The Role of Teaching Persian Conversation Program in Educational Success of Non-Persian Adult learners in Iran

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ABSTRACT: This article is based on a research entitled "A study on the role of Teaching Persian Conversation Program (TPCP) on the educational success of non- Persian adult speakers." The aim is to determine the success rate of TPCP, and investigating the attitudes of adult educators and supervisors in the necessity of operating TPCP for adult learners. The methodology of this study is survey and ex post facto method by the use of experimental and control groups. Statistical population is adult learners in primary courses in the east and west Azerbaijan, Ardebil and Zanjan in Iran. Sampling size is 1588 learners from 148 classes selected randomly. The collecting tools are closed and opened questioner, pre- test, post-test, and final test. Frequency, percentage and adjust value have been used to analyze data. The most important results are: The number of passed adult learners of experimental-group in comparison to control- group has increased. -Presented views towards characteristics and tools of TPCP show that all are suitable teaching tools and the only slight problems exist in the choice of words, sentences, methods of teaching contents, and non colorful pictures in tablets.
Keywords: Adult Learners, Bilingualism, Curriculum, Persian Conversation, Educational Success, Non- Persian Speakers

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

INTRODUCTION

In most countries around the world, teaching basic level of reading and writing to those of non-Persian speakers faces some difficulties. There are several different local languages and dialects in Iran which make learning Persian language difficult. To solve this problem some actions have been taken such as "increasing teaching hours with the name of educational backwardness", but unfortunately no perfect program has been provided for optimal use of these hours. Researches were successful to provide TPCP for non-Persian speakers after some years of study. First, the pilot study was implemented in 2006 in Ardebil and Pars Abad in Ardebil province and after assessing the program and revising the program accordingly; it is implemented in 74 classes in three provinces of the East and West Azerbaijan, Zanjan, and Ardebil. The summary results are presented in this paper.

Problem Statement

Teaching basic reading and writing is one of the main aims of each educational system. Teaching these skills to those whose languages are not the same of official language differs. Iranian educational system has no educational plan to consider some hours to teach Persian language to non-Persian speakers. Designers and plan makers of Teaching Persian Conversation Program are in belief that some hours should be added regularly to educational plan in order to remove the existent differences between non-Persian speakers and Persian speakers to some extent. In other words, it is needed to think of teaching oral skills of Persian language (speaking and listening) at the same time of teaching reading and writing skills to non-Persian speakers (Zandi.et.al.1999).

That is why (TPCP) has considered 40 hours in level 1 and level 2 in the form of 18 conversations in order to increase the quality of the amount of basic literacy teaching program in different regions.

Title of Conversations in level I shows in table no. 1

Title of conversations in level II shows in table no. 2

The main problem is what the role of TPCP is in the educational success of non-Persian speakers. In Other words teaching of those who are non- Persian speakers mainly differs from those Persian speakers that are why non-Persian speakers need especial teaching program.

The importance of this research

Many of Iranians could not read, write Persian language and they are deprived for the advantages of using Persian language as a means of communication. Unfortunately the large numbers of these people live in non-Persian speaking area, and that is why they could not read, write Persian, nor they can communicate with other Iranians completely, and nor they can use Persian radio or TV (Zandi, et. Al. 1999:5).

Since Persian is the formal language in Iran, and a common communicating mean among all Iranians of different languages such as Fars, Arab, Kurdish, and Turkish and so on, learning four skills of Persian language—speaking, listening, reading, and writing is a necessity for all Iranians. As the result, providing a TPCP for non-Persian speakers is a necessity.

Aim

The main aim of this research is a Study of the role of Teaching Persian Conversation Program to non-Persian Speakers.

Especial aims

1. Collecting adult educators' view regarding the implementation of TPCP for non- Persian speakers.

2. Studying of internal reliability of contents, teaching method, educational tools, conversational timing, learning and interest amount of language learners of TPCP.

3. Studying of the success rate of the program regarding the number of those passing student in final exam, and the percentage of passing students and their educational success

Hypothesis

1. Providing fixed TPCP in selected regions is necessary.

2. It is assumed that there is adequate internal reliability among components of the program.

3. The number of the passing non-Persian speaker students would increase with the use of TPCP.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research tools

1- A, B and C forms have opened and closed questions to measure first and second hypotheses.

From A concludes 36 five-choice- questions

Form B is made to collect adult educators' views, and supervisors of literacy movement organization regarding the pros and cons of TPCP.

2- Form 27 is built in order to study and define the number of the passing adult learners in two groups of experimental and control. In this form the results of final exam and low grade of adult learners at the final exams are recorded.

Methodology

Survey, ex-pose facto method are the methodologies that have been used to implement this project.

Population and sample size

Population of this project is all non-Persian adult learners who participated in the primary levels of literacy teaching organization in the East and West Azerbaijan, Ardebil and Zanjan in Iran. The total population is 42,395 people in 1388. As the result of expansion of population 1588 non- Persian adult learners from 148 classes have been selected randomly. Half of these non-Persian adult learners are selected as experimental group and the left half considered as control group. Adult educators and supervisors of the whole 148 classes have been selected to collect their views. Therefore, randomly is the sampling method.

Data Analysis

To analyze data descriptive statistic such as frequency, percentage, and adjust value via the following formula have been used:

$$adjust\ value = \frac{(P1 \times 5) + (P2 \times 4) + (P3 \times 3) + (P4 \times 2) + (P5 \times 1)}{100}$$

RESULTS

The number and percentage of the passing non-Persian adult learners of experimental group (classes that Persian conversation plan have been conducted) and control group (classes which Persian conversation plan have not been conducted) are selected according to information of the forms of 027 (the results of final and low grade). The analysis of findings is shown in table no. 3.

As it is considered in the above table, the total numbers of 128 classes have been statistically analyzed. These classes include 74 classes related to experimental group (classes which TPCP have been implemented in them) and 74 related to control group (classes which TPCP have not been implemented in them).

In 74 classes of experimental group 793 numbers have been participated in final exam and on the whole 536 adult learners are passed. The percentage of the passing adult learners in experimental group in final exam in comparison to participants in final exam equals to %68. In 74 classes of control group 795 people have participated in final exam and 454 passed the exam. The percentage of those who passed final exam in control group in comparison to participants of final exam equals to %57.

The difference between those who passed final exam in experimental group is 82 people more than those passed final exam in control group. Assuming that the participants of two groups in final exam equals the number of those who passed in experimental group 82 persons are more than control group. This increased amount is the result of applying TPCP. The percentage difference of the passed adult learners in experimental group in comparison to control group equals to 11. It shows11 percent growth in those classes TPCP have been implemented. Therefore, it is concluded that the implementation of TPCP in those of non-Persian speakers provinces results the effective reduction of the quantitative and qualitative drop. In addition, the implementation of this plan is effective in the reduction of dissipation of cost rate.

Analysis of the form A

In order to analyze data of form a frequency, and percentage. The number of those who passed the final exam in each group has been counted and their percentage in comparison to all participants in final exam has been measured. At end adjust value amount of each descriptive characteristics measured by the use of below formula.

$$adjust\ value = \frac{(P1\times5) + (P2\times4) + (P3\times3) + (P4\times2) + (P5\times1)}{100}$$

In this formula "P" represents the frequency percentage of each one of the descriptive degrees. If the obtained adjust value is larger than three, it indicates the responses given to each one of features is effective and significant; if the obtained adjust value is less than 3, it indicates that random response is given to each feature and it is insignificant. The frequency and percentage of different presented attitudes given to form A are described in the table 4.

Summary analysis of form "A"

Most of participants agree that the features number1,2,4,5,6,7,8,13,24,25,27,29,30, and 32 are effective and necessary. Most of participants agree that features number 3,9,10,11,14,15,16,17,20, and 35 are highly operative and appropriate. Most of participants considers number 12,19,,21,22,23, 33,34,35 as relevant, sufficient and active features.

Analysis of form "B"

Form B is distributed among adult instructor of tested classes. It provides to find out the attitude towards the educational content, subjects, educational tools, teaching time for each conversation, the attitude of learners towards the content of each conversation, and their amount of learning. The summary results of participant attitudes are as follows:

Selected words

Participants distinguish all the selected works appropriate, but learning some words, especially verbs and terms related to direction is difficult, as well as words such as 'sneeze", "runny nose", "tunnel", "ambulance, "adult learner." Their requests are the more use of everyday words and the more exercises on difficult words.

Sentences

Participants distinguish sentences appropriate on the whole, at the same time they note that sentences on the lessons of second level are long and it is needed to break them to short and simple sentences.

Subjects

Participants recognize all subjects on the whole are appropriate and attractive, especially subjects on second level, but some subjects such as conversation no.4, and 5 carry inordinate amount of urban life culture and conversation no. 7 carries inordinate amount of rural life culture. This issue is natural since urban and rural classes were not separated in this project.

Educational tools

All of the participants consider non-colorful pictures as the shortcoming of this program. They ask for colorful notebooks for all adult learners.

Teaching time

Participants consider teaching time for this program appropriate in the whole, but some has request to increase the teaching time a little bit more for conversations of second levels.

Attitudes of learners on the contents of conversations. All the participants assess the attitude of language learners as positive, but most of the participants confirm the negative attitude of language learners towards the contents of conversations no. 11, and 18.

The mount of learning of language learners

Participants recognize the learning amount of language learners appropriate in first level, but they consider the learning of conversation no. 5 is difficult and the conversations no.7 and 11 is assessed as average. In second level of conversations, in general the learning amount of language learners was considered as average, and especially the learning amount of conversation no.18 is considered low.

Table 1. Title of conversations in level I and level II

Conversation no.	Subject	Conversation no.	subject
1	Greeting	10	pilgrimage
2	Animals, fruit, colors	11	Work in urban area
3	Clothes	12	Religion and health
4	Food	13	Catching cold
5	Party	14	Dental health
6	Cooking	15	Discrimination
7	Work in farm	16	Drug poisoning
8	Rural Jihad organization	17	Parents' fight
9	Traveling	18	cooperation

Table 2. Frequency distribution and percentage of the passing adult learners in final exam

Group	Number of Classes	Participants no.	Number of passing adult learners	Percentage of passing adult learners
Experimental	74	793	536	68%
Control	74	795	454	57%
Differences	0	-2	82	11%

Table 3. Frequency and percentage of collected attitude from form A

Concerned features	Frequency and Percentage										Adjust value
	Good		Relatively Good		Average		Relatively Poor		Poor		
	f*	p**	f	p	F	p	f	p	F	p	
Necessity amount of implementing TPCT in non-Persian speaker areas	19	30	24	39	14	22	2	3	4	6	3.84
The amount of proportion rate to look and say, and listen and answer method in language teaching	15	24	27	43	12	18	6	10	3	5	3.71
Efficiency amount of problem-solving method in teaching and learning language	11	15	27	36	23	31	10	14	3	4	3.44
The effectiveness of questioning and answering method in teaching language and learning of language learners	21	29	28	38	15	21	8	11	1	1	3.83
The effectiveness of listening and responding method in language teaching learners	16	22	34	46	16	22	2	3	5	7	3.74
The effectiveness of discussion method in learning language	18	24	23	31	16	22	12	16	5	7	3.49
The effectiveness of storytelling method in language teaching and learning	16	22	20	28	16	22	16	22	4	6	3.38
The effectiveness of total physical response in language teaching and learning	20	27	25	34	16	22	10	14	2	3	3.68
interest amount of adult learners towards teaching – learning activities	17	23	27	37	19	26	9	12	1	2	3.67
The appropriateness amount of contents in level 1 with everyday needs and interests of language learners	24	33	25	34	18	25	3	4	3	4	3.88
The appropriateness amount of contents in level 2 with everyday needs and interests of language learners	22	30	20	27	24	33	4	5	3	5	3.72
The amount of learners' satisfaction and interest of learning contents of level I	23	31	28	38	18	24	4	5	1	2	3.91
The amount of learners' satisfaction and interest of learning contents in level II	19	26	25	34	21	28	6	8	2	4	3.70
The appropriateness amount of the size of content in level 1 with considered teaching time	19	26	26	36	16	22	9	12	3	4	3.70
The appropriateness amount of the size of content in level 2 with considered teaching time	17	23	24	33	20	27	5	7	7	10	3.52
The appropriateness and connection of teaching content of level 1 with the real and local life conditions of language learners	16	22	26	36	18	25	9	/5 12	3	/5 4	3.58
The appropriateness and connection of teaching contents of level 2 with the real and local life conditions of language learners	14	19	30	41	17	23	9	12	3	5	3.57
The appropriateness amount of selected words and sentences in the teaching contents of level 1 and level 2 in learning Persian language	16	22	25	35	23	32	6	8	2	3	3.65
The appropriateness amount of provided teaching contents with the stored knowledge and experienced of language learners	12	16	29	40	19	26	10	14	3	4	3.5
Sentence efficiency regarding their shortness and simplicity in learning	19	26	27	38	14	19	7	10	5	7	3.66

Feature											Mean
The appropriateness amount of the subjects of content with the language teaching aims and learning of language learners	24	33	20	27	16	22	7	10	6	8	3.67
The sufficiency of intended instruction time in teaching content of level 1	26	36	22	30	12	16	8	11	5	7	3.77
The sufficiency of intended instruction time in teaching content of level 2	18	25	23	32	17	23	10	14	5	6	3.56
The participation amount of language learners in teaching content in level 1	26	36	29	40	15	20	2	3	1	1	4.07
The participation amount of language learners in teaching content in level 2	17	24	23	32	22	30	6	8	4	6	3.6
the logical relationship of teaching sessions	19	26	28	38	21	29	5	7	-	-	3.83
The tablet efficiency in motivation of language learners	28	38	23	31	18	25	3	4	1	2	3.99
The tablet efficiency in achieving aims of teaching language	28	39	25	35	16	22	2	3	1	1	3.3
The efficiency of illustrated books in motivation of language learners	30	42	24	33	11	15	8	10	-	-	4.07
The efficiency of illustrated books in achieving the aims of language teaching	30	41	24	32	12	16	8	11	-	-	4.03
Conformity of pictures with the psychological and sociological characteristics of language learners	15	21	27	37	16	26	10	13	2	3	3.6
Efficiency of pictures in learning of language learners	24	33	26	36	16	20	5	8	2	3	3.88
Conformity of pictures with real and local life of language learners	22	29	27	36	16	21	8	10	3	4	3.99
Conformity of pictures with subjects and educational contents	13	18	20	40	21	30	10	12	-	-	3.34
Attractiveness and comprehensiveness of pictures	16	21	28	37	20	27	8	11	3	4	3.6
The appropriateness of pictures with age, sex of language learners	18	25	24	34	20	27	8	11	3	4	3.64

∗Frequency
∗∗Percentage

DISCUSSION

The results of this project entitled "The Role of Teaching Persian Conversation Program in Educational success of non-Persian Adult Learners in Iran" are as follow:

Comparison between the frequency of adult learners in experimental and control groups shows that the number of the passed learners in experimental group is 82 persons more than control group. And this increase is the result of teaching Persian Conversation Program.

The comparison between the percentage of the adult learners who passed the final exam in experimental and control group shows the increase of 11 percent in the experimental group which is the result of using Teaching Persian Conversation Program.

The collected attitude of form A, the frequency percentage of these attitudes and computing of the amount value of each measured features shows that all these features in Teaching Persian Conversation Program are effective and all participants states that the roles of noted features are highly effective in implementation of TPCP.

The Responses to the features of form B shows that each one of the features and educational tools of the program is appropriate and there are just some small problems over the selection of words, sentences, the methods of teaching contents, non-colorful pictures.

The gathered attitude towards form C shows that firstly, implementation of this program is a necessity, since this program is effective, and motivate in the educational development of learners. Secondly, if the program will be revised according to the findings of this research then better result will be expected.

Suggestions

According to the results some suggestions are given as follows:

To provide educational tools such as exercise book, guide books for adult instructor, common dictionary and tests, and to proved colorful pictures for books

To revise those pictures of book which are not appropriate with regards to the content?

To make easier the content of second level by making short the sentences and considering the horizontal and vertical relations of subjects in a way they stay in harmony with the primary Persian book.

To teach Persian conversation as an independent material in all primary classes of four provinces of the West and South Azarbayejan, Ardebil, and Zanjan

To provide educational movies for this program, to show educational program in an especial time on TV, and providing some training course for adult instructors.

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