5. CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the conclusions arrived by the researcher based on the whole research work. Furthermore, it explains the pedagogical implications, contributions, the scope for further studies recommendations and the limitations of the study.

5.2 SUMMARY

This study demonstrated the issues and concerns related to the English language teaching and learning in the Government upper primary schools of Jammu and Kashmir State India. Based on the background knowledge (collected through secondary sources, personal experience and observation), as a first step, the English textbooks prescribed to the learners of these Government schools were evaluated as a pre-survey effort. It was confirmed through evaluation that both the content and the tasks in the course books are not according to the needs of the learners. With the help of background knowledge and evaluation inferences, two questionnaires (separately for teachers and learners) were developed. A survey was conducted with these two personally administered questionnaires. These questionnaires helped to examine the perceptions of teachers about their learners, English teachers teaching practices, teachers’ preferences in the classrooms, teachers suggestions about future textbooks and learners views about teaching and about English language learning progress. It was exhibited that the teaching methods including inappropriate teaching practices do not serve the purpose. Hence inappropriate teaching methods, strategies and English textbooks are equally responsible for dismal English language teaching environment in the State Government schools. Not only these elements have been affecting the learners’ performance in the final exams but also have been preventing them from English language acquisition.
In other words, the current unsuitable English textbooks have been found to be a hindrance to English language teaching. Further inappropriate teaching methods, old teaching practices and inadequate strategies (e.g. rote-learning, dictation of answers) have made it more difficult to learn the English language in a non-native environment of the State. One hand the content and the tasks of the textbooks have left the learners grappling in the English classrooms. On the other hand inappropriate teaching practices have increased the severity of the situation. This mismatch of both components is considered deterrents for the development of skills of the learners and for their English language acquisition process.

Since the first few objectives of the study were meant to examine the prescribed English textbooks, teaching practices, methods used by the teachers, after scrutiny process it is evinced that these components are not according to the needs of learners. Therefore, English language teaching and learning in the Government schools of the Jammu and Kashmir is in a desolate and disagreeable state.

The other research objectives were to develop innovative modules and to adopt the task-based approach. In this connection the modules were developed with innovative and outcome-based nature. These modules were developed as a treatment to the problems revealed by the pre-survey and survey inspection. The process of development of modules was done by taking care of the paramount needs of English language teaching for a particular background. While developing the modules multiple needed aspects were kept in mind such as subjects (upper primary level learners), their abilities (current knowledge about basics of English), their needs (skill development), etc. The foremost features of the modules were content according to their age and its familiarity with their daily life, tasks assuring language practice in an outcome-based manner, no overload of information, taking care for the development of four basic skills including grammar knowledge, etc. It was ensured that the research modules match with the needs of English language learners of the state government schools. The speciality of the modules was that there was 95% probability (for any State Government school teacher) to get an almost same result while teaching with these modules.
In order to test the developed innovative modules, an experimental design was chosen. According to this experimental design, the control and the experimental group were pre-tested through a question paper carrying a weightage of 50 marks comprising questions on four basic skills and grammar. During the pre-test, the skills were tested in the following order. A daily life based passage followed by multiple questions was framed for a listening test. The speaking test was conducted by asking learners to speak a few lines on any given daily based topics. The reading was tested by asking them to read a few lines from their own English textbook. Another two questions were framed to test their writing skills. These questions were related to their real life experiences. At the end a few sentences were given to check their grammar knowledge, however most grammar skills were examined by measuring spelling, capitalization, grammar usage, sense of the sentences of their writing pre-test. All the five skills were measured according to the criteria of the rubric developed for testing skills. Therefore the marks weightage was given more for the writing test because of its dual test nature.

The pre-test of control and experimental was conducted. It was a formative assessment that helped to identify English language related lacks and necessities of the learners. The data was analysed through descriptive analysis using SPSS. With the help of data analysis, the pre-test control group mean and pre-test experimental group mean were found almost similar. It was inferred that both the groups have equal knowledge of the English language. After finding the homogeneity between both the groups, the experimental group alone was exposed to the innovative modules as per the experimental design.

As a proceeding step, the experimental group were taught three modules on three different topics, namely Flower Gardens in Kashmir, Agriculture in Kashmir and Winter in Kashmir. The experiment comprises different teaching learning parts such as pre-reading and reading exposure with reading tasks, basic grammar knowledge and grammar practice tasks, pre-listening and listening tasks, pre-speaking and speaking tasks and finally pre-writing tips followed by pre-writing tasks and writing tasks. All the
elements like interesting content, tasks and language through games fostered interest and motivation among experimental group subjects. During the experiment the learners grabbed the opportunities for English language learning practice while learning about their real life practices.

After the teaching of experimental modules, the subjects were given a post-test. Since 250 students were regular during experimental classes, only these 250 regular students were encouraged to appear for the post-test. The post-test was given with a question paper containing two parts part A and B. It was meant to measure all the four basic skills and grammar knowledge. It carried a weightage of 100 marks. The post-test was based on the modules; they were exposed to during the experimental classes. In order to measure the progress of the experimental group at the completion of instruction (summative assessment), the improvement of each skill was tested with respect to its sub skills. The development of listening sub skills were tested by measuring focusing ability, general understanding, accuracy and information extraction traits. The speaking development was measured by the level of pronunciation, delivery attitude, fluency and content. The reading development was tested with fluency, vocabulary decoding accuracy and comprehension. The writing development was tested by checking the use of grammar (a cohesion aspect: the grammatical and lexical relationship between different elements of a text), sentence construction, ideas with respect to coherence and communication (coherent aspect: how easy it is to understand the writing). The grammar part was examined by looking into the spelling, capitalization, use of grammar, sense of the sentences used in the written test. A sufficient marks weightage was given again to the post-test writing because of its dual assessment nature. However grammar knowledge was also considered a grammar testing unit and few questions related to grammar knowledge were also framed separately. Table 4:21 is useful for more detailed information.

The subject performance in terms of sub skills was measured according to the four set levels. Both the pre-test and post-test scores were given according to the developed rubric assessment templates (See: Appendix N for more information).
Further the total obtained marks in each skill were counted. In this manner the scores of the experimental group were documented, validated and described through descriptive analysis using SPSS.

While giving the post-test to the experimental group, it was found that the experimental subjects have improved well both in receptive and in productive skills including grammar knowledge. The following skill wise details were found noteworthy after post-test. The experimental group listening post-test mean 12.94 signified more than four times improvement compared to their pre-test mean 2.49. There is again more than four times improvement from pre-test mean 2.99 of reading to the post-test mean 12.61. With respect to speaking skills, there was more than 3 times improvement from previous mean 1.50 to present mean 7.74. In addition to this, the grammar skills of the experimental group have improved more than six times from pre-test mean 2.00 to 13.17 post-test mean.

The credit of this successful experiment goes to the experimental group who have shown an overwhelming interest in the experimental classes. However the following qualities of the treatment material cannot be ignored.

- The language level of the modules has been compatible with the majority learners of rural areas.
- The modules have matched with the cognitive limits of majority learners.
- It has been observed that the modules were free from information overload
- The textual part and the tasks have helped children fostering the interest among participants of rural as well as urban areas.
- It has supported children practically to receive the daily life based information.
- It has helped children to practice the tasks which in turn have helped them to acquire language basics. This is an important feature of the modules which obliges both teacher and learner to use English language communication. As a result, there are possibilities of maximum communication practice in the target language and the maximum opportunity to practice a target language is a positive sign for any English language learner. The testing with these modules
have maximized language practice opportunities and therefore covered the needs of rural as well as urban learners.

- Compared to the prescribed texts of the Government school education department, the teaching with these modules has shown how to pay attention to individual learners and to groups for the practice of each basic skill. This feature gives the novel edge to these innovative modules.

- The modules have infused a right spirit of English language teaching among learners of government schools indicated by the learners and the teachers' feedback and post-test performance results of learners.

- The relevant knowledge and information of the modules have provided opportunities for English language acquisition through task-based language teaching activities. Different aspects of innovative modules have shown the quality that can benefit both the teacher and the learner fraternity.

It is expected if the teaching of these modules will be continued for at least six months with few more necessary modules, the expected outcome will be gained as per the objectives of teaching English at the upper primary level.

5.3 RESULTS

The language learning exposure depends on constant practice. It helps to acquire language competence. In the context of this study language exposure was built through the diversity of tasks. It is unusual to observe a remarkable difference among learners within a short period. However with regard to this experimental study, a significant change was seen among the learners. In addition, the psychological advantages were achieved by exposing children to daily life-based texts which fostered learning interest and motivation.

Earlier they had no knowledge about the sense of a sensible sentence, how it is framed, how to write/organize sentences or ideas. But after treatment the post-test performance declared it that the learners have been equipped with such necessary
knowledge. The treatment made them know about their daily life and about the constituents of a sensible sentence and different types of sentences in the English language.

The learners were unable to speak a sensible sentence but after teaching the modules a noteworthy change was found with regard to their basic speaking ability. The small portions of basic grammar in the modules with exciting tasks have added value to the modules.

Most of the government school English teachers who observed the use of relevant materials taught with a task-based method. They have found the modules appealing. The language learning focus of the modules has aided the learners individually and collectively to acquire the following language basics.

- Identification of a clause.
- The learners learned the identification of independent and dependent clause by practising the tasks based on the content rather than the teaching of topics of grammar.
- They learned how to improve reading comprehension and to understand a text.
- They learned the listening techniques for listening improvement by word games and spelling games which improve listening, etc.
- They were able to transform different sentences both in speaking and written forms.
- They gained knowledge about the sentence patterns in the English language with Subject Verb and Object formation through content, songs, games, etc.
- They gained knowledge about tenses by songs.
- They learned the formation of simple, compound and complex sentences.

This study confirms the effect of TBLT as an outcome based teaching method and a compatible method with the materials matching with the daily life and future academic interests of the children of government schools of Jammu and Kashmir State.
A strong learning stability was found in the classrooms after the experiment with try-out modules. The effect of the study cheered the learner participants’ interest, motivation and also stimulated their communicative ability. The increased interest and motivation among learners and the improvement of their communicative skills at their beginning level have been positive signs. The pedagogical modules have built a dovetail between teachers and learners and are productive models for all non-native English language teaching stakeholders, course developers, teachers and learners facing shortcomings in English language teaching and learning.

5.4 PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings of the present research have led to the following implications. The policy constraints have been there since long which misled school educational system. This research study provides fundamental pre-planned parameters which address the English curriculum framework policy better for (non-native) schools in viable terms. The findings of this research study could be utilized in new language policy-making processes at the non-native beginning level, i.e. primary to high school level in state Government schools. The outcomes can be incorporated into the school education planning for instructional materials and teaching methods. The government can implement the present research strategies district wise and after trying out experiments they can add more districts for more reliable tests. There will be no hindrance of micro and macro-contextual factors to the implementation of this research implication.

This research copes with the number 1 and number 7 point of National Curriculum Framework 2009. “In no. 1, it says ‘Language proficiency of the teacher needs to be enhanced, but existing programmes do not recognize the centrality of language in the curriculum. In no.7, it signifies that there is no opportunity for teachers to examine their own biases and beliefs and reflect on their own experiences as part of classroom discourse and enquiry.

The results of this research address the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2009: 1.7.3 point on Role of Community Knowledge in education
It describes that it is important for the development of concepts in children as well as the application of school knowledge in real life that the formal knowledge is linked with community knowledge. This increases the relevance of education as well as the quality of learning.

The research result further fulfils the demand noted in point 1.12 in the same document titled under Research and Innovation. It says,

There is a need to increase research that document practices reflectively and analytically – whether it is of programs or of individual classrooms – so that it can be included in the body of knowledge available for study to student teachers. University departments and research institutions need to undertake such research.

Point no. 2.2 under Foundations of education says,

Understanding the learning and growing child is the basic foundation on which a programme of teacher education needs to be built. Beginning teachers need to understand children by interacting with them and observing them in diverse social, economic and cultural contexts rather than through an exclusive focus on psychological theories of child development. Foundational learning in this area involves establishing links between developmental constructs and principles in psychological theory and the larger socio-political realities in which children grow and develop.

According to government school teachers, the modules have several features that enhance language proficiency of learners and teachers. They provide even better chances for teachers to examine themselves in many respects such as what teaching strategy they have been applying in old classrooms and to what extent were these good enough to achieve the objectives. On the whole, it has been demonstrated by the experiment how to
overcome the current concerns of Government schools of Jammu Kashmir State with regard to teaching English.

Looking into the major portion of the document, the research findings contribute much to the needs of learners according to the NCF suggestions for State Government school education departments.

5.5 CONTRIBUTIONS

The study has made a rich contribution through different perspectives such as theoretical perspective, materials development perspective, skill development perspective, learners’ background and age-factor perspective, interest and motivational perspective.

5.5.1 Theoretical Perspective

The newly developed modules support the three adopted theories (Nativist, Sociocultural and Input hypothesis theories) as they have practically fulfilled the requirements advocated by these theories.

5.5.2 Materials Development Perspective

The study has imparted a new material developing strategy proving familiar culture-specific contents are more suitable for teaching the English language.

5.5.3 Skill Development Perspective

The modules have taken care of skill development through different tasks and activities. With the help of task diversity, each skill has been given individual attention needed at upper primary level. The sentence identification game, listening test game,
choral drills have shown a significant development in second language learning interest along with motivational influence.

5.5.4 Learners’ Background and Age-factor Perspective

The developed modules have taken care of different backgrounds of the learners such as Rural, Urban, Backward, Border area, Gujar, Backarwal, Pahari children and their mental level.

5.5.5 Interest and Motivational Perspective

The study addresses the motivational aspect of the children through the diversity of tasks. It has shown a new way for teachers to develop instructional materials for teaching the English language. It is ascertained that there is a significant correlation between culture-specific contents and task-based modules.

5.6 SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDIES

It will be interesting to conduct the study with the following guidelines.

- Few more additional modules can be developed for the proficiency of learners in the English language. They can be used in teaching language by adopting the task-based approach.
- The culture-specific contents can be exploited to teach the children of the 9th and 10th standard.
- New materials with the same focus can be developed and tested on teachers and to develop their proficiency in the English language.
- The same approach can be applied for small scale to large scale industry employees to teach English very easily.
• The study provides new dimensions for instructional materials developers, stakeholders and researchers of English language teaching.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS

This research puts forth the following recommendations:

• A result-oriented teaching method depends on well-trained teachers and the quality develops through teacher training and the practising adequate instructional materials offered by the education system concerned. Therefore all relevant facilities should be provided to teachers.

• Firstly, the subject-specific teachers should be recruited from school level and secondly subject-specific training should be offered to them biannually.

A suitable language teaching method should focus on:

a) Learning objectives: what the goals of teaching and learning will be.

b) The syllabus: what the primary units of organization for a language course will consist of.

c) Teacher and learner roles: what roles teachers and learners are expected to play in the classroom.

d) Activities: the kinds of classroom activities and techniques that are recommended (Richards, “Key Issues in Language Teaching” 59).

In this regard, the task-based method is one of the advanced methods of time which meets these needs of the English language teaching classrooms providing suitable materials. Therefore, it should be implemented by all school teachers. Education stakeholders must promise and practice each recommendation because of their cost-effective nature.

5.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
Due to weather and space constraints, the experiment was conducted school wise and the maximum number of students in each school did not cross twenty. The participants were informed about the procedure of the experiment.

The innovative modules are developed only for the learners of Government Schools of Jammu and Kashmir State as it deals with the culture of Jammu and Kashmir. The cultural contents and the tasks in the developed module best fit to the abilities, age and to the needs of upper primary level learners studying in the government schools of the State. Hence the study is quite applicable to the Upper primary level English language learners of Government schools of the State. The experimented modules can or cannot produce the same result in any other non-native condition. The experiment time period could have been extended, however, due to time constraint, the study could be conducted only in Kashmir region of the State.

5.9 CONCLUSION

The culture-specific contents of the innovative modules, the diversity of activities such as games, riddles, chants, which stimulates the interest of the children through task-based approach have proved to be effective in the learning of language. These factors led the children to perform better in the post-test conducted during the experimental study which is evident from the significant difference in the scores obtained by them. Thus the hypothesis formulated by the researcher proved beyond doubt that non-native upper primary level children learn the language more easily through the task-based approach and through culture-specific contents.