

A DIAGNOSTIC STUDY OF ERRORS COMMITTED IN WRITTEN ENGLISH BY PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS IN RELATION TO THEIR CEREBRAL DOMINANCE

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Abstract

The present study has been designed to investigate the relationship between errors committed in written English and cerebral dominance by the prospective teachers and also to see the gender & locale differences on the basis of their cerebral dominance scores. The study was conducted over a sample of 500 (both male and female) prospective teachers doing B.Ed in the various colleges of education affiliated to GNDU, Amritsar. A diagnostic test in written English to detect the errors was constructed by the investigator herself. Test for style of learning and thinking (SOLAT) by Venkatarama (1989) was used to see the dominant hemisphere. The results reported that there existed a negative correlation between cerebral dominance and errors committed. Female prospective teachers with their left dominating cerebral hemisphere and urban prospective teachers with their right dominating cerebral hemisphere showed a negative and significant correlation between the scores of errors committed and cerebral dominance. Females and urban prospective teachers with their left dominating hemisphere committed fewer errors as compared to their male and rural counterparts.

Key words : Errors in written English, Cerebral dominance and prospective teachers

Language is one of the unique possessions of human beings. It is only human who has the power to learn the language of his society and pass it to others. A man can be judged from his language. As Ben Johnson puts it, "Language most shows a man; speak that I may see thee." Language is an indispensable part of our scheme of studies. After independence in the year 1950, the Indian constitution declared Hindi in Devnagri script as the official language of the union. It was further declared that English language would continue for a period of fifteen years as an associate language. The intention was to replace English with Hindi totally, but unfortunately, this was not to be and English was made an Associate official language of India for an indefinite period according to an Act passed in Parliament in 1963.

English language got a fillip and relegated all other Indian languages to the background. This meant that India would require teachers proficient in this language. Language being a skill subject and anybody interested in learning a language has to master all the four skills namely listening, speaking, reading and writing. In a society that encourages self development, all the skills of language are important but most important among them writing. It is the major paths to advancement whether it is personal, professional or social.

The difficulties that one may have with written English are our primary concern. It is quite often observed that the students commit errors in vocabulary, punctuation,

spellings, sentence formation or tenses. Deviating from accuracy implies error. If we ponder over the whole scenario we would come across a strange paradox that the teachers claim to have taught the language to the students in the schools but the students do not seem to have learnt it. For this to apprise our self of the actual situation, we must see how proficient our prospective teachers are in English language. It is on their shoulders that the responsibility of teaching the language lies. One of the factors on which the language ability of a person depends is cerebral Dominance, Our brain consists of two distinctive but anatomically symmetrical units called the right and left hemisphere. Cerebral Dominance according to Oxford Dictionary of Sports Science and Medicine refers to the side that has the main responsibility for the development of language. In 90% of people, it is the left hemisphere while the right hemisphere is usually concerned with other tasks as motor activities, visual spatial skills, intuition etc. The left hemisphere specializes for language and the Perisylvian region of the left hemisphere is the main center for the function of language. Broca's area helps in expression of language and in comprehending written or spoken language. Whereas the right hemisphere plays a very important role in prosody which is the emotional coloring of the language. It also handles non visible memories such as visual patterns. It also approximates numerical computation.

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Objectives

1. To study the relationship of cerebral dominance with errors committed in written English language skill.
2. To study the relationship of cerebral Dominance with errors committed in written English language skill with regard to
 - i. Gender
 - ii. Locale

Sample

A sample of five hundred prospective teachers (both male and female) from different colleges of education affiliated to Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar was selected randomly.

Measures

1. A diagnostic test in written English to detect the errors was constructed by the investigator.
2. Test for style of learning and thinking (SOLAT) by Venkatarama (1989) was used to see the dominant hemisphere.

In order to test the hypotheses, the prospective teachers were classified on the basis of their left and right dominating cerebral hemisphere. Out of the total sample (N=500), 400 prospective teachers were found to have their left cerebral hemisphere dominating whereas 97 had their right cerebral hemisphere dominating and only 3 prospective teachers had their integrated dominating cerebral hemisphere. The left and right dominating cerebral hemisphere prospective teachers were further classified into male, female, rural and urban as shown in the table 1.

Table 1

The number of male, female, rural and urban prospective teachers with their left, right or integrated dominating cerebral hemispheres.

Sr. No.	Dominating Hemisphere	Male	Female	Rural	Urban	Total
1	Left	36	364	203	197	400
2	Right	6	91	53	44	97
3	Integrated	0	3	0	3	3

The corresponding error scores of the prospective teachers were indicated in front of the each category and their mean and standard deviations were

calculated and t-test was applied on the different categories of the sample on the basis of their error scores as shown in the table 2.

Table 2 :

Comparison between prospective teachers with their left and right dominating hemispheres Males (36+6), Females(364+91),Rural(203+53) and Urban(197+44) on the basis of their mean error scores.

Sr. No.	Variables	Group	Mean	SD	SED	Df	t-value
1	Cerebral	Males L	16.64	5.094	1.938	41	.043
	Dominance	Males R	16.56	5.637			
2	Cerebral	Females L	15.58	5.057	.604	453	2.588
	Dominance	Females R	17.14	5.531			
3	Cerebral	Rural L	16.30	4.849	.785	254	2.196*
	Dominance	Rural R	18.02	5.921			
4	Cerebral	Urban L	15.04	5.209	.858	239	1.229
	Dominance	Urban R	16.09	4.860			
5	Cerebral	L	15.68	5.063	.583	495	2.518
	Dominance	R	17.14	5.523			
6	Cerebral	Females w	15.33	6.028	2.935	365	.084
	Dominance	Females L	15.58	5.057			
7	Cerebral	Females w	15.33	6.028	3.259	89	.574
	Dominance	Females R	17.20	5.540			
8	Cerebral	Urban w	15.33	6.028	3.036	198	.098