A Teaching Learning Model for Developing Reading Skills of Slow Learners in Primary Schools

Abstract

The present work is an empirical investigation of the efficacy of a 'Teaching Learning Model' (TLM) specially designed for slow learners in primary schools. The focus of this research is to design a 'Teaching Learning Model' (TLM) and examine its efficacy in enhancing the reading sub-skills of the slow learners in their 1st language/mother-tongue (Odia).The study employs a pre-test, post-test quasi-experimental design to investigate the effect of specially designed TLM in enhancing the reading sub-skills i.e. Oral Reading Fluency, Spelling and Reading Comprehension of slow learners in their 1st language (Odia)/OFL in primary schools of Odisha, India. For this purpose a sample of 216 slow learners (SLs) were purposively selected from grade 4 and 5 of six primary schools from one district (Jagatsinghpur) of Odisha through their academic achievement score (below 30%), teachers' perception, and Das-Naglieri's CAS-PASS tests; they were randomly divided into Control and Experimental groups (N=108 in each group). In the pre- test both the groups were given reading tests i.e. Oral reading fluency (ORF), Spelling, and Reading comprehension (RC) in their 1st language/Odia. Both the group slow learners were found to be homogeneous and having similar demographic characteristics. The video based TLM was designed following constructive learning theories, multi-sensory intervention approach and interactive pedagogical strategies; administered only on Experimental group OFL slow learners as special tutoring in small groups for a period of 04 months. The standardized Home environment and Classroom observation scales were also administered to collect qualitative data about home and school factors. The OFL Control group was attending the regular classroom teaching and the Experimental group was attending both the regular classroom teaching and TLM special tutoring; after 04 months both groups were again administered post-test reading tasks on ORF, Spelling and Reading Comprehension. In all the post-test reading tasks (ORF, Spelling, RC) the Experimental group OFL slow learners were found to perform better than their Control group counterparts; the '*t*' values of all the 3 reading sub- skills were significant at 0.01 level. The TLM in Odia language was found to be effective in enhancing OFL

Slow learners' reading sub-skills and reducing their reading errors; thus proved its efficacy in developing phonological awareness, word encoding-decoding, vocabulary and reading comprehension skills among Odia First Language (OFL) slow learners. Results of the ANCOVA showed significant differences between groups at posttest. The learning gains were found to be significant in both post- test and retention test (after 02 months). After using the TLM the SLs have also improved in other areas like English, Science, History, Geography and Mathematics.

However, in the Slow Learners home environment the factors like learning material and opportunities, physical environment, enrichment for learning, emotional climate were found to be low; and in (Odia medium) primary schools all the teaching learning variables i.e. classroom environment, infrastructure, teachers' lesson delivery and interactions were found to be below average (in teaching performance and pedagogical practices) might be the causal factors of slow learning among primary school children. Thus, the present study recommends for using the TLM for regular classroom teaching, parental awareness and language teachers' training in primary schools.

Key words**: Teaching learning model, reading skills, slow learners, primary schools, cognitive processing skills