. From the list, teachers can understand the activities, the discourses, and the different type of strategies that they have to use in the classroom. The activities for the second day are briefly listed in the module. In the first day, each and every child gets the opportunity to read the card which is given as part of a homework activity. Followed by this, the children are asked to read the lessons once again and and the cards of all the children will be presented in the classrooms. By doing this the children will feel that their writings are being considered and appreciated. Five activities are included in the third day of the training. Discourses like story writing, versification were done in the third day. Activities like analysing, prediction, listening to stories and poems , nature walk, observation, picturisation, acting, role plays etc., are used as strategies to ensure learning. The activities are carried out in a collaborative way and are arranged in such a way that the children got opportunities to respond freely. The activity 'muttathoru maramunde' is a language enrichment activity to observe and study the nature. That activity provided a lot of opportunities for children to speak informally and naturally. The fourth day's activities were divided into seven phases. Children get acquainted with discourses such as story, drama and picturisation. There was a PTA in the fourth day which provided platform for the interacting with parents (*Snehapoorvam Ammayodu*). The activities provided in the fifth day were in a different style. Children were splited into three groups according to their progress in language learning. First group needed more support. For them, opportunities are given to practice how to read and write words and sentences. Adequate support were given for children who engage in independent writing. The entire process is progressed through picture cards. Childen got maximum opportunities for independent writing and reading in each phase. The support to be provided by the teachers in each phase was recorded in the handbook.

Procedure

This programme was carried out in three phases- development of the package, try out, study on the effectiveness of the programme. Practical and useful learning strategies were employed in the package of Ente Malayalam for students who are backward in language learning at high school level. In the first phase, tryout classes were carried out in the selected 8 schools of Alappuzha educational district. The problems encountered during the implementation of the programme were identified in the try out. On the basis of this, the programme was implemented in educational districts like Kannur, Alappuzha and Kattappana. Resource teachers, who participated in the first phase were appointed to head the educational zonal level in three zonal groups. In a selected school, there were two consecutive tryout classes led by the resource teachers. On the basis of the pre-test 20 students were selected. Two faculty members from each high school attended the event as observers. From the third day onwards teachers who participated in this programme implemented the package in their own schools. A team comprising of AEO, DEO, Diet faculty members, assessed the progress of the programme in each school. An impact study was done to measure the effectiveness of the programme To evaluate the learner's progress in learning, learning product and notebooks were also assessed.

Findings

- About 61% of the learners who participated in the 'Ente Malayalam' language enhancement programme were able to read fluently. 68% of them actively participated in the learning activities and were confident enough to communicate freely. 44% of the learners proved their mettle in creative activities.
- 54% of the learners showed above average in the presentation of the lessons. Only 11% of the learners need improvement.
- 50% of the learners proved their mettle in the presentation of their own writings. 33% of the learners showed average level in their presentations whereas 17% of the learners need more improvement in this area.
- 47% of the learners showed above average individual presentation whereas 41% showed average level. 12% of the learners need to improve in this area.

- 59% of the learners actively participated in group discussions whereas 33% showed an average level. Only 8% of the learners need more improvement.
- Major percentage of the learners (58%) actively responded to the questions. On the other hand 31% showed average performance. It is noted that 11% of the students could not respond well to the questions.
- Regarding the presentation of the common subjects 53% of the learners showed above average performance and 32% of the learners showed average level. It is noticeable that 15% of the learners need more improvement in this area.
- 52% of the learners showed outstanding performance in the process of article writing based on the samples provided whereas 33% of the learners responded in an average level. It is found that 15% of the learners need more training in this area.
- In performing script writing 49% of the learners performed in an above average level whereas 38% of the learners performed in an average level. 13% of the learners still need more training in the independent writing skill.
- 49% of the students performed well in making notes based on the classroom discussions. About 38% of them performed in an average level in this area whereas 13% of them need more improvement.
- 41% of the learners proved an above average level in creative writing and the same percentage were able to perform in an average level. 18% of the learners need more improvement.
- 65% of the learners showed interest in reading the lessons in an above average level whereas 25% of the learners showed interest in an average level. 10% of the learners need more improvement in reading the lessons.
- 52% of the learners showed high interest in reading the textual works. 31% of the learners showed somewhat a better interest whereas 17% of the learners showed least interest in reading the textual works.

- 35% of the learners showed an outstanding capability to read the works critically whereas 41% showed an average capability. It is noted that 24% of the learners need more improvement in this area.
- 60% of the teachers are of the opinion that children's leadership is more evident when they are given opportunities to present their own ideas and opinion.
- The teacher's observations on the impact of my Malayalam project are as follows. Able to keep a friendly attitude with children (63.33%) Able to identify the skill of each child and were able to give respective support (58%)
- Gave opportunities for children to present their own ideas and suggestions 36.67%.were able to use learning materials which install interest among students (53.33%)
- The teachers observed that the impact of my Malayalam project on parents is important.60% of them opined that the parents showed interest to share their learning outcomes with the teachers. It is observed that 40% of the parents had started actively interacting with their children. 56.67% of them have started encouraging their children in learning and 66.67% started giving learning support to their children.

Suggestions

- Create a language atmosphere in classrooms that can be enjoyed by all children. For this teachers need to use effectively mediums like audio video presentations, acting ,etc.
- Learning activities need to be designed considering the diversity of the children. The learning process should be flexible and should consider all the levels of the learners.
- Learning activities need to be interesting. Active participation of the children need to be ensured in the presentation of the learning activities.
- The process of editing should be in a way that it should increase the confident level of the child. Rebuking for mistakes need to be avoided completely.
- For the formation of the concepts teachers may use different medium of teaching like audio video presentation, nature walk, etc.,The concepts thus formed need to be presented

verbally. Later these need to be presented in a written form. Teacher will write the same sentence on the blackboard and the learners need to check with it to know whether they have made any mistakes in their writings. Teachers need to ensure this process is followed throughout the activities.

- The child should be able to go to other learning activities as they take up the activities in the classroom. The learning activities should be planned in such a way to fulfill this aim.
- A child will build up his/her confidence if he/she feels that they are being considered. So it is to be ensured that each child is considered individually.
- The classrooms should be filled with friendly atmosphere. Teacher should be able to work with the learners as if he/she is one among them. Natural learning only takes place in a fearless situation.
- When the learners are given challenging activities, it is to be ensured that the teachers should be able to act as a co-learner to find solutions for those challenging activities.
- It shouldn't feel that only language teachers are responsible for this project. The backwardness in the language will make the learners exhibit poor performance in other subjects too. So the teachers handling all the subjects should carry out and evaluate the module of Ente Malayalam.
- On the spot editing and evaluation is important. Ensure that this process is followed in each phase of the activity.
- Teachers should take up the responsibility to know their children and their atmosphere at home. Teachers can make use of home visit and friendly talks.
- Classroom activities need to be designed taking account of the demerits of the homely atmosphere of the children.
- Children should be given leadership not only in learning activities but also in other school activities.

Conclusion

Ente malayalam programme put forward a drastic change in language learning and find a solution for the backwardness in reading, writing, listening and speaking and also able to upgrade other language experiences in learning. Learners could indulge not only in learning but also develop their creative skills in language. They were also excelled in other subjects as well. The teachers approach towards children were also changed as they were more close to their students.