

---

## Listening and Speaking Skills of English Language of Adolescents of Government and Private Schools

**Dr. Amardeep Kaur**

Professor, Babe Ke College of Education,

Mudki, Ferozepur, Punjab

### Abstract

*The present study was designed to study the Listening and Speaking Skills of English Language of Adolescents of Government and Private Schools. A sample of 200 students of IX class of Government and Private Schools of District Fatehgarh Sahib was taken. Self Constructed test for assessing the Listening Ability of Secondary School Students and Self Constructed test for assessing the Speaking Ability of the Secondary School students was employed for collection of data. . The results revealed significant difference in listening and speaking competency in English language of students of Government and Private Schools at Secondary level. A careful examination of the result revealed significant difference in listening competency in English language of male and female students of Government Schools at Secondary level whereas no significant difference was found in speaking competency in English language of male and female students of Government Schools at Secondary level. The study also revealed no significant difference in listening and speaking competency in English language of male and female students of Private Schools at Secondary level.*

**Key words:** English language, Listening skill, Speaking skill, adolescents, government schools, Private schools.

### Introduction

Human language is unique in comparison to other forms of communication, such as those used by other animals, because it allows humans to produce an infinite set of utterances from a finite set of elements. As the symbols and grammatical rules of any particular language are largely arbitrary, so the system can only be acquired through social interaction.

Coming to English language, the global lingua franca ,it holds today the place of pride as the world's most widely used Language. It is known in almost every country of the world; and a person out of every four on earth can be reached through it, as over 50% of the world's radio stations use English as a medium of communication. It is the international language for greater understanding and inter-linking the people in other countries. English is being learnt and used all over the world not out of any imposition but through the realization that it has certain inherent advantages. It is, in fact a 'global language', 'a window on the modern world'. It is no wonder that the English language continues to occupy a prominent place in our Indian school curriculum. F.G. French aptly remarks ;“Anyone who can read English can keep in touch with whole world without leaving his own home.”

Seventy years of independence clearly shows that English in India is indispensable. English in India today is a symbol of people's aspiration for quality in education and a fuller participation in national and international life. The liberalization of Indian Economy ushered in all kinds of reasons to learn the language. From the advent of multinationals resulting in many developments like varied job opportunities that demanded the command in English, more English Channels on the television, an increasing number of English publications and international lifestyles become a tempting option. In the opinion of Das (2005), “The opening up of Indian Economy, in the 1990's has coincided with an explosion in the demand for English in our schools because English is perceived to open up opportunities.”

---

## English as a skill subject

English is a skill subject like painting or dancing. Just as we learn painting or dancing through constant practice, we acquire English in the same way. In fact English is an over learned skill. With globalization and constant technological revolutions this Language has emerged as Global Language. There is huge demand of trained professionals and Masters of English Language. We need a Language Trainer at a call center, a Teacher or Professor at a school or college, Language Translators at Embassies and the more recent trend is to clear the IELTS and TOEFL Language tests to get admission in Foreign Universities which is basic eligibility criteria for English as Second Language learners. So there is dire need of professionals in the Language to meet the current needs of the market to fulfill the demands of growing Multinationals across the globe , all that require one thing that is a full fledged command over language and possession of good communication skills , which is only possible with maximum usage of English language.

## Language Skills

Learning a language comprises of four skills. These are listening, speaking, reading and writing (LSRW). Among these four skills, listening and reading are used as the channels of receiving information. Thus, these two skills are called as receptive skills. The remaining two skills, speaking and writing, are used as channels of sending information. Thus, these two skills are labeled as productive skills.

### *Listening*

In the learning of any language, listening is the basis of everything. When the child learns mother tongue, listening skill comes first. In the teaching of English as a foreign language, the learner is to respond to a new set of symbols in speech. To achieve this aim, the teacher must provide maximum opportunities to his pupils to listen to the different spoken forms . The aim is that children learn to respond to English sounds produced in quick succession. In fact, everything in language learning is based on good listening.

### *Speaking*

Listening is naturally followed by speaking. Once the child has started understanding language symbols, he should be given opportunities to use those verbal symbols in speech. This means that the child should be able to make the sounds of English-single sounds as well as sounds in combination; he should know the use of proper stress and intonation; he should be able to express himself through short simple sentences; he should be able to converse in English, answer simple questions and ask simple questions; he should be able to talk about events, places, things and persons in simple English.

### *Reading*

Reading is one of the fundamental skills in language learning. It is a receptive skill. It means of fixing firmly the language items which have already been learnt by the child as a part of listening and speaking. Reading is a 'developmental process'. The first stage is learning sound symbols which is followed in new combinations as words, sentences, paragraphs and short passages. So it can be said that 'the process of learning to read is the process to transfer from the auditory signs of language signals which the child has already learned to the new visual signs for the same signals'. Reading is a 'Psycho-linguistic' guessing game in the sense that one has to predict, infer and assume. Reading is nothing but an understanding of written symbols which consist of recognition and comprehension skills. To perform the reading activity one should have the knowledge of the language; the knowledge of the writing system; ability to recognize the phonemes and the ability to interpret and comprehend the texts, etc.

While reading, a reader interacts with a text, decodes it, and constructs meaning in the process. The reading activity updates one's knowledge and it is an important tool for academic success.

### *Writing*

Writing is the process of conveying one's thoughts through written symbols. It is a difficult process. Writing activity, which is viewed as a communicative act, also helps strategy training as well as cognitive and literacy development. Thus, the writing reinforces what the students have already learnt through oral work or through reading lessons. The writing skill includes the ability to shape the letters; ability to convert the ideas using the

---

written symbols, ability to write without grammatical errors and the ability to present and organize in a readable fashion, etc. A well planned writing can present complicated facts in a logical comprehensible order. The value of writing lies in the sense that it reinforces that the students have learned through listening, speaking and reading. A well known Chinese proverb aptly fits here, 'The Palest ink is better than the most retentive memory.'

All these four skills of language are the bases for communication. Hence, they form the base for the language proficiency-the ability to use the knowledge in different tasks.

### **Government Secondary Schools**

A school that is intermediate in level between elementary school and college and that usually offers general, technical, vocational or college-preparatory curricula are known as 'Secondary Schools'. If schools are mostly funded by Government of the state they are better known as Government Senior Secondary Schools. In much of India, the schooling offered by the state governments would technically come under the category of "public schools" or Government schools. They are states or public bodies funded and have zero or very minimal fees.

### **Private Secondary Schools**

A private secondary school is run and supported by private individual organizations. Private schools, also known as independent schools, are not administered by local, state or national governments; thus, they retain the right to select their students and are funded in whole or in part by charging their students tuition, rather than relying on public (state) funds. Such schools solely depend on individuals or a corporation rather than a government or public agency.

### **Objectives**

- ) To find out difference in Listening competency in English language of students of Government and Private Schools at Secondary level.
- ) To find out difference in Speaking competency in English language of students of Government and Private Schools at Secondary level.
- ) To find out difference in Listening competency in English language between male and female students of Government Schools at Secondary level.
- ) To find out difference in Speaking competency in English language between male and female students of Government Schools at Secondary level.
- ) To find out difference in Listening competency in English language between male and female students of Private Schools at Secondary level.
- ) To find out difference in Speaking competency in English language between male and female students of Private Schools at Secondary level.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

- ) The study was limited to rural and urban school going students at secondary level.
- ) Male and female students of district Fatehgarh Sahib were taken to study the problem.
- ) The Government and Private Schools of district Fatehgarh Sahib were taken for studying the problem.

### **Review of Related Literature**

Kudchedkar (1981) developed a course in spoken English and study its effectiveness. It was revealed that the students taught by traditional methods failed to acquire mastery over the language as system. Also aptitude appeared to be an even more important factor than motivation or methodology. Gaikwad (1982) conducted his

study with the objective to examine the comparative efficiency of direct method and the bilingual method under experimental condition for teaching English as a second language to lower classes of secondary schools in rural areas. Another objective was to compare the achievement of pupils in language learning gained by the direct method and bilingual method in respect of four basic skills of language learning namely listening, reading, speaking and writing. A sample of class 5<sup>th</sup> students from a village school, which was typically rural in all aspects was selected. The major findings of the study revealed that the bilingual method was superior to the direct method in developing linguistic skills of understanding, speaking and writing. Both the methods were equally effective so far as reading skills were concerned. Pillai (1984) in his study found that English language still depends on the situation in which the user puts the language in actual use in achieving his objectives of vocabulary. Vocabulary acquisition of writing mechanism provided the base for the receptive and productive skills respectively. The use of English for speaking, reading was very limited as compared to that of writing and listening. Khan (1998) in his study developed teaching strategies in English on the basis of difficulties faced by second language learners. It was reported that pronunciation, vocabulary, spelling and grammar were the important aspects where learners faced difficulties. Based on the above difficulties he developed different strategies for the teaching of English pronunciation, vocabulary, spelling and grammar. Anil Sarwal (2008) wrote a paper focusing on the 'Problems of Teaching English as Second Language-A random test of proficiency in spoken and written English of the students of First year Graduation with respect to pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and other super segmental elements'. The basic objective of this study was to evaluate the competence of learners in respect to the development of basic language skills and how far the learners are able to express their thoughts and emotions naturally in their second language. At the same time, this study gives deep insight into on the influence of first language L1 (Mother tongue) affects the competence of the second language L2 learner. Shukla (2013) in her article 'Teaching English Language: Problems and Remedies' stressed that English ought to be spoken for communication, read for understanding the content, written for self expression and listened to for understanding.

### **Hypotheses**

- ) There exists no significant difference in Listening competency in English language of students of Government and Private schools at secondary level.
- ) There exists no significant difference in Speaking competency in English language of students of Government and Private schools at secondary level.
- ) There exists no significant difference in Listening competency in English language between male and female students of Government Schools at Secondary level.
- ) There exists no significant difference in Speaking competency in English language between male and female students of Government Schools at Secondary level.
- ) There exists no significant difference in Listening competency in English language between male and female students of Private Schools at Secondary level.
- ) There exists no significant difference in Speaking competency in English language between male and female students of Private Schools at Secondary level.

### **Method and Procedure**

#### *Sample*

A sample of 200 students of IX class of Government and Private Schools of District Fatehgarh Sahib was taken. The sample was balanced among male and female students to study gender differences.

#### *Tools Used*

1. A Self Constructed test for assessing the Listening Ability of Secondary School Students.
2. A Self Constructed test for assessing the Speaking Ability of the Secondary School students.

#### *Statistical Techniques*

1. Mean, Median and Standard Deviation to study the nature of distribution of scores.
2. t-ratio to investigate the significance of difference between male and female students of their Listening and Speaking Skills in English Language.

### Analysis of Data and Interpretation of Results

**Objective- I : To find out difference in Listening competency in English language of students of Government and Private Schools at Secondary level.**

**Table 1 Showing the difference in Listening Competency in English language of Government and Private schools at Secondary level**

Listening Competency	Mean	S.D.	S.E <sub>d</sub>	t-Value	Level of Significance
Government Secondary School Students	19.55	4.85	0.61	19.88	Significant at 0.01 level of significance
Private Secondary School Students	31.68	3.78			

The above table 1 shows the Mean Scores, Standard Deviation, and t -Value of Listening Competency of Government and Private Secondary school students. The table illustrates that the mean score for Government Secondary schools is 19.55 and of Private Secondary schools is 31.68 .The obtained t value is 19.88 which is higher than the t critical i.e.2.58 at 0.01 level of confidence. Hence significant difference is found in the Listening Competency of Government Secondary school students and Private Secondary school students.

### Verification of Hypothesis

From the above result, it is clear that the obtained t value is significant at 0.01 level . Hence, the hypothesis of the study “There exists no significant difference in Listening Competency in English language of students of Government and Private Schools at Secondary level.” is rejected.

**Objective- II : To find out difference in Speaking competency in English language of students of Government and Private Schools at Secondary level.**

**Table 2 Showing the difference in Speaking Competency in English language of Government and Private schools at Secondary level**

Speaking Competency	Mean	S.D.	S.E <sub>d</sub>	t-Value	Level of Significance
Government Secondary School Students	12.58	3.22	0.39	21.64	significant at 0.01 level of significance
Private Secondary School Students	21.02	2.27			

The above table 2 shows the Mean Scores, Standard Deviation and t Value of Speaking Competency of Government and Private Secondary school students. The table illustrates that the mean score for Government Secondary schools is 12.58 and of Private Secondary schools is 21.02 .The obtained t value is 21.64 which is higher than the t critical i.e.2.58 at 0.01 level of confidence. The finding reveals significant difference in the Speaking Competency of Government Secondary school students and Private Secondary school students.

### Verification of Hypothesis

From the above result, it is clear that the obtained t value is significant at 0.01 level. Hence, the hypothesis of the study “There exists no significant difference in Speaking Competency in English language of students of Government and Private Schools at Secondary level” is rejected.

**Objective III : To find out difference in Listening competency in English language between male and female students of Government Schools at Secondary level.**

**Table 3 Showing the difference in Listening Competency in English Language of Male and Female students of Government Schools at Secondary level**

Listening Competency	Gender	Mean	S.D.	S.E <sub>d</sub>	t-Value	Level of significance
Government Secondary School Students	Male	18.04	4.28	0.93	3.25	significant at 0.01 level of significance
	Female	21.06	4.96			

The table 3 shows that significant difference exists in Listening competency in English language of male and female students of Government Schools at Secondary level. The Mean scores of Listening competency in English language of male and female students of Government Schools at Secondary level are 18.04 and 21.06 respectively. t- ratio is 3.25 which is greater than t critical (2.58) at 0.01 level of confidence . Hence after comparing the Mean Scores, it was found that the Listening competency in English language of female students is significantly higher than that of male students of Government Schools at Secondary level.

### Verification of Hypothesis

From the above result , it is clear that the obtained t value is significant at 0.01 level. Hence hypothesis of the study “There exists no significant difference in Listening Competency in English language of male and female students of Government Schools at secondary level” stands rejected.

**Objective-IV: To find out difference in Speaking competency in English language between Male and Female students of Government Schools at Secondary level.**

**Table 4 Showing the Difference in Speaking Competency in English language of Male and Female Students of Government Schools at Secondary Level**

Speaking Competency	Gender	Mean	S.D.	S.E <sub>d</sub>	t-Value	Level of significance
Government Secondary School Students	Male	12.26	3.37	0.65	0.98	Not significant at 0.05 level of significance
	Female	12.90	3.06			

The above table 4 shows the Mean Scores, Standard Deviation and t Value of Speaking Competency of Government Secondary school students. The table illustrates that the mean score for Government Secondary schools Male and Female students is 12.26 and 12.90 respectively. The obtained t value is 0.98 which is lower than the t critical i.e.1.96 at 0.05 level of confidence. Hence, significant difference is not found in the Speaking Competency of Government Secondary school male and female students.

#### Verification of Hypothesis

From the above result, it is clear that the obtained t value is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence, the hypothesis of the study “There exists no significant difference in Speaking Competency in English language of Male and Female students of Government Schools at Secondary level” is accepted.

**Objective V: To find out difference in Listening competency in English language between male and female students of Private Schools at Secondary level.**

**Table 5 Showing the Difference in Listening Competency in English language of Male and Female Students of Private Schools at Secondary Level.**

Listening Competency	Gender	Mean	S.D.	S.E <sub>d</sub>	t-Value	Level of Significance
Private Secondary School Students	Male	31.03	4.05	0.57	1.80	Not significant at 0.05 level of significance
	Female	32.06	3.50			

The above table 5 shows the Mean Scores, Standard Deviation and t Value of Listening Competency of Private Secondary school students. The table illustrates that the mean score of Private Secondary schools Male and Female students is 31.03 and 32.06 respectively. The obtained t value is 1.80 which is lower than the t critical i.e.1.96 at 0.05 level of confidence. Hence, significant difference is not found in the Listening Competency of Private Secondary school male and female students.

#### Verification of Hypothesis

From the above result, it is clear that the obtained t value is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Hence the hypothesis of the study “There exists no significant difference in Listening competency in English language of Male and Female students of Private Schools at Secondary level”, stands accepted.

**Objective VI: To find out difference in Speaking competency in English language between male and female students of Private Schools at Secondary level.**

**Table 6 Showing the difference in Speaking Competency in English language of Male and Female students of Private Schools at Secondary level.**

Speaking Competency	Gender	Mean	S.D.	S.E <sub>d</sub>	t-Value	Level of Significance
Private Secondary School Students	Male	21.20	2.32	0.46	0.61	Not significant at 0.05 level of significance
	Female	20.92	2.24			

---

The above table 6 shows the Mean Scores, Standard Deviation and t Value of Speaking Competency of Private Secondary school students. The table illustrates that the mean score for Private Secondary schools Male and Female students is 21.20 and 20.92 respectively. The obtained t value is 0.61 which is lower than the t critical i.e.1.96 at 0.05 level of confidence. Hence, significant difference is not found in the Speaking Competency of Private Secondary school male and female students.

### **Verification of Hypothesis**

From the above result, it is clear that the obtained t value is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence the hypothesis of the study “There exists no significant difference in Speaking competency in English language of Male and Female students of Private Schools at Secondary level” stands accepted.

### **Conclusions**

On the basis of present investigation, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Significant difference is found in the Listening Competency of Government Secondary school students and Private Secondary school students. Private Secondary school students have higher Listening Competency than Government Secondary school students. This calls for more efforts on the part of Government schools in this area.
2. Significant difference is found in the Speaking Competency of Government Secondary school students and Private Secondary school students. Private Secondary school students have again fared better in Speaking Competency than Government Secondary school students. This calls for more efforts on the part of Government schools in this area as well.
3. It was found that the Listening competency in English language of female students is higher than that of male students of Government Schools at Secondary level. Hence girls are performing better in comparison to boys in Listening skill of English language.
4. No significant difference was found in the Speaking Competency of Government Secondary school male and female students. Thus the Speaking competency in English language of male and female students is almost equal of Government Schools at Secondary level.
5. Again no significant difference was found in the Listening Competency of Private Secondary school male and female students.
6. No significant difference was found in the Speaking Competency of Private Secondary school male and female students.

### **Educational Implications**

Findings of the study will make the teachers, students and administrators more clear about the aims and objectives of teaching and learning English. Keeping these in mind, the authorities and curriculum framers can take care of this aspect at the time of pre-service education. This subject should be taught more as a Skill Subject rather than as a knowledge subject. Further the teachers should be encouraged by school Principals to read recently published articles in Newspapers and books on English literature. They should also be encouraged to send their articles in School magazines or Newspapers. It is also revealed that availability of funds to be spent on teaching, learning and other activities in the subject of English is inadequate. So the administration should create adequate funds for this purpose. Habit of listening carefully must be inculcated among the students. Students must be guided to consult dictionary whenever they come across a new word. Love and passion for learning English language should be inculcated in the students which is possible by making it a Skill subject and not a knowledge subject.

---

## References

- J Bhatia, K.K. (2000). *Teaching and learning as a Foreign Language.*” Kalyani Publishers.
- J Das, B. K. (2005). *Focus on English.*” Ms. NFG-English.
- J French, F.G. (1950). *Teaching of English Abroad.*” Part I, II, and III, Oxford.
- J French, F.G. (1988). *Teaching English as International Language.* Oxford.
- J Gaikwad, M. A. (1982). A comparative study of the Effectiveness of the Direct Method and the Bilingual Method of teaching English at lower classes for secondary schools in rural areas of Maharashtra state- An experiment”,*Ph.D. Education Thesis*, Shi. Uni.
- J Kaur, A. (2007). An Evaluative study of English Language teaching in Secondary Schools of Punjab. *PhD, (Edu.)*, P.U. Chandigarh.
- J Khan, I. A. (1998). Strategies for the teaching of English as a second language in India.” *Progress of Education- Vol. LXX III.*
- J Kudchedkar, S. (1987). The Development of course in Spoken English at the college level and study of its effectiveness”, *Ph.D. Education Thesis*, SNTD.
- J Pillai, V. A. (1974), “A critical study of the basic structures in English and the corresponding structures in Malayalam and its implications in the Design of a course for Secondary schools”, *Ph.D., Edu., Thesis*, Ker. Unuversity.
- J Sarwal, A. (2008). Problems of Teaching English as Second Language”-A random test of proficiency in spoken and written English of the students First year Graduation with respect to pronunciation ,vocabulary, grammar and other super segmental elements. *Diviner – A Research Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 5(1), 56-64.
- J Shukla, A. (2013). Teaching English Language :Problems and Remedies, *The CTE National Journal*, XI(1),9-17.