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2. The Effect of Pandemic on Students' Writing Skill

Dr. S. D. Deshbhratar

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Abstract

2020 and 2021 were the COVID-19 years. The period was under the impact of Corona pandemic. Almost every sector affected adversely during this last two years. Education sector is also affected adversely across the country. The education took place in online mode. The period is remarkable for using modern technology in academic sector. Classes, tests, interviews, everything was conducted online. It is a significant development took place in last two years. But there is another side which is ignored. On the name of online education, the assessment took place very superficially. Most of the students read online material, attended online classes, and submitted online multiple choice exam papers. The entire scenario for the student was very easy, as the modern generation is very comfortable with smartphones and laptops. Now in 2022, everything is getting settled and most of the institutions are following their traditional or hybrid mode of teaching and assessment. But now they are facing a lot of difficulty and they are not at all comfortable with their writing skills. Writing is the most adversely affected area for students after the pandemic.

Introduction

One of the most underestimated predicaments of teaching an English language is ignoring a vocabulary power of student. In fact, it is assumed that after qualifying the 12th or HSC examination or having undergone through at least 7 to 12 years of English language based education, we assume that the students of FY have at least a basic vocabulary. Hence, our way of teaching changes, we start giving them content based education or lecture based explanation. But it is observed, there is a huge fatal flaw in our basic development. Although we provide a quantity based education but we fail to evaluate quality based education.

We know without specific required vocabulary, we can't put ourselves; similarly our students are unable to keep a pace with actual reality. Still we expect from our students to pull on the language, without constructing the actual bricks of development.

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As pandemic period adversely affected the writing skill of students. Researcher felt, it is need to study the ground reality of our student's vocabulary and writing skill. There is a need to search for area where our students lag behind during these last two years.

As a case study point of view, researcher has under taken that test on 'writing skill' on FY students of graduate (100 students were selected on random basis from BA & B.Com.) They have been given very easy words in the form of dictation and asked them to write it down on the answer sheet. After dictating 100 words, they have been asked to cross check the spelling they have written. During the last two years, they did not practise writing the long passages, as a part of homework or even in the examination due to the online mode. They avoided writing skills, it resulted into the desperate writing skill. After close study, the following observations are derived. It is observed that how simple day to day words are too difficult for them to write down.

Explaination of Problem

Our students are tremendously ignoring the need of vocabulary empowerment. They are unable to express the context or content with best possible words. That is why, the communication between the sender and receiver fails. When we check the papers of our students, we realize that our students are able to get the meaning but they fail to express it. Even our average students are able to express themselves in their mother language, but when the same context is asked to express in English they fail, it is because they never realize the importance of vocabulary development and its practical approach.

Objectives of Research

- 1. To verify how pandemic adversely affected the writing skill of the student.
- 2. To study the frequency of spelling mistakes.

Hypothesis

- 1. Lack of writing practice during the pandemic period adversely affected the writing skill of the student.
- 2. Very easy and day today words are not written properly by the students.

Methodology

- 1. Total 100 students from BA I & B.Com I of Kamla Nehru Mahavidyalaya had been selected for the study of English vocabulary.
- 2. Vocabulary sheet of 100 words has been prepared.
- 3. The words were so simple and from our day today use.

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4. The students listen the words carefully and have to write it down on the answer sheet.

Explanation

It is the basic principle of our primary school curriculum system that students should acquire writing and reading skills. At every class, a certain vocabulary has been introduced and it is expected that students should acquire the skill and start using the words in their everyday life.

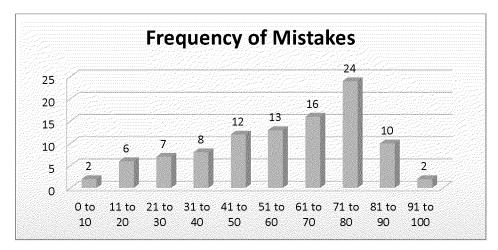
In every class, our curriculum provides all the basic knowledge, skills to our students. But real problem lies in our valuation process, since nursery school students are excused for their grammatical and spelling mistakes. Even students pass the classes step by step without any hurdle. They keep committing the same mistakes again and again. Then it becomes common practice for them. Instead of improvement our student becomes adamant, once their mistakes are accepted. They never change themselves. The end result is, when the student comes to the degree level. They are full of mistakes. Here also, their grammatical and spelling mistakes are ignored and for them the valuation remains the same. They even able to clear, their last hurdle and pass the degree easily.

It is assumed that the student who take admission in BA. and B.Com has qualified 12th [HSC] examination. It means he/she has been learning in the school since last 12 years. If we look into the last 12 year books of Maharashtra State Government or CBSE which have been taught in the schools. It provides almost all basic knowledge of English vocabulary. They should be very comfortable in basic skills like reading and writing, which have been taught in the school and college levels. If we study the course design of every class [from I std to 12th] It seems that although our student go through the abundance of words but they fail to utilize the usage of vocabulary. There is a flaw in our curriculum. Even if our student knows a tremendous amount of vocabulary, but as far as accuracy of spelling and proper usage is concerned, they are horrible.

To study the ground reality of the last two years, 100 students have been selected for this case study. 100 words were pronounced loudly before them in the class. They were asked to write it down on the answer sheets. The answer sheet was checked closely and according to that data frequency of spelling mistakes have been generated. On the basis of the input, the following observations have been made.

Observation and Classification of Data

The students' frequency of mistakes has been categorized in the following series (Graph).



As per the graph No. [1] shows that out of 100 students, the majority of students committed mistakes. The graph indicates the range of mistakes increase after 40 to 80, Total 77% of students are not comfortable with most common spelling. The most noticeable point is 52% students made 80% mistakes. Only 8% students commit fewer mistakes.

Days Related Words

According to the Graph No [2] 'Thursday' is most difficult spelling for maximum student, total 80% students committed mistakes. Followed by, 71% for 'Wednesday', 55% for 'Saturday' and 'Tuesday', 'Friday' and 'Sunday' are also misspelt by 26% and 24% students respectively. Only easier spelling in days is 'Monday' which is misspelt by only 17% of students.

North

South

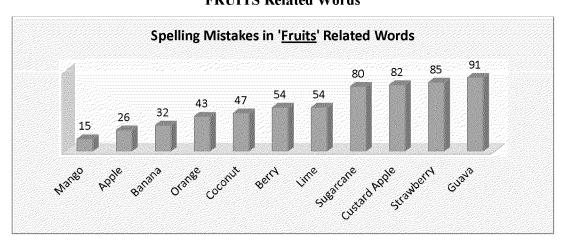
Spelling Mistakes in '<u>Directions</u>' Related Words

Direction Related Words

As per the graph No [3] 48% of students are unable to write the correct spelling of 'East' followed by 43% for 'west', 37% for 'south' and 33% for 'North'. In direction, 'East' is most difficulty and 'North' is easier for them.

West

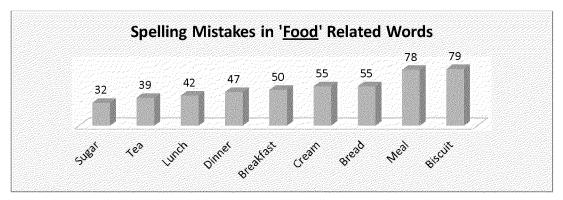
East



FRUITS Related Words

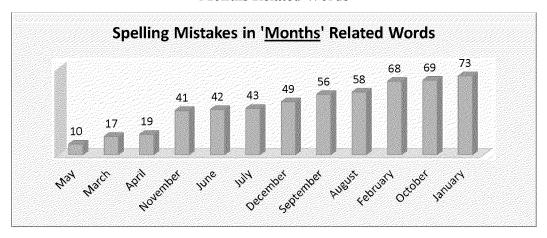
Under the topic of 'fruits', total 11 words have been taken to check the correction level of spelling mistake. As per Graph No [4] The most difficult word for students is 'guava' 91% students misspelt it, followed by 'strawberry', 85%, 'Custard Apple', 82% 'sugarcane', 80% . The easier word for student is 'Mango' which is miss pelt by only 15% students.

FOOD Related Words

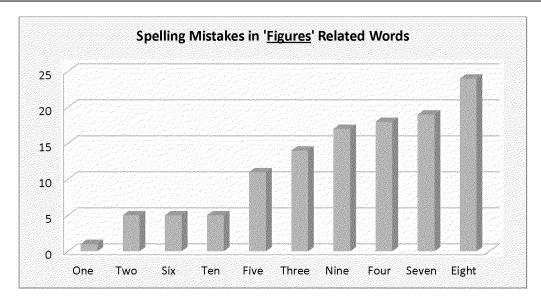


As per the Graph No [5] under the title 'food', total 9 words have been selected. Out of which, the most difficult word for student is 'biscuit' only 21% of students respond it correctly. 'Meal' followed after that total 78% students make mistakes while writing it. It seems very strange that still 39% & 32% students are not able to write 'Tea' and 'Sugar' respectively. 'Bread' and Cream are common day to day words but still 55% cannot able to attempt it correctly.

Months Related Words



As per the Graph No [6] the most difficult word under the title of months, The result is astonishing, the most difficult words is 'January'; 73%, 'October'; 69%, 'February'; 68%. 'August', 58%, 'September'; 56%, 'December'; 49%, 'July'; 43%, 'June'; 42% and 'November'; 41% are some more difficult words. The only satisfaction is, there are very few words like 'May', 'March' and 'April' with 10%, 17%, and 19%, of students make mistakes respectively.



As per the Graph No [7] shows the most difficult word in the 'Figures' related words. It has been seen that although we use 'figures' in our day today life. The only spelling spared by students is 'one'; which is misspelt by only 01% students, Other misspelt words are 'two'; %, 'Six' %, 'ten' %, and 'five' %, The most difficult word is 'eight', 24% students didn't able to write it down properly.

Finding & Conclusion

The following findings /conclusions have been derived from the frequency of mistakes committed by the students.

- 1. The basic reason of committing the spelling mistakes is less practice, in our education system exercised is not properly followed student do not complete their assignment by their own but either copy it from others or they ignore it.
- 2. Repetition is a basic law of imitation, whatever we learn, it is a part and parcel of our listening ability and utilization of that symbol, which means the 'repetition' of the same words again and again, but our students complete their homework only for the sake of completion.
- 3. During the pandemic, online mode of education was followed. Writing skill, assignment, homework was terribly ignored. It resulted into the damaging their writing skill.
- 4. Most assessments were done on a MCQ basis through Google Forms. Students were compelled to select the option. It damages their writing skills.

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- 5. During the pandemic, online mode was the only medium, although education went on during the period, it spoiled the basic skills of our generation.
- 6. The problem is in 'error and correction method' students themselves never realize their mistakes. In this situation, it is necessary that teacher should point out this mistakes, But the online mode has brought entire scenario into the worse level. Once students commit the mistake, they adopt it and continue until somebody points it out. At the end at UG level whenever he exposes instead of improvement, he/she losses the confidence.
- The maximum spelling mistakes show that there is fatal flaw in our primary level education system, where no doubt everything has been taught but not fairly exercised.

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