

Effect of Bridge Course for Developing Language Competencies

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ABSTRACT

With a view to evaluating the effect of bridge course for building various competencies among the pre service teachers, the researcher carried out an experimental study. The researcher designed an Online E-test and a Bridge Course which were implemented on the trainees. The major components included in the research were Language Skills, Soft skills and ICT skills. The test and Bridge course were designed keeping in mind these components. Two English medium teacher training institutions were selected randomly for the research. A pre test on Professional Competency was implemented online and then a Bridge course of 30 sessions were executed to the experimental group. The professional competency means the basic skills to bridge a gap between their specialization and teacher training course such as language skills, soft skills and basic ICT skills. The researcher also observed and conducted a feedback at the end of the research from the trainees. It was found from the study that the students built their professional competencies through this Bridge course. It was also observed during the research that exposure plays vital role in developing individual and professional competencies. The research paper also talks about best activities graded by the students in improving their lacunas.

1. Introduction

Effective use of human resources is one of the most crucial parts in the development of any country. Therefore, management of different sectors have to enable the employees for quality products in all the fields. This process of developing quality of the product is in the hands of employer or employee. Since the employee is paid as per his competencies, it is necessary for any individual to build personal and professional capabilities. Education also plays very vital role to produce well capable, skillful, expert and talented employees.

Since, the teacher is known as the creator of all the other professions, it is our foremost duty to respect and sensitize for quality teacher training. Therefore NCTE redesigned the entire course structure of B.Ed. course. The major expectations from the teacher training institutions are to enable the teacher to build capacities on content mastery, language and attitude. If the teacher is having a positive attitude then he would be able to develop his content mastery and if he develops his content mastery then naturally a language learning becomes possible. **M. Mojibur Rahman (2010)** he said that oral communication fulfills a number of general and discipline-specific pedagogical functions. Learning to speak is an important goal in itself, for it equips students with a set of skills they can use for the rest of their lives. Speaking is the mode of communication most often used to express opinions, make arguments, offer explanations, transmit information, and make impressions upon others. Students need to speak well in their personal lives, future work places, social interactions, and political endeavours.

In the era of globalization and technology, it is mandatory for each teacher to make the optimum and smart use of ICT resources for quality product. One must know, how to analyse the result sheets, use of Microsoft Office, internet and basics of classroom technology to sustain an individual and society.

2. Rationale of the Study

It has been mentioned in the **National Curriculum Framework (2005)** that the teacher must possess certain professional ethics to enable the learners to adapt quality practices. Keeping this in mind, **National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE December- 2014)** reformulated the course structure of B.Ed. course from one year to two year. There were many rationale and arguments for increasing the duration of the course. The major purpose behind doing so is to enhance the quality of the teachers. A duration of one year B.Ed. course was found absolutely insufficient to train the teachers. At this juncture, the researcher extracted mainly the three major components that teachers must enhance before, during and after the teacher training. They are Language Skills, ICT Skills and Soft Skills. **Hildebrandt, Murphy, and Thomas (1997)** wrote in their research studies that the public presentation must be effective and necessary at any business or educational institutions. It was found that the learners must be taught life skills. **National Curriculum Framework (2000)** states the need to attend to the development of skills of language aural and oral skills of language are to be emphasized at the primary stage, all the skills listening, speaking, reading, writing and thinking are to be aimed at in a balanced manner by the end of the upper primary stage and slightly more attention is to be paid to the skills of reading and writing at the secondary stage. The most crucial and ultimate task of language education at all these levels remains to prepare the learners to use the languages effectively in either mode (spoken/written) whenever and wherever required in their day to day life situation of all sorts.

The study focuses on the practice of professional activities to enhance the personal and professional development. The study is indeed useful for future employees to develop their language and perform their best at workplace. According to **National Vocational Education Qualification Framework**, English is a key skill that can transform the employability of

India's youth. The in service teachers are found proficient in one or couple of components only due to this an ideal personality of the teachers cannot be exposed. **Dr. Damayanti Umra** in her book **Playway to English** mentioned that language should be taught through playing games and in a natural context. Since, there is a huge discussion on globalization in 21st century, it is inevitable for any teacher to remain away from the use of technology.

3. Objectives

1. To study the effect of Bridge course in building professional capacity
2. To study the effect of activities in building capacity with respect to English
3. To Evaluate the effect of Bridge course in developing soft skills among the pre service teachers
4. kills
5. To extract the learning outcomes and provide suggestions for quality teacher training

4. Variables of the Study

- Independent Variable: Bridge Course
- Dependent Variable: Professional Competency
- Control Variable: Pre service teachers of English Medium Teacher Training Institutes

5. Hypotheses

1. There will be no significant difference between the mean achievement score of the students learning through Bridge course and normal mode.
2. There will be no significant difference between the mean achievement score of pre test and post of the students learning through bridge course.

6. Research Methodology

Population and Sample

The population comprised all the English medium teacher training institutions of Gujarat state. The researcher selected 95 pre-service teachers from the grant in aid and private sector as random sampling technique as sample for the study.

Type of Research

It was an experimental research study.

Research Design

Table:1.1 Professional Competency of Controlled and Experimental Group

Post Test	Mean	N	SD	SEM	Df	t
Controlled	26.33	49	8.75	1.74	94	5.7
Experimental	36.24	46	8.25			

*Significant at 0.01 level

The computed t-value i.e. 5.7 is greater than the table t-value 2.63 at 0.01 level of significance for 94 degree of freedom.

So, the null hypothesis that here will be no significant difference between the mean achievement score of the students learning through Bridge course and normal mode is rejected. It means, there was significant difference in the mean

The researcher took two group pre test programme post test design for the study. In which a pre- test was administered to both experimental and control group. The researcher designed Bridge course activities keeping in mind the pre test score. The course was implemented to the experimental group only. After week time again, the researcher administered the post test to both control and experimental group.

Procedure of the Research

The researcher prepared the strips and randomly took the strips for two teacher training institutions. One for experimental and the other for controlled. Fortunately the researcher got Waymade College of Education as experimental group and H M Patel Institute of English Training and Research as Controlled group. The researcher implemented online E- test on professional competency to both the group and executed the Bridge course to the trainees of Waymade College of Education and again after the Bridge course readministered the similar post test to the trainees of both the colleges. There were 20 sessions kept in the course. 7 sessions for Language development and soft skills and 6 sessions for ICT skills. The researcher also gave a feedback form to the trainees to collect feedback to know the effectiveness of his teaching and most prominent activities.

Tools of Data Collection

The researcher used Online E-Test for collecting data as pre and post test. The researcher implemented a Bridge course among the pre service teachers of the experimental group. The researcher also collected feedback from the pre service teachers in to two major forms. One was on researcher's classroom teaching and the other was giving preferences to the best activities.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The researcher analysed data quantitatively and qualitatively using percentage analysis, t test and content analysis techniques. The following are the details of quantitative data analysis and interpretation.

Ho1 There will be no significant difference between the mean achievement score of the students learning through Bridge course and normal mode.

achievement score of the students' learning through Bridge course and normal mode.

Ho2 There will be no significant difference between the mean achievement score of pre test and post of the students learning through bridge course.

Table 1.2 Professional Competency of Experimental Group in Pre and Post Test

Experimental	Mean	N	SD	SEM	Df	t
Pre Test	27.54	46	5.53	1.46	91	5.96
Post Test	36.23	46	8.25			

*Significant at 0.01 level

The computed t-value i.e. 5.95 is greater than the table t-value 2.63 at 0.01 level of significance for 91 degree of freedom.

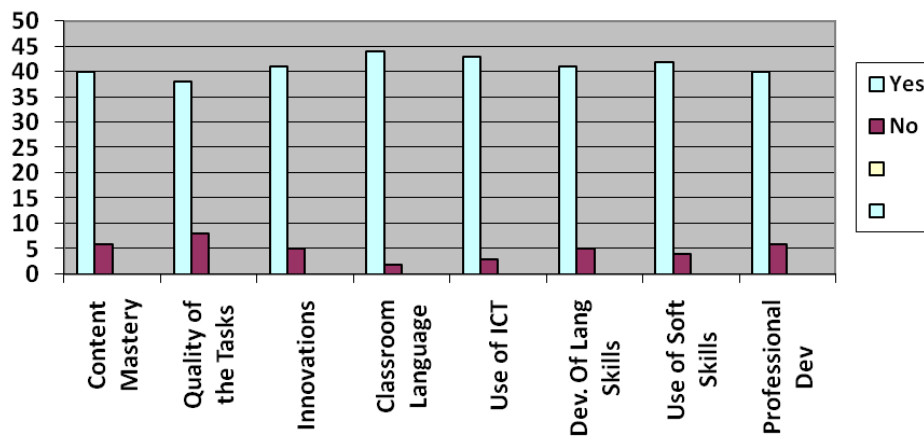
So, the null hypothesis that there will be no significant difference between the mean achievement score of pre test and post of the students learning through bridge course is rejected. It means, there was significant difference in the mean

achievement score of the students' in their pre test and post test learning through Bridge course.

8. Interpretation of Feedback

The following two graphs show the effectiveness of the researcher's teaching and prominent activities.

Graph:1 Feedback on Classroom Teaching



The above graph explains what did students feel for the researcher's classroom teaching. More than 95% students put tick mark in yes column. In all, 46 trainees were there in the experimental group. Their reflections for the above components in number like this. Content mastery-40, Quality of tasks-38, Innovations in teaching-41, Classroom language of the researcher-44, Use of ICT-43, Scope of Developing Language-41, Use of Soft Skills-42 and Professional Development-40. The number of respondents for each component explains that the execution of the Bridge course was quite effective. It means they liked the researcher's classroom teaching keeping in mind the above criteria.

- Students became sensitive in using English language not only in their classroom language but also in their day to day communication.

9. Findings of the study

- The trainees of the experimental group found a measurable and change in their capacity building through Bridge course activities.
- Students found that language activities of the Bridge course were more important in developing professional competency.
- It was also found that learning exposure is more important rather than talking about theories.
- The trainees developed professional soft skills such as non verbal and value based ethics through the Bridge course activities.
- Basics of ICT skills were enhanced through various innovative use of ICT in classroom teaching and learning.

10. Suggestions of the Study

- Students should be given a wide range of exposure to enhance professional skills.
- Each teacher training institution should plan, execute and study the effect of such Bridge course programme.
- Trainees should be given an entry test when they join the teacher training course so that effective diagnosis, remediation and improvement can be done.
- There should be adequate numbers of practical/tutorial sessions to practise language skills in the syllabus of the colleges/universities.
- Students should be made to practice all the three major components such as Language, soft skills and ICT skills.
- Teacher educators should also maintain a developmental profile of each trainee to track the progress.

11. Conclusion

Thus, the research study is useful in modern teacher training practices. It has included all the three major components that are to be developed through out the teacher training programme. This study enlightens not only the young

pre service teachers but also the teacher educators for the quality teaching and learning. The reflections of the trainees communicate the success of the Bridge course. At last, the research study proclaim that, English language skills as one of

the survival skills in the time of globalization as they are considered in –“The Global Achievement Gap” by Tony Wagner. Where as soft skills and ICT skills are derived more naturally through the teacher training practices.

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