



PUPPETS IN THE CLASSROOM: IMPACT ON EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE SKILLS OF STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

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ABSTRACT

The study under investigation is an experimental one which aims to find out the effectiveness of Puppetry Method on Expressive language skills of students with Moderate level of Intellectual Disability. Research design used in the study was Non Equivalent Groups Pre-test-Post-test Control Groups Design. Sample size of the study were confined to 32 where 16 included in experimental group and rest 16 included in the control group. All the students were having moderate level of Intellectual Disability and selected from a special school exclusively made for children with Intellectual Disability. The experimental group students were taught through the Puppetry Method. Existing method of teaching was adopted to teach students in the control group. Language test for children with Intellectual Disability was used as the tool for data collection. For the analysis of the collected data, the investigator used descriptive statistics like Mean, median, mode, standard deviation and Mean Difference Analysis. The study reveals that there exists significant difference between post test scores of Experimental and Control group with respect to Expressive Language skills. Students in the experimental group show significantly better performance in terms of Expressive Language performance than that of students in the Control group as higher mean scores are attached with them.

KEYWORDS: *Puppetry method, Expressive language, Students, Intellectual Disability, Experimental Approach, Existing method of Teaching, Language skills*

INTRODUCTION

Language can be considered as an effective means of communication. Expressive language and receptive language are two categories of language domain. Expressive as well as receptive language is essential for a person to be independent in life (Liang et al., 2017). Expressive language enables to express one's ideas, feeling, concepts etc. without losing its intensity. Expressive language stands the language which is used to express our ideas, concepts etc. Strategies to develop expressive language skills among children with intellectual disability are a matter of debate for a long time. Exceptional children are those who have some special needs which is to be addressed using specialized strategies (Brownell et al., 2010). In the present study, a new strategy is being attempted to enhance the expressive language skills of children with Intellectual Disability.

Children with Intellectual disability have certain special needs of their own. Any intervention which caters the needs of children with Intellectual disability can be considered as suitable intervention for them (Fidler et al., 2019). Repeated practice will enable them to achieve a new skill/ concept

(Göransson et al., 2016). Puppetry will serve as a suitable academic intervention for children with Intellectual Disability since it offers a platform for them to have repeated practice. Hence the study can be considered as a significant one in terms of expressive language skill among children with Intellectual Disability.

The present study tries to find out the effectiveness of Puppetry method on expressive language skills of children with Intellectual Disability. Puppetry method is a pleasure based strategy which arouses interest among receivers. In the present study, expressive language skills are being taught to the experimental group through hand puppets. It has been a matter of debate for a long time, which is the most efficacious academic mode of content transaction for special learners. But, fortunately or unfortunately it is unanswered till the time. Effectiveness of any academic intervention depends mostly upon the efficacy of content transaction and cooperative attitude of students in the academic activity. Puppetry method is presented as a strategy to enhance the expressive language skills



through purposeful and deliberate attempts of special educational efforts.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Objectives of the present study are:

- To study whether there exists any significant difference between the mean pretest scores of experimental and control groups with regard to Expressive language skills.
- To study whether there exists any significant difference between the mean posttest scores of experimental and control groups with regard to Expressive language skills.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The present study was to test the following hypothesis.

- There will be no significant difference between the mean Pretest scores of Experimental and Control group with regard to Expressive language skills.
- There will be no significant difference between the mean Posttest scores of Experimental and Control group with regard to Expressive Language skills.

METHODOLOGY

Research method adopted for the study was experimental in nature and the particular design opted was Non Equivalent Groups Pretest-Posttest – Control Groups Design. Students in the Experimental Group were taught through the Puppetry method and

Conventional teaching strategies were used to teach students in the control group..

Participants

Thirty-two students from a special school exclusively set up for intellectually challenged were selected as the sample. 16 students from the total sample were included in the experimental group and 16 students were in the control group. Age group of the students was in between 12-14. The experimental group students were taught through the Puppetry method. Conventional teaching strategies were made used to teach students in control group. Hand puppets were used to transact expressive language skills to children with Intellectual Disability.

Tools Used for the Study

For the present experimental study, Expressive Language Domain of Language Test developed by Hameed and Aiswarya (2016) was used. General Data sheet were also used to collect preliminary details of the sample.

Statistical Techniques Used for Analysis

For the analysis of the collected data, the investigator used descriptive statistics like Mean, median, Mode, Standard deviation etc. Mean Difference analysis was done using paired sample student's t test .

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results of Mean Difference Analysis

Results of the Mean Difference Analysis in case of Expressive language skills are summarized and discussed in this section.

Data and results of the t-test done for the comparison of pretest scores in respect of Expressive language skills are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Data and Results of the Comparison of Pre test Scores Between Experimental and Control group for the Total Sample

Sl. No.	Variables	N	Mean	SD	t- Value	Level of Significance
1.	Pretest (Experimental)	16	15.00	2.39	0.82	Not Significant
2.	Pretest (Control)	16	14.37	1.45		

The obtained t value is 0.82 and it is found below the table value set for significance even at 0.05 level. Hence it can be concluded that there is no significant difference exists between pretest scores of experimental and control groups. Expressive language performance of both experimental and

control group found to be almost same without any significant difference. The result signifies the comparability of both groups.

Data and results of the t-test done for the comparison of posttest scores in respect of Expressive language skills are presented in Table 2.



Table 2
Data and Results of the Comparison of Posttest Scores Between Experimental and Control group for the Total Sample

Sl. No.	Variables	N	Mean	SD	t- Value	Level of Significance
1.	Posttest (Experimental)	16	17.87	1.74	3.14	0.01
2.	Posttest (Control)	16	15.56	2.50		

From Table 2, the obtained t value is 3.14 and it is greater than the table value set for significance at 0.01 level. Hence, it can be concluded that there is significant difference exists in between posttest scores of Experimental and Control group with respect to Expressive Language skills. From the Mean Difference Analysis it is understood that students in the experimental group show significantly better performance in terms of Expressive language skills than that of students in the Control group as higher mean scores are attached with them.

CONCLUSION

Any teaching strategy which is designed according to the level, needs and interest of children will definitely work in a desirable way. Puppetry method can be presented as an advisable strategy for enhancing expressive language skills among children with Intellectual Disability. Puppetry method is being designed with an aim to arouse the interest of learners. As we all know, arousal of interest can be considered as the first step to achieve any behavioral objective from learners. In Such a way, puppetry method can be cited as an innovative strategy tailored according to the needs of children with Intellectual Differences.

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