



# INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES AND INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

( Peer-reviewed, Refereed, Indexed & Open Access Journal )

DOI : 03.2021-11278686

ISSN : 2582-8568

IMPACT FACTOR : 5.71 (SJIF 2021)

## Language Skill Attainment in English among Anantnag District Collegians

MOHD SYED LONE

Assistant Professor,  
Higher Education Department UT of JK

DOI No. **03.2021-11278686** DOI Link :: <http://doi-ds.org/doi/10.2021-48319361/IRJHIS2105020>

### Abstract:

*The study attempts to examine Language Skill attainment in terms of listening, speaking, reading and writing at college level as second language learners of English. The study is significant in respect, as no such study has been conducted by government or private organization in district Anantnag till date. The second language generally refers to language that is not the native language of the speaker, but that is used in the locale of that person. The study was conducted to both rural and urban areas, boys, women and co-education colleges. A sample of 120 respondents from population by random and systematic sampling was obtained. A total of 10 colleges and 120 respondents were included to which, the ASSET writing skill test, a Questionnaire, an Inventory/ Data Sheet, a Classroom Observation Schedule and a Cloze test as a test tool were employed to elicit the information from the respondents. Simple t-test and percentage technique were employed to determine the interpretation and analysis. The interpretation of data revealed that there is significant difference between the aims/objectives obtained by the collegians to laid down by National policies and UGC time to time. The collegians are far away from the objectives suggested by LOCF for English. The two main problems, one the faulty methods of teaching and second the over burden curriculum, can be associated for non-attainment of prescribed goal.*

**Keywords:** ASSET test, Anantnag, a cloze test, collegians.

### A. Introduction:

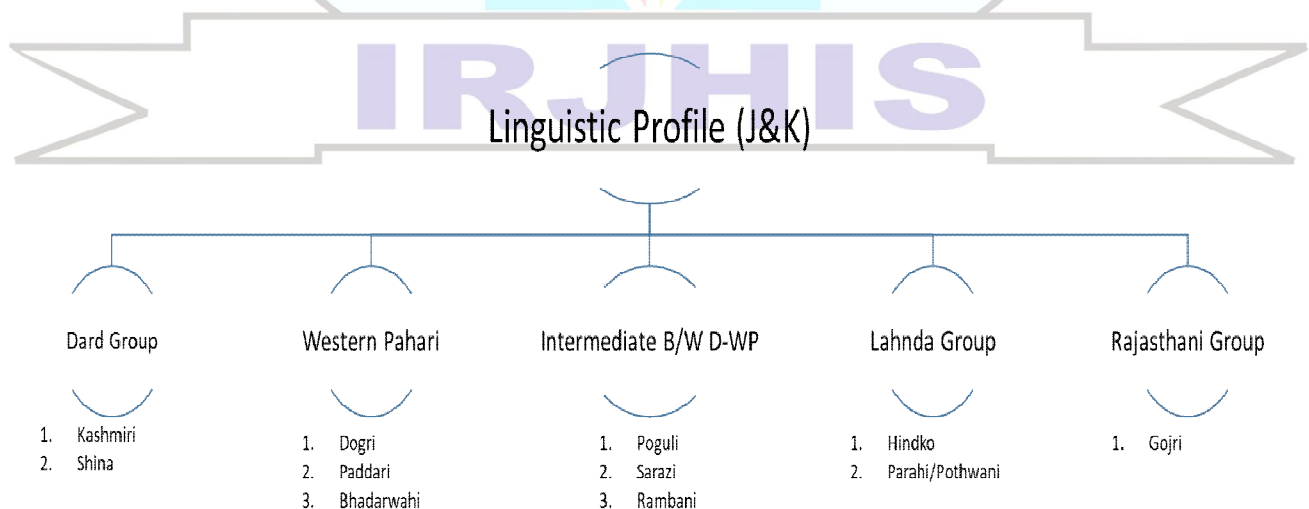
Language is the inherent capability of the native speakers to understand and form grammatical sentences. A language is a set of (finite or infinite) sentences, each finite length and constructed out of a finite set of elements. This definition of language considers sentences as the basis of a language. Sentences may be limited or unlimited in number, and are made up of only limited components. (Noam Chomsky). Language according to the words of Sapir is purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of system of voluntarily produced symbols. Linguistically, Charles Hockett believes that system must have six features (displacement, creativity, arbitrariness, cultural transmission, interchangeability, and

discreetness) to called language. These features make human language different from other animal communications.

Why to consider **language as a skill**? Skill generally refers to any ability which has scope for learnability, improvement, expertise and execution. Language possesses all the said features, so primarily a skill. Besides, it is not a content-based subject like-Science, Social Studies, Commerce, Mathematics, etc., with the goals to imparting information and fill the human mind with knowledge. Fundamentally, most of the skills are simple in nature however language is multifaceted skill with sub-skills- Listening, Speaking, reading and speaking. Speaking and writing are considered as productive skills while listening and reading receptive.

By **Language Skill Attainment**, the investigator means, how far collegians' have reached the expected level of attainment of the pre-defined language skills – listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, vocabulary and comprehension etc. assessed through appropriate tests and tools, like the ASSET test, scheduled and structured observations, Cloze-test, rating scales designed by experts. It must be noted that hereafter, Language Skill Attainment means attainment of skills for English language.

Coming to word “**English**” in the title refers to English as a language subject taught in colleges which has a full flagged LOCF/Syllabus designed by UGC. English, originally is a part of the Germanic branch of Indo-European family of languages. British Colonialism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, American Capitalism and technological progress in 20<sup>th</sup> were the main causes of spread of English throughout the world. According to the research by the British council “English as official or special status in at least 75 countries with total population over two billion. Speakers of English as second language will soon outnumber those who speak English as first language. A language other than the mother tongue that a person or community uses for public communication, especially in trade, higher education, and administration is second language. Thus, in J&K, English act as L2.



The overall linguistic profile of State can be highlighted as.

Kashmiri (85%) is primarily mother tongue (L1) of inhabitants of Anantnag while Gojri(12%) of Gujjars, Pahari(1.2%) and Punjabi(0.55%) of Sikhs. Therefore, English language takes the place of second language (L2) in UT of JK, so in Anantnag district.

## B. Related Literature Review:

There is sufficient literature available for review but I selected only few of my interest.

**Sharma, V. (2000).** Studied the effect of multimedia package on learner's achievement and found:

1. Flash cards and transparencies helped in letter recall.
2. Use of tape recorder improved listening ability and comprehension.
3. Use of charts and pictures helped the students understand the meaning and comprehends.
4. Computer-assisted instruction fueled learners' curiosity.
5. Multi-package helped to develop scientific attitude among the learner.
6. Questioning, explaining, illustration with examples improved achievement of the students.
7. Traditional techniques also helped in improving achievement.

**Kumbhar, A. 2001** carried out a study of the proficiency in English of English and Marathi Medium secondary school students in Kolhapur district. He concluded his study with major conclusions such as:

1. Majority of EM students is not sufficiently proficient in English.
2. Almost all MM students appear to be at the developmental stage of L2 acquisitions.
3. Educational career of EM students 'below average' category in terms of higher education may be full of problems as they are not proficient in any language.
4. The ELT conditions in both types EM and MM secondary schools are not satisfactory.

**Karekatti, T. (2002)** carried out study entitled, "Exploration in Second Language Learning: A Comparative Study of Child and Adolescent Marathi Learners of English." The objective of the study was both understanding of the nature and content of mental processes and structures behind the overall activities of SLL.

## C. Significance and delimitations of the research:

1. Since, no significant research has been conducted over language skill attainment by any organization be that public or private, individual or group in terms of comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, language use, spelling in the colleges of district Anantnag till date.
2. To explore how far the aims and objects framed by UCG for undergraduate level in accordance with general English-LOCF are achieved by undergraduate students.
3. To identify the issues and bottlenecks of the existing-LOCF and methods of teaching besides the problems perceived by teachers, students and experts.
4. To cognizant stakeholders with the findings and results of research and to look for better

possible alternatives if aims and objectives are not met as framed by commission.

### **Delimitations:**

The research has been carried out in the colleges of district Anantnag only. There are 09 Govt. Degree Colleges that represent population of the study. Thus the study is confined to these nine colleges only and finding can't be applied to whole division of Kashmir or UT of JK. So for the statistical techniques for analysis are concerned these too are limited to t-test and percentage only. Moreover, only few aspects of language skills were touched considering the resources and time constraint- paraphrase, summarization and dictation in listening; observed and structured approach in speaking; phonemic, phonic and comprehension in reading and punctuation, sentence structure and grammar in writing.

### **D. Objectives of the research:**

The major objectives of the research are:

1. To find language skill attainment in terms of sub-skills listening, speaking, reading and writing against aims and objectives framed for UG level by competent authority.
2. To determine the significance of relationship of language skill attainment with regard to gender (Male vs Female).
3. To determine the significance of relationship of language skill attainment with regard to geography (Urban vs Rural).

### **E. Hypotheses:**

The research was based on the assumption that:

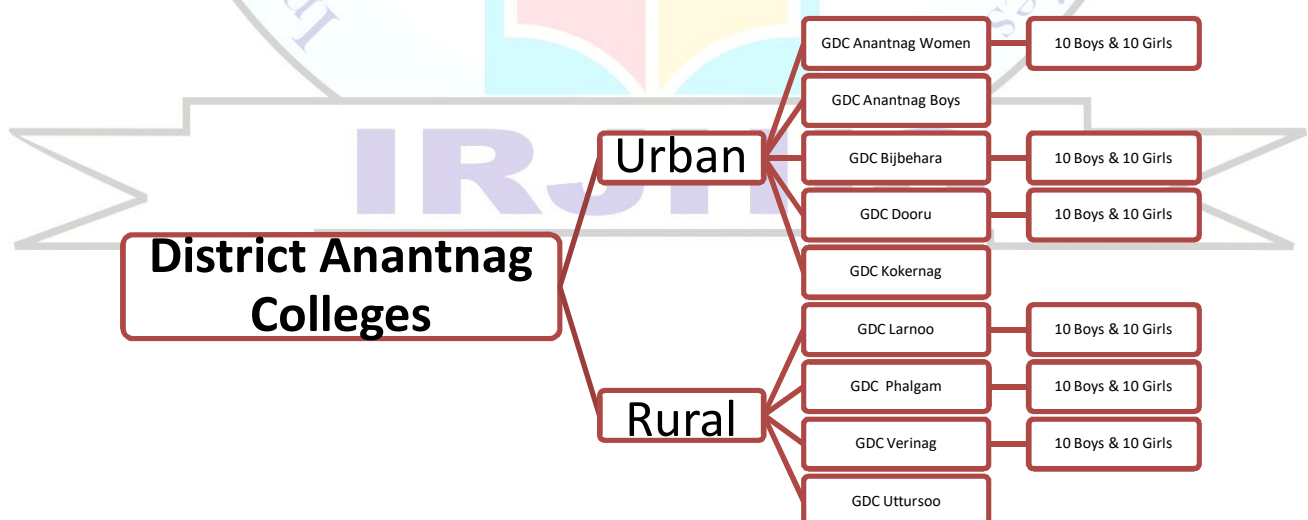
1. There is no difference in language skill attainment between collegians of Anantnag district to that of prescribed by competent authority for UG level.
2. That English Language Attainment of boys is higher than girls in district Anantnag colleges.
3. That English Language Attainment of girls is higher than boys in district Anantnag colleges.
4. That English Language Attainment of girls in urban colleges is higher than boys in district Anantnag colleges.
5. That English Language Attainment of boys in urban colleges is higher than girls in district Anantnag colleges.
6. That English Language Attainment of girls in rural colleges is higher than boys in district Anantnag colleges.
7. That English Language Attainment of boys in rural colleges is higher than girls in district Anantnag colleges.

## F. Methodology:

Considering the objectives of study “Language Skill attainment in English among Anantnag District Collegians” the investigator is fundamentally bound to use quantitative procedures eliciting information from respondents. However, some of the qualitative procedures also have been used for recording the response of respondents. Following are ways and means, tools and techniques employed by investigator or demanded by study for collection of data.

### Sampling:

As already stated, that various educational research methods were viewed besides, considering the objectives of study, the researcher decided to bring quantitative method in use. The primary aim of the investigator is to determine the attainment of language skills among collegians of district Anantnag, so all college going students constitute the population for the study. From 09 Govt. Degree Colleges sample of 120 student were selected. The sampling procedure was very simple, in first stage all the nine colleges were identified and listed, systematically two categories urban and rural were made, by simple random sampling equal number of three colleges each from both category were chosen. In second stage, equal number of boys and girls (10-10 each) were chosen again by employing simple random sampling from sample colleges. Simply put, the colleges were grouped together according to location being been urban/rural were each assigned numbers to represent each strata of the population. The slips bearing the numbers were then put in a hat and there from each group picked at random similarly, 120 participants were chosen 60 girls and 60 boys. It is pertinent to mention that colleges were not grouped according to gender because there is single Womens’ college in Anantnag District, however equal number of girls were chosen for the study. For better understanding flow chart can be used.



## G. Administration of the tools:

The investigator printed the required material and visited the selected Colleges, personally. After getting the permission from concerned principals and then with the help of English subject teachers introduced himself to the sampled students. He then explained the purpose of visit and provided them the information about tools. With simple instructions students were asked to fill in the bio-data form and asked to fill the response sheets within one hour. After completion of time response sheets were collected by the investigator himself and scoring were done by using scoring key. Following were the main tools for data collection.

### T.1 Cloze Tests:

In the three Cloze passages uniform fifty (50) item tests were used. These were scored separately for each school. When scoring, two methods were used, the exact word method where the subjects were expected to write the exact word as in the test passage in the blank spaces and the method which allows any contextually acceptable word in the blank spaces. Here score charts containing the serial number and the type of word, whether a content word, main verb, noun, adjective, adverb, demonstrative pronoun etc. Or function (grammatical) words: conjunction, preposition, article or auxiliary verbs for those particular spaces were used for the exact word, acceptable replacement word in the blank spaces. For every error a cross (X) was scored and each correct word was ticked (✓). However if a subject filled in the blank space a contextually acceptable word, then a cross with a circle 0 was used. Thereafter, these were converted to figures for easier analysis. Each tick (✓) was awarded one (1) mark, each cross (X) was awarded two (2) marks and each cross with a circle 0 was awarded three (3) marks. All these were done in the score charts. Once this was done, a percentage of errors in each section per school was calculated, to show their readability and comprehensibility of the passages and also, to show a comparison of how the schools performed in these tests.

### T.2 English Language Attainment Tool:

After a thorough and careful study of the literature available on English language attainment, the investigator collected materials and discussed with the experts in the field of English education. Thus modified already prepared tool for evaluating attainment of English language pertaining to the components such as Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing, Grammar, Vocabulary and Comprehension based on UG syllabus of Government of J&K and UGC-LOCF. The English language Attainment tool consists of 50 items in modified form.

### T.3 Comprehension Passage:

The most widely used tool to evaluate the comprehension ability of students in all exams is also used to investigate the English language attainment of 12th standard students of the district Anantnag. The skills involved in this test item are:

1. Deducing the meaning of unfamiliar words.
2. Inferring the information which is not overtly stated.

Using above stated tools, simple percentage and t-test technique were employed to obtain the results and findings.

#### **T.4 Observation Methods:**

The investigator employed observational and structured approaches for assessing speaking skills. In the observational approach, the respondents were observed while communicating to their class teacher in a classroom or conversing with their friends, class mates purely in natural setting, without knowing that they are being watched and assessed. Their speaking skills were observed and assessed unobtrusively, while in the structured approach, some specific assignments were prepared by experts and were given to the respondents and they were asked perform acts. All the recorded information was assessed/evaluated and various ratings were given according their performance. Both observational and structured approaches use a variety of rating systems.

#### **T.5 The ASSET Writing Skills Test:**

For the assessment of writing skills among collegians of Anantnag district, the ASSET Writing Skills Test is modified with the consternations of subject experts with due consideration of prescribed curriculum UG. The modified version consists of 36-items based on aforesaid syllabus and 25-minutes were given to respondents for measuring their understanding of the conventions of standard written English in punctuation, grammar, sentence structure, strategy, organization, and style. Spelling, vocabulary but only the findings of punctuation, sentence structure and grammar in writing was included in the analysis and findings. The test consists of three prose passages, each accompanied by a sequence of 12 multiple-choice test items and variety of rhetorical situations, a range of passage types is also employed.

#### **H. Tools and Techniques:**

T-test was administered to the data obtained from respondents for exploring any significance of difference between male vs female and urban vs rural while percentage technique was used for knowing average attainment in language skills with regard to syllabus/curriculum prescribed for the course.

#### **I. Analysis of Data:**

All the data so collected from the respondents were examined, errors and omissions were corrected as per norms. The collected data, collected by employing mean and t-test techniques and the results were tabulated on the basis of framed objectives. During analysis of the data various parameters were thoroughly considered. The validity and reliability of the tools were again ensured. The processed data was tabulated for easy understanding.

## J. Result & Discussion:

Following are the main findings of the research.

**Table-J1: Language skill attainment in terms of sub-skills listening, speaking, reading and writing against aims and objectives framed for UG level by competent authority.**

**TABLE-J1**

COMPONENT	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
<b>CORRECT RESPONSES</b>	58	54	59	52
<b>PERCENTAGE</b>	48	45	49	43

It is inferred from the above **Table J1** that English language attainment at UG level is not good with respect to prescribed aims and objectives. It is almost below 50 percent in all sub-skill of language. The attainment in components listening is (48%), speaking is (45%), reading (49%), and writing (43%). It is the general percentage irrespective of gender and geographical variable consideration for collegians of district Anantnag.

**Table J-2: Significance of relationship of language skill attainment with regard to gender (Male vs Female)**

There is no significant difference between Boys and girls of 12<sup>th</sup> standard students in their English language attainment in district Anantnag.

**TABLE-J2**

Component	Variable	Number	Mean	SD	Table T-Value	Calculated T-Value	Signf. At 5% Level
Listening	Boys	60	8	3	1.96	5	S
	Girls	60	12	4			
Speaking	Boys	60	10	4	1.96	4.6	S
	Girls	60	14	3			
Reading	Boys	60	9	5	1.96	4.7	S
	Girls	60	10	2			
Writing	Boys	60	8	4	1.96	4.2	S
	Girls	60	7	3			
Total	Boys	60					
	Girls	60					

It is clearly visible from the **Table J-2** that calculated t-value for the sub-skills listening, speaking, reading and writing is greater than that of t-table value 1.96. Therefore there is significant difference in Language skill Attainment at 0.5% level. From evaluating and analyzing the response sheets of respondents girls show greater attainment than boys almost in all components.



### Table J-3: Significance of relationship of language skill attainment with regard to geographical variable (Urban vs Rural)

There is significant difference in some components of language and non-significant differences in other components.

**Table J-3**

Component	Variable	Number	Mean	SD	Table T-Value	Calculated t-value	Signf. at 5% level
Listening	Rural	60	10	4	1.96	0.9	NS
	Urban	60	11	3			
Speaking	Rural	60	7	3	1.96	05	S
	Urban	60	14	2			
Reading	Rural	60	10	5	1.96	06	S
	Urban	60	12	4			
Writing	Rural	60	7	4	1.96	1.2	NS
	Urban	60	9	4			
Total	Rural	60					
	Urban	60					

From the **Table J-3**, some components show significant difference while some other shows non-significant. There no clear cut inference can be summarized considering language skill attainment between rural vs urban collegians, however, considering sub-components inferences can be made. There is significant difference between the components of speaking and reading while no significant difference between listening and writing. The study shows speaking and reading skill attainment is higher urban collegians than rural.

#### References:

- i. Agarwal, Y.P. (1988) *Statistical Methods, Concepts, Applications and Computation*, New Delhi: Sterling Publications Pvt. Ltd.
- ii. Alam, QaizerZoha. *English Language Teaching in India*. New Delhi: Doaba House, 1982. Print.
- iii. Agnihotri, R.K. Sharma, Khanna A.L. *English Language Teaching In India* :
- iv. Alam, QuaizaZoham. *English Language Teaching in India: Problems and Issues*. Bombay: Atlantic Publishers, 1988. Print.
- v. Allan Davies (1991) *The Native Speaker in Applied Linguistics*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press,.
- vi. Anderson, R. (1981) *New Dimension in Second Language Acquisition Research*, Rowley Mass: Newbury House.
- vii. Chomsky (1981) *Lectures on Govt. and Binding*, Paris: Dordrecht.
- viii. David Numan (1992) *Research Methods in Language Learning*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- ix. Saraswathy, V. (1996) *The Journal of English (India)*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 4, July -August, 1993.
- x. *The Journal of English Language Teaching (India)* 2000, Vol. XXX, September –October, Pp. 126 – 128.
- xi. *Issues and Innovations*. New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 1995. Print.