

A Study of the Awareness about Modern Instructional Methods/ Strategies and Approaches among Secondary School Hindi Teachers in Kerala

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Abstract: Quality education is an important objective of National education policy. Teachers are the major component of quality education. Thus teachers have to alter their notion and teaching methods, establish new teaching ideology, play their own role and fulfil their own task. Translation method was commonly used in Kerala to impart Hindi which is neither psychological nor child centred. After the introduction of National Curriculum Frame work (NCF) many teaching methods and strategies, having strong psychological base and pupil participation, emerged in the field of Hindi education. The peculiar feature of these methods is that most of them are useful in developing speaking skills in students, which was neglected during the period of the age old translation method. So to make Hindi teaching live, interesting, student centred and interactive, adoption of modern instructional methods and strategies are compulsory. After discussing with experts in the field of Hindi education, 21 methods, strategies and approaches were selected, whose use will be very beneficial in Hindi instruction. Awareness regarding these methods, strategies and approaches was tested keeping in mind their role in the modernization of teaching Hindi.

Key Terms: Innovations, Facilitation, Competency building, Instructional strategies

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I. INTRODUCTION

A sharpened focus on refining Hindi language education in the existing school curriculum of Kerala is meant to equip the learner into an efficient user of Hindi and be able to master the acquisition of language skills and in identifying the specific patterns of strengthening language competence. But there is marked disparity towards the attainment of such unique objectives of Hindi language education and the expected status through the present system of instruction. As the National and Official Language of India, due emphasis is to be given to modernize varied dimensions and transactional modes towards mastery in Hindi language. For the modernization of Hindi language teaching, creative and constructive instructional practices are to be designed, validated and practised. But research studies proved that a sizable number of teachers prefer the translation method as major transactional mode, which ignores the active use of the target language in their learning space and is ineffective in the acquisition of language skills in Hindi.

With the world changing rapidly, the stock of knowledge is far greater and the pace of its growth is much greater than in a traditional society. This is true in the case of instructional strategies also. In tune with the rapid changes taking place in the area of language education, the pedagogical strategies are also being upgraded and modified. For the modernization of teaching Hindi, change in teaching methods is the primary necessity. Grammar Translation method was adopted to transact Hindi in the State for many decades. According to Richard and Rodgers (2001), "Grammar Translation is a method with no theory. There is no literature that offers a justification for using it and it causes frustration in students". It seemed that students who had some sort of language education in their back ground were better able to deal with this language teaching approach, and perhaps these students used previously acquired schemata to process new forms of a different target language to process new forms of a different target language.

The vision of education in the new era is that learning should not be related to feelings like fear or conflict. It should be related to feelings like pleasure and happiness. Even though it goes without saying that, a paradigm shift has taken place in the field of Hindi language education, it cannot be believed that things are going on very smoothly. Application of the constructivist approach, without understanding its very basics has created dilemma in learners as well as teachers. A good number of teachers are not aware of modern instructional strategies, and are more inclined to the translation method. They are also seemed to be reluctant to

accepted changes in teaching methods. Lack of sufficient time for instructional practice also seems to be a barrier in the pathway of modernization of Hindi teaching.

The first step towards the modernization process of Hindi teaching is application of modern instructional methods and strategies in the class room. But it is a disappointing fact that majority of the teachers are un-aware of modern instructional methods, for which they could not be blamed. Only little effort is taken by the authorities to make the teachers aware of the tremendous changes taking place in the field of second language pedagogy. Teachers have to rise to the occasion and examine whether or not the instruction that goes in our classrooms keeps changing in tune with the changing needs of the time. It is a fact that existing system demands necessary sharpness and appropriateness. This is a challenge that needs to be taken up immediately. Only a minority of teachers have succeeded in practicing and experimenting with modern instructional practices and in giving shape to the ideas by attaining such core outcome suggested by the curriculum framers.

In order to achieve the objectives of teaching and learning Hindi, different innovative methods and strategies of teaching are designed and practiced. But it is noted that a sizable number of teachers prefer the translation method, which ignores the active use of the target language in the class room and not effective in promoting the acquisition of language skills in Hindi. It also acts as a barrier in the development of creativity and divergent thinking skills in learners.

Educationists held the view that the need of the hour is either the application of prevalent modern instructional strategies in the class room or developing such innovations. This is an effective and practical way to modernize the teaching of Hindi. Since developing new techniques of teaching take a long span of time, application of prevailing innovative instructional techniques is the practical way to modernize the teaching of Hindi.

Problem selected for the study

A Study of the awareness in about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches among Secondary School Hindi teachers in Kerala

Objectives of the study

- 1 To study the awareness in Secondary school Hindi teachers working in Kerala about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches
- 2 To compare the awareness of male and female Hindi teachers working in Kerala about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches.
- 3 To compare the awareness of government and aided school Hindi teachers working in Kerala about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches.
- 4 To compare the awareness of rural and urban school Hindi teachers working in Kerala about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches.

Hypotheses of the study

- 1 The awareness of Secondary school Hindi teachers working in Kerala about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches is low.
- 2 There will be no significant difference between the awareness of male and female Hindi teachers working in Kerala about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches.
- 3 There will be no significant difference between the awareness of government and aided school Hindi teachers working in Kerala about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches.
- 4 There will be no significant difference between the awareness of rural and urban school Hindi teachers working in Kerala about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches.

Sample selected for the study

The Sample consists of 488 Secondary school Hindi teachers working in different districts of Kerala.

Method used for the study

Survey method was used in the study

Tool Used for the study

A checklist prepared by the investigator which contains 21 items.

Statistical techniques used

Calculation of percentages, Z test of significance

Analysis of data

Total

Table 1 presents the distribution of sample teachers by their familiarity with different teaching methods/strategies/approaches. Table shows that project method, co-operative learning and problem based learning are familiar to all teachers. It is also evident from the table that 87.50 per cent of teachers have

awareness of constructive approach which is prevalent in the upper primary and secondary sector. The analysis shows that 73.98 per cent teachers have awareness of collaborative learning, which is an unavoidable aspect of constructivist teaching.

Computer assisted instruction is adopted in the secondary schools of Kerala. 66.19 per cent of teachers have awareness about computer assisted instruction. Communicative language teaching is very effective in developing speaking skills in students. Majority of the teachers (54.10 per cent) are aware of this. Team teaching is an innovative teaching strategy which makes teaching more active and interesting. 50.41% of teachers are aware of team teaching.

Table 1: Distribution of sample teachers by their familiarity with different teaching methods/strategies/approaches

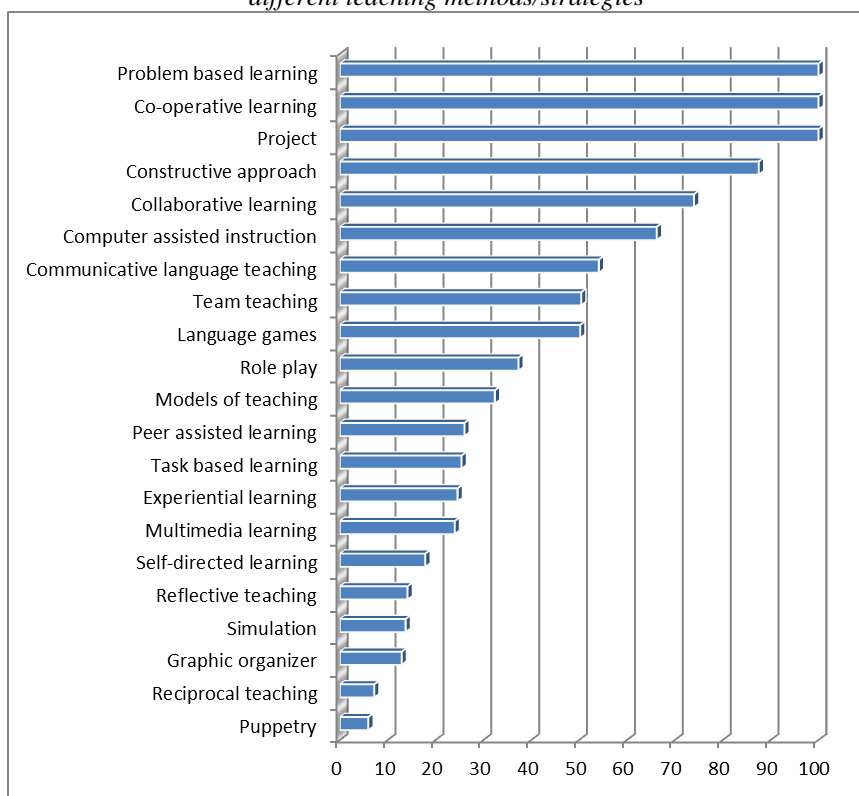
No.	Methods/strategies/approaches	N	%
1	Project	488	100.00
2	Co-operative learning	488	100.00
3	Problem based learning	488	100.00
4	Constructive approach	427	87.50
5	Collaborative learning	361	73.98
6	Computer assisted instruction	323	66.19
7	Communicative language teaching	264	54.10
8	Team teaching	246	50.41
9	Language games	245	50.20
10	Role play	182	37.30
11	Models of teaching	158	32.38
12	Peer assisted learning	127	26.02
13	Task based learning	124	25.41
14	Experiential learning	120	24.59
15	Multimedia learning	117	23.98
16	Self-directed learning	87	17.83
17	Reflective teaching	69	14.14
18	Simulation	67	13.73
19	Graphic organizer	63	12.91
20	Reciprocal teaching	35	7.17
21	Puppetry	29	5.94

Second language learning can be converted into a joyful journey through introducing language games in the classroom. 50.20 per cent of teachers are aware of language games. Models of teaching which is very much useful in developing creativity in students can be effectively incorporated in Hindi instruction. Models of teaching are familiar to 32.38 percentages of teachers. Peer assisted learning makes teaching more students centred. It is beneficial to both academically bright and weak students. 26.02 per cent of teachers are familiar with this strategy.

Task based learning put forward tasks to students and they complete it with the assistance of the teacher. 25.41 per cent of teachers are aware of this strategy. Experiential learning engages students in critical thinking, problem solving and decision making contexts that can personally relevant to them. 24.59 per cent of teachers have knowledge regarding experiential learning. Multimedia learning makes the classroom active and interesting through the use of modern instructional support materials. Multimedia learning is familiar to 23.98 per cent of the sample.

In Self-directed learning the teacher gives only directions to students. This method is useful in developing self-learning skills in students. 17.83 per cent of the sample has awareness regarding this method. Simulation is useful in making the classroom alive. Speaking skills could be easily developed through simulations. Reflective teaching is effective in diverge thinking skills in students which is familiar to 14.14 percentage of students. Simulations which are very helpful in developing listening and speaking skills in students, is known to only 13.73 per cent of teachers. Graphic organizers help students classify ideas and communicate more effectively. This is familiar only to 12.91 per cent of the respondents.

Figure 1: Percentage distribution of sample teachers by their familiarity with different teaching methods/strategies



Reciprocal teaching is child centred one, which is very useful in developing analytical and thinking skills in students. But it is familiar to only 7.17 percentages of respondents. Puppetry is an interesting strategy to develop listening and speaking skills in students, which could be effectively used in Hindi classrooms. Only 5.94 per cent of teachers have awareness about this strategy.

The analysis proves that out of the twenty one items included in the check list, the respondent have cent percentage awareness regarding project, co-operative learning and problem based learning. It is also evident that the total sample has good awareness regarding, constructive approach, collaborative learning, computer assisted instruction, communicative language teaching, team teaching and language games as the mean scores are above fifty. But as far as the remaining methods, strategies and approaches are concerned, i.e. role play, models of teaching, peer assisted learning, task based learning, experiential learning, multimedia learning, self-directed learning, reflective teaching, simulation, graphic organizer, reciprocal teaching and puppetry, the awareness of the sample is not satisfactory as the mean scores are below fifty.

Gender

Table 2: Distribution of sample teachers by their familiarity with different teaching methods/strategies and gender

Methods/strategies/approaches	Total	Gender		Z	Sig
		Male	Female		
	%	%	%		
Project	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	-
Co-operative learning	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	-
Problem based learning	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	-
Constructive approach	87.50	85.11	88.07	0.780	0.441
Collaborative learning	73.98	79.79	72.59	1.430	0.156
Computer assisted instruction	66.19	68.09	65.74	0.433	0.667
Communicative language teaching	54.10	61.70	52.28	1.647	0.101
Team teaching	50.41	53.19	49.75	0.599	0.555
Language games	50.20	53.19	49.49	0.645	0.522
Role play	37.30	36.17	37.56	0.250	0.803
Model of teaching	32.38	35.11	31.73	0.629	0.535

Peer assisted learning	26.02	29.79	25.13	0.925	0.358
Task based learning	25.41	23.40	25.89	0.498	0.624
Experiential learning	24.59	34.04	22.34	2.367	0.018
Multimedia learning	23.98	22.34	24.37	0.414	0.682
Self-directed learning	17.83	15.96	18.27	0.526	0.603
Reflective teaching	14.14	14.89	13.96	0.233	0.818
Simulation	13.73	20.21	12.18	2.033	0.042
Graphic organizer	12.91	8.51	13.96	1.416	0.159
Reciprocal teaching	7.17	7.45	7.11	0.115	0.912
Puppetry	5.94	7.45	5.58	0.689	0.496

It is evident from Table 2 that all the teachers from both gender have cent percentage awareness about project, co-operative learning and problem based learning. The analysis shows that the result of gender wise analysis of the sample regarding the awareness about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches is at par with that of the total sample. Both types of teachers have cent percentage awareness regarding project, co-operative learning and problem based learning. Male and female teachers have very good awareness regarding constructive approach, collaborative learning and computer assisted instruction. Both male and female teachers have sound awareness regarding communicative language teaching,, team teaching and language games.

But as far as the rest methods, strategies and approaches i.e. role play, models of teaching, peer assisted learning, task based learning, experiential learning, multimedia learning, self-directed learning, reflective teaching, simulation, graphic organizer, reciprocal teaching and puppetry, the awareness of the sample is not satisfactory as the mean scores are below fifty.

As far as methods/strategies/approaches are concerned there is no significant difference in the percentages of male and female teachers was observed except in experiential learning and simulation strategy, as the significance level of Z test is greater than 0.05. In the case of experiential learning and simulation strategy, the significance levels of Z test are 0.018 and 0.042 respectively. The result shows that among the female teachers who are the major chunk of the secondary teachers were less aware about two methods/strategies which are important to Hindi teaching, compared to the minority male teachers. This gender-wise difference can be attributed as a constraint to the modernization of Hindi Teaching in the Schools of Kerala.

Type of school

Table 3: Distribution of sample teachers by their familiarity with different teaching methods/strategies/approaches and type of school

Methods/strategies/approaches	Total %	Type of school		Z	Sig
		Govt. %	Aided %		
Project	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	-
Co-operative learning	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	-
Problem based learning	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	-
Constructive approach	87.50	91.13	84.91	2.048	0.041
Collaborative learning	73.98	79.80	69.82	2.476	0.014
Computer assisted instruction	66.19	72.91	61.40	2.649	0.008
Communicative language teaching	54.10	61.08	49.12	2.613	0.009
Team teaching	50.41	50.25	50.53	0.061	0.952
Language games	50.20	52.22	48.77	0.751	0.453
Role play	37.30	44.33	32.28	2.713	0.007
Models of teaching	32.38	37.93	28.42	2.213	0.027
Peer assisted learning	26.02	34.48	20.00	3.593	0.000
Task based learning	25.41	29.56	22.46	1.776	0.076
Experiential learning	24.59	30.54	20.35	2.577	0.010
Multimedia learning	23.98	27.59	21.40	1.579	0.116
Self-directed teaching	17.83	15.27	19.65	1.246	0.215
Reflective teaching	14.14	14.39	13.79	0.187	0.857
Simulation	13.73	15.27	12.63	0.835	0.407
Graphic organizer	12.91	13.79	12.28	0.490	0.624
Reciprocal teaching	7.17	7.39	7.02	0.156	0.881
Puppetry	5.94	7.39	4.91	1.142	0.254

It is evident from Table 3 that all the teachers from both government and aided schools have cent percentage awareness about project method, seminar and problem based learning. They have very good awareness regarding constructive approach, collaborative learning and computer assisted instruction. Both types have good awareness regarding communicative language teaching, team teaching and language games.

But as far as the rest methods, strategies and approaches i.e. role play, models of teaching, peer assisted learning, task based learning, experiential learning, multimedia learning, self-directed learning, reflective teaching, simulation, graphic organizer, reciprocal teaching and puppetry, the awareness of the sample is not satisfactory as the mean scores are below average.

As far as other methods/ strategies/ approaches are concerned, there is no significant difference in the percentage of government and aided secondary school Hindi teachers as far as team teaching, language games, task based learning, multimedia learning, self-directed teaching, reflective teaching and puppetry are concerned; as the significance level of Z test is greater than 0.05. But in the case of constructive approach, co-operative learning, computer assisted instruction, communicative language teaching, role play, models of teaching, peer assisted and experiential learning, the Z test values are less than 0.05. (Z values are 0.041, 0.014, 0.008, 0.009, 0.007, 0.027, 0.000 and 0.010 respectively) The results shows that among the aided school teachers who are the major chunk of the sample, are less aware about eight important methods/strategies/ approaches which are beneficial to the modernization of Hindi teaching, compared to the government school teachers who are the minority. This institutional wise difference can be attributed as a major constraint to the modernization of Hindi teaching in the schools of Kerala.

Locality

Table 4: Distribution of sample teachers by their familiarity with different teaching methods/strategies/approaches and locality

Methods/strategies/approaches	Total	Locality		Z	Sig
		Urban	Rural		
	%	%	%		
Project	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	-
Co-operative learning	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	-
Problem based learning	100.00	100.00	100.00	-	-
Constructive approach	87.50	90.30	86.44	1.150	0.250
Collaborative learning	73.98	72.39	74.58	0.492	0.624
Computer assisted instruction	66.19	64.93	66.67	0.363	0.719
Communicative language teaching	54.10	51.49	55.09	0.711	0.478
Team teaching	50.41	50.00	50.57	0.111	0.912
Language games	50.21	49.25	50.57	0.259	0.803
Role play	37.30	38.06	37.01	0.215	0.834
Models of teaching	32.38	37.31	30.51	1.434	0.153
Peer assisted learning	26.03	23.88	26.84	0.664	0.509
Task based learning	25.41	23.13	26.27	0.710	0.478
Experiential learning	24.59	23.88	24.86	0.224	0.826
Multimedia learning	23.98	20.90	25.14	0.980	0.327
Self-directed teaching	17.83	17.16	18.08	0.236	0.818
Reflective teaching	14.14	14.93	13.84	0.306	0.764
Simulation	13.73	9.70	15.25	1.591	0.112
Graphic organizer	12.91	10.45	13.84	0.998	0.322
Reciprocal teaching	7.17	5.97	7.63	0.633	0.529
Puppetry	5.94	5.97	5.93	0.016	0.992

It is evident from Table 4 that all the teachers from both urban and rural areas have awareness about Project method, Seminar and Problem based learning. Sample from both categories has very good awareness regarding constructive approach, collaborative learning and computer assisted learning. The analysis also shows that they have good awareness about communicative language teaching, team teaching and language games, as the mean scores are above average.

But in the case of methods, strategies and approaches like role play, models of teaching, peer assisted learning, task based learning, experiential learning, multimedia learning, self-directed learning, reflective teaching, simulation, graphic organizer, reciprocal teaching and puppetry are concerned, the awareness of the sample is not satisfactory as the mean scores are below average

As far as different methods/strategies/approaches are concerned, there was no significant difference was observed in the percentage of urban and rural teachers, as the significant level of Z test is greater than 0.05 in all the cases. The results show that even though rural teachers face so many difficulties in acquiring knowledge about modern instructional methods, they are as aware as urban teachers, as far as modern instructional methods/strategies/approaches are concerned.

Tenability of Hypotheses

The analysis shows that the total sample has average awareness regarding modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches. Hence the first Hypothesis that the awareness in Secondary school Hindi teachers working in Kerala about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches is low is rejected. The study shows that male teachers have more awareness regarding modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches. Hence the Hypothesis that there will be no significant difference between the awareness levels of male and female Hindi teachers working in Kerala about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches is rejected.

It is evident from the analysis that government school teachers are more aware about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches. Hence the Hypothesis that there will be no significant difference between the awareness of government and aided school Hindi teachers working in Kerala about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches is rejected.

The study also shows that the awareness level of rural teachers are at par with that of teachers working in urban areas. Hence, the Hypothesis that there will be no significant difference between the awareness levels of rural and urban school Hindi teachers working in Kerala about modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches is accepted.

II. CONCLUSION

The study shows that the total sample has good awareness regarding modern instructional methods / strategies and approaches except few strategies which could be considered as entirely 'new' in the field of Hindi education. These innovations are: models of teaching, peer assisted learning, task based learning, collaborative learning, experiential learning, self-directed learning, simulation, graphic organizers, reciprocal teaching and puppetry. The study proves that the sample is less aware of these methods/ strategies and approaches which will act as a constraint to the modernization of Hindi teaching in the schools of Kerala. The study shows that female teachers are less aware of two strategies. They are experiential learning and simulation.

The teachers working in aided schools who are the major population in the State are less aware of eight important methods, strategies and approaches when compared with sample from government schools. These include experiential learning, peer assisted learning, models of teaching, role play, communicative language teaching, computer assisted instruction, co-operative learning and constructive pedagogy. Lack of awareness regarding these innovations is a draw back and this will surely hinder the modernization process of Hindi. It is also clear from the analysis that there exist no significant difference between urban and rural teachers regarding the awareness of modern instructional methods, strategies and approaches are concerned. Since majority of the schools are situated in the rural areas in Kerala, this similarity in awareness of teachers regarding innovative practices will surely act as facilitation to the modernization of Hindi teaching in the schools of Kerala.

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