

## Effectiveness of Training for Elementary School Teachers in Mizoram in the Context of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

H. Lalrinliana\*  
B.B. Mishra\*\*

### Abstract

*The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) aims to provide quality education to all children in the 6 to 14 age group across the nation. The programme places great emphasis on building the capacity of teachers for teaching, through regular training programmes. The Scheme provides for regular annual in-service training for up to 20 days per teacher. The SSA framework was amended to give more emphasis to practical classroom related teacher training by providing for a maximum of 10 days institutional training at BRC level, and another 10 days, specifically at cluster/school level, in order to ensure follow-up, peer learning and experience practical classroom transactions. In the present study, an attempt has been made to evaluate the 10 days institutional training at BRC level and 10 days at cluster/school level for improving the teaching learning practices of teachers through subject specific training in two language subjects – English and Mizo. The study reveals that the subject specific trainings are largely effective in the attainment of the goals.*

**Key words:** Effectiveness, Training, Elementary school teachers, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

### Introduction

For improvement of elementary education, which has now become a fundamental right of all the children of the country, various programmes and schemes have been implemented from time to time. These schemes have rightly recognized the need to provide recurrent training to teachers who are already on the job to provide quality elementary education. Thus, teacher development through in-service teacher training

programmes has continued to be one of the thrust areas to ensure quality of elementary education.

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) aims to provide quality education to all children in the 6 to 14 age group across the nation. The programme places great emphasis on building the capacity of teachers for teaching, through regular training programmes. The Scheme provides for regular annual in-service training for up to 20 days per teacher. The

\*Mr. H. Lalrinliana is Research Scholar in Department of Education, Mizoram University, Aizawl.

\*\*Dr. B.B. Mishra is Professor in Department of Education, Mizoram University, Aizawl. Email: bana.mishra55@gmail.com

SSA framework was amended to give more emphasis to practical classroom related teacher training by providing for a maximum of 10 days institutional training at BRC level, and another 10 days, specifically at cluster/school level, in order to ensure follow-up, peer learning and experience practical classroom transactions. SSA also provides for 30 days induction training for newly recruited trained teachers to orient them to their roles and responsibilities, the expectations of the SSA programme and specific state/district priorities in quality education. Further, 60 days training is also provided for teachers who have not received pre-service training. All training programmes are funded from SSA and cover several pedagogical issues, including content and methodology, improving teaching learning transactions at class room level. States have started exploring several innovative means of imparting these trainings, including use of distance, self-learning mode and use of educational technology.

States prepare their own teacher training schedules and programmes based on fresh guidelines for in-service teacher training under SSA prepared by NCERT in January 2007 that was shared with all the states. Based on this, the state of Mizoram also prepared training calendars for different years and conducted the trainings according to the schedules. Apart from training in general topics, subject specific trainings are also conducted for teachers teaching the specific subjects. Each subject-specific-

training has its own objectives. A very important concern in this regard is whether the trainings are effective for the teachers or not, or whether the objectives of the trainings are fulfilled or not.

To address the concern raised above, it is pertinent to take up investigation on these. However, when the investigators made a serious exploration of various sources to locate empirical studies of present nature, they hardly found any empirical study conducted anywhere in the country. Since SSA is a new scheme introduced in the year 2001 only, no study on SSA can be expected prior to 2001 and two/three years after. Being a government scheme, its implementation is monitored by external agencies like universities and others as monitoring institutions. In the case of Mizoram, Department of Education, Mizoram University takes up the monitoring work but it is beyond their scope to address the issues raised above. Moreover, no study of this kind has been found to have been conducted in Mizoram. It is against this background that the investigators decided to take up an evaluative study on effectiveness of training of elementary school teachers in Mizoram in the context of SSA.

#### **Operational Definitions of Key Terms Used**

The terms used in the article are quite familiar. However, the following terms which have specific meaning in the context of the study are explained below.

**Training:** Training in the present study implies the twenty days in-service training

of teachers broken up into ten days institutional training at BRC level, and another ten days specifically at cluster/school level organized every year under SSA of Mizoram in conformity to the broad/core objectives stipulated by MHRD, Government of India.

**Elementary School Teachers:** Elementary school teachers refer to the teachers teaching classes I to VIII in composite elementary schools or primary schools comprising of classes I-IV and middle schools comprising of classes V-VIII.

**Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan:** Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) literally means Education for All. It is a campaign on a mission mode for universalization of elementary education in the whole of our country.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The present study has been conducted with the following objectives:

- 1) To evaluate the effectiveness of training on teaching learning of English for both primary and middle school teachers in Mizoram under SSA.
- 2) To compare the effectiveness of training on teaching learning of English with reference to stages of education and gender of teachers.
- 3) To evaluate the effectiveness of training on teaching learning of Mizo for both primary and middle school teachers in Mizoram under SSA.
- 4) To compare the effectiveness of training on teaching learning of

Mizo with reference to stages of education and gender of teachers.

### **Delimitation of the Study**

In the present study, training has been delimited to the training on teaching learning of two language subjects i.e. English and Mizo only that are imparted to elementary school teachers in Mizoram by SSA.

### **Methodology of the Study**

For the present study, both qualitative and quantitative approaches of research were employed. Stratified random sampling method was applied as sampling technique. First of all, the whole of Mizoram was stratified based on districts. At first, out of the eight districts, four were randomly selected. Elementary schools in the four districts were again stratified into primary and middle schools. Forty schools in each district consisting of 20 primary and 20 middle schools were again randomly selected as sample schools. Two separate questionnaires were developed by the investigators to assess the effectiveness of the training programmes for the two subjects- English and Mizo focusing on the objectives of the training programmes. Data were collected through the questionnaires from all teachers of the sample schools who had attended subject-specific trainings in English and Mizo conducted at BRC level. Responses from 124 and 98 teachers of English and Mizo respectively were obtained. The data were organized and analyzed both qualitatively and

quantitatively with respect to the two subjects. For quantitative analysis frequency and percentage were used.

**Analysis of Data**

**Effectiveness of ‘Training on Teaching-Learning of English’ for Primary and Middle School Teachers**

The first objective of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of training on teaching learning of English for both primary and middle school teachers in Mizoram under SSA. The questionnaire for assessing the effectiveness of the

subject specific training in English has seven statements with two alternative choices ‘ Yes’ and ‘No’. Further, in order to reveal the extent to which the trainees have been benefitted, two more alternatives- ‘To a great extent’ and ‘To some extent’ were given for those who would respond ‘Yes’. All the seven statements were prepared based on objectives of subject specific trainings in English conducted at BRC level. The data were analyzed according to the objective of the study and the results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Responses of Teachers on Effectiveness of Training on Teaching-Learning of English**

State- ment No.	Statement	Response (N = 124)		
		Yes		No
		To a great extent	To some extent	
1	It helped me become more aware of my students’ pronunciation difficulties	82 (66.1)	42 (33.9)	0 (0.0)
2	It enabled me to use a range of simple techniques for helping my students to improve their pronunciation of individual sounds	54 (43.5)	36 (29)	34 (27.5)
3	It improved my ability to differentiate between passive and active vocabulary at each level	44 (35.4)	40 (32.3)	40 (32.3)
4	It improved my ability to use various techniques for showing new vocabulary	56 (45.1)	25 (20.2)	43 (34.7)
5	It increased my knowledge about what grammar means, units of language and parts of the sentence	54 (43.5)	32 (25.8)	38 (30.7)

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6	It improved my ability to conduct different activities for teaching grammar	62	28	34
		(50)	(22.6)	(27.4)
7	It helped me improve my techniques of teaching the four language skills – skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing	75	22	27
		(60.5)	(17.7)	(21.8)

*Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages*

Table 1 reveals that all the respondents who had attended subject specific trainings in English reported that they became more aware of their students' pronunciation difficulties as a result of the training. Further, 66.1% and 33.9% of them said that they were benefitted to a great extent and to some extent respectively by the training in this regard. Relating to the second statement 72.5% responded positively and the rest 27.5% responded negatively. It implies that the training enabled majority of the teachers to use a range of simple techniques for helping their students to improve their pronunciation of individual sounds. Relating to the third statement 67.7% responded positively (35.4% to a great extent and 32.3% to some extent) and the rest 32.3% responded negatively. It implies that majority of the trainees perceived the training programme helpful to them in improving their abilities to differentiate between passive and active vocabulary. Relating to the 4<sup>th</sup> statement 65.3% responded positively (45.1% to a great extent and 20.2% to some extent) and the rest 34.7% responded negatively. It implies that majority of the trainees perceived the training programme helpful to them in improving their abilities to use various techniques for showing new

vocabulary. The 5<sup>th</sup> statement was responded positively by 69.3% (43.5% to a great extent and 25.8% to some extent) and negatively by 30.7%. It implies that majority of the trainees perceived the training programme helpful to them in enhancing their knowledge about what grammar means, units of language and parts of the sentence. Relating to the 6<sup>th</sup> statement 72.6% responded positively (50% to a great extent and 22.6% to some extent) and the rest 27.4% responded negatively. It implies that majority of the trainees perceived the training programme helpful to them in improving their abilities to conduct different activities for teaching grammar. Similarly, relating to the last (7<sup>th</sup>) statement 78.2% responded positively (60.5% to a great extent and 17.7% to some extent) and the rest 21.8% responded negatively. It implies that majority of the trainees perceived the training programme helpful to them in improving their techniques of teaching the four language skills – skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

The percentages of teachers who considered the trainings in English subject ineffective on attainment of the seven objectives ranged from 21.8 to 34.7. Thus, the results indicate that the objectives of

subject specific trainings in English conducted at BRC level were largely fulfilled in case of majority of the trainees.

The second objective of the study was to compare the effectiveness of

training on teaching learning of English with reference to stages of education and gender of teachers. The results are presented in Table 2 and Table 3 for stage-wise and gender-wise comparison respectively.

**Table 2**  
**Stage-wise (PS & MS) Responses of Teachers on Effectiveness of Training on Teaching-Learning of English**

Statement No	Statement	Primary School (N = 42)			Middle School Teachers (N = 82)		
		Yes, to a great extent	Yes, to some extent	No	Yes, to a great extent	Yes, to some extent	No
1	It helped me become more aware of my students' pronunciation difficulties	30 (71.4)	12 (28.6)	0 (0.0)	52 (63.4)	30 (36.6)	0 (0.0)
2	It enabled me to use a range of simple techniques for helping my students to improve their pronunciation of individual sounds	22 (52.4)	14 (33.3)	6 (14.3)	32 (39)	22 (26.8)	28 (34.2)
3	It improved my ability to differentiate between passive and active vocabulary at each level	18 (42.9)	16 (38.1)	8 (19)	26 (31.7)	24 (29.3)	32 (39)
4	It improved my ability to use various techniques for showing new vocabulary	24 (57.1)	10 (23.8)	8 (19.1)	32 (39)	15 (18.3)	35 (42.7)
5	It increased my knowledge about what grammar means, units of language and parts of the sentence	20 (47.6)	14 (33.3)	8 (19.1)	34 (41.4)	18 (22)	30 (36.6)
6	It improved my ability to conduct different activities for teaching grammar	26 (61.9)	10 (23.8)	6 (14.3)	36 (43.9)	18 (22)	28 (34.1)
7	It helped me improve my techniques of teaching the four language skills – skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing	25 (59.5)	8 (19.1)	9 (21.4)	50 (61)	14 (17)	18 (22)

*Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages*

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Table 2 reveals that training on teaching learning of English is perceived to be beneficial to majority of both primary and middle school teachers. However, it has been perceived to be more effective by primary school teachers than middle school teachers. It is revealed from Table 2 that: (i) Out of the seven areas or objectives of training in English subject, the percentages of primary school teachers who perceived the training effective to a great extent are more than that of middle school teachers in five areas/objectives; (ii) The percentages of middle school teachers who considered the training as not effective are more than that of primary school teachers in all the areas; and (iii) The percentage of middle school teachers who found the training effective to a great extent is more than that of primary school teachers only in the seventh objective i.e. improvement in techniques of teaching the four language skills – skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. All teachers of the two groups are found to have been benefitted by the training in becoming more aware of their students’ pronunciation difficulties. In comparison to middle school teachers, the primary school teachers perceived the training programmes to be more beneficial to them to use a range of simple techniques for helping their students to improve their pronunciation of individual sounds; in improving their abilities to differentiate between passive and active vocabulary and to use various techniques for showing new vocabulary; in enhancing their knowledge about what grammar means, units of language and parts of the sentence; and in improving their abilities to conduct different activities for teaching grammar.

**Table 3**  
**Gender-wise Responses of Teachers on Effectiveness of Training on Teaching-Learning of English**

State ment No	Statement	Male Teachers (N = 52)			Female Teachers (N= 72)		
		Yes, to a great extent	Yes, to some extent	No	Yes, to a great extent	Yes, to some extent	No
1	It helped me become more aware of my students’ pronunciation difficulties	36 (69.2)	16 (30.8)	0 (0.0)	46 (63.9)	26 (36.1)	0 (0.0)
2	It enabled me to use a range of simple techniques for helping my students to improve their pronunciation of individual sounds	26 (50)	14 (26.9)	12 (23.1)	28 (38.9)	22 (30.6)	22 (30.5)

3	It improved my ability to differentiate between passive and active vocabulary at each level	20	16	16	24	24	24
		(38.5)	(30.8)	(30.7)	(33.3)	(33.4)	(33.3)
4	It improved my ability to use various techniques for showing new vocabulary	22	10	20	34	15	23
		(42.3)	(19.2)	(38.5)	(47.2)	(20.9)	(31.9)
5	It increased my knowledge about what grammar means, units of language and parts of the sentence	20	12	20	34	20	18
		(38.5)	(23)	(38.5)	(47.2)	(27.8)	(25)
6	It improved my ability to conduct different activities for teaching grammar	24	10	18	38	18	16
		(46.2)	(19.2)	(34.6)	(52.8)	(25)	(22.2)
7	It helped me improve my techniques of teaching the four language skills – skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing	30	8	14	45	14	13
		(57.7)	(15.4)	(26.9)	(62.5)	(19.4)	(18.1)

*Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages*

From Table 3 it is revealed that all teachers of the two groups are found to have been benefitted by the training in becoming more aware of their students' pronunciation difficulties. Male teachers found the training on teaching learning of English more effective than female teachers to use a range of simple techniques for helping their students to improve their pronunciation of individual sounds and in improving their abilities to differentiate between passive and active vocabulary. Similarly, female teachers found the training on teaching learning of English more effective than male teachers to use various techniques for showing new vocabulary; in enhancing their knowledge about what grammar means, units of language and

parts of the sentence; in improving their abilities to conduct different activities for teaching grammar, and to improve the techniques of teaching the four language skills – skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

#### **Effectiveness of 'Training on Teaching-Learning of Mizo' for Primary and Middle School Teachers**

The third objective of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of training on teaching learning of Mizo for both primary and middle school teachers in Mizoram under SSA. The questionnaire for assessing the effectiveness of the subject specific training in Mizo has four statements with two alternative choices 'Yes' and 'No'. Further, in order to reveal



the extent to which the trainees have been benefitted, two more alternatives- ‘To a great extent’ and ‘To some extent’ were given for those who would respond ‘Yes’. All the four statements were prepared based on objectives of subject specific trainings in Mizo conducted at BRC level. The data were analyzed according to the objective of the study and the results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4**  
**Responses of Teachers on Effectiveness of Training on Teaching-Learning of Mizo**

State ment No	Statement	Response (N = 98)		
		Yes		No
		To a great extent	To some extent	
1	It increased my knowledge about the importance of development of skills in language learning	74 (75.5)	24 (24.5)	0 (0.0)
2	It enabled me to collect and develop learning materials	52 (53.1)	44 (44.9)	2 (2)
3	It built self confidence in organizing skill development programme	66 (67.3)	32 (32.7)	0 (0.0)
4	It enabled me to conduct assessment of children’s learning in reading and writing	58 (59.2)	38 (38.8)	2 (2)

*Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages*

From Table 5 it is found that subject specific training on teaching learning of Mizo has four main objectives. The table reveals that training in Mizo subject is effective enough as the percentages of teachers who found the training effective to a great extent are much higher for all the objectives than that of teachers who found the training effective to some extent. Moreover, the percentages of teachers who viewed the training as not effective are very few and negligible.

With regard to effectiveness in fulfilling the objectives of training, the

above table shows that: (i) As many as 75.5% of the teachers perceived the training in Mizo subject as effective to a great extent in increasing their knowledge about the importance of development of skills in language learning while the rest 24.5% of the teachers found the training effective to some extent; (ii) The next highest percentage of teachers i.e. 67.3% perceived the training as effective to a great extent in building self confidence in organizing skill development programme and rest 32.7% of the teachers considered the training effective to some extent; (iii) Again, 59.2% and 38.8 per

cent of the teachers found the training effective to a great extent and to some extent respectively in enabling them to conduct assessment of children’s learning in reading and writing; and (iv) Lastly, 53.1% and 44.9% of teachers felt the training beneficial to them in collecting and developing learning materials to a great extent and to some extent respectively.

The fourth objective of the study was to compare the effectiveness of training on teaching learning of Mizo with reference to stages of education and gender of teachers. The results are presented in Table 5 and Table 6 for stage-wise and gender-wise comparison respectively.

**Table 5**  
**Stage-wise (PS & MS) Responses of Teachers on Effectiveness of Training on Teaching-Learning of Mizo**

State ment No.	Statement	Primary School (N= 34)			Middle School (N = 64)		
		Yes, to a great extent	Yes, to some extent	No	Yes, to a great extent	Yes, to some extent	No
		1	It increased my knowledge about the importance of development of skills in language learning	30 -88.2	4 -11.8	0 (0.0)	44 -68.8
2	It enabled me to collect and develop learning materials	15 (44.1)	17 (50)	2 (5.9)	37 (57.8)	27 (42.2)	0 (0.0)
3	It built self confidence in organizing skill development programme	22 (64.7)	12 (35.3)	0 (0.0)	44 (68.8)	20 (31.3)	0 (0.0)
4	It enabled me to conduct assessment of children’s learning in reading and writing	20 (58.8)	12 (35.3)	2 (5.9)	38 (59.4)	26 (40.6)	0 (0.0)

*Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages*

Table 5 shows that training on teaching learning of Mizo is more effective for middle school teachers than primary school teachers as a whole. The percentages of middle school teachers who found the training effective to a great extent to them are more in three out of four areas such as collection and development of learning

materials, building self confidence in organizing skill development programme and conducting assessment of children’s learning in reading and writing. Primary teachers are found more benefitted only in the area of increasing knowledge about the importance of development of skills in language learning.

**Table 6**  
**Gender-wise Responses of Teachers on Effectiveness of Training on Teaching-Learning of Mizo**

State ment No.	Statement	Male Teachers (N = 50)			Female Teachers (N = 48)		
		Yes, to a great extent	Yes, to some extent	No	Yes, to a great extent	Yes, to some extent	No
1	It increased my knowledge about the importance of development of skills in language learning	38	12	0	36	12	0
		(76)	(24)	(0.0)	(75)	(25)	(0.0)
2	It enabled me to collect and develop learning materials	30	18	2	22	26	0
		(60)	(36)	(4)	(45.8)	(54.2)	(0.0)
3	It built self confidence in organizing skill development programme	34	16	0	32	16	0
		(68)	(32)	(0.0)	(66.7)	(33.3)	(0.0)
4	It enabled me to conduct assessment of children's learning in reading and writing	32	16	2	26	22	0
		(64)	(32)	(4)	(54.2)	(45.8)	(0.0)

*Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages*

Table 6 reveals that training on teaching learning of Mizo is more effective in case of male teachers than female teachers. The percentages of teachers who took the training as effective to a great extent range from 60 to 76 in the case of male teachers whereas the range for the same in the case of female teachers is 45.8 to 75 for all the four focused areas. Moreover, the percentages of male teachers for whom the training was effective to a great extent are more for all the areas in comparison to female teachers.

#### **Findings of the Study**

The study reveals the following findings:

- Training on teaching learning of English was most effective in helping teachers become more aware of students' pronunciation difficulties. It was also quite effective in improving their techniques of teaching the four language skills – skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The training was effective somehow but not that effective in: (i) enabling teachers to use a range of simple techniques for helping students to improve their pronunciation of individual sounds; (ii) improving their ability to use various techniques for showing new vocabulary; (iii)

increasing their knowledge about what grammar means, units of language and parts of the sentence; and (iv) improving their ability to conduct different activities for teaching grammar. The training was least effective in improving their ability to differentiate between passive and active vocabulary at each level.

- Training on teaching-learning English was considered to be much more effective by primary school teachers than middle school teachers.
- There was not much difference in the perceptions of male and female teachers on the effectiveness of subject specific training in English. As a whole, female teachers found the training more effective than male teachers.
- Training on teaching-learning Mizo was most effective in increasing their knowledge about the importance of development of skills in language learning and in building self confidence in organizing skill development programme. It was also effective in enabling teachers to conduct assessment of children's

learning in reading and writing and again in enabling them to collect and develop learning materials.

- Middle school teachers found subject specific training in Mizo more effective than primary school teachers.
- Subject specific training in Mizo was considered to be more effective by male teachers than female teachers.

### Conclusions

With regard to trainings on teaching learning in the two language subjects-English and Mizo, conducted by SSA for elementary school teachers at BRC level, it may be concluded that the training programmes were largely effective in helping the teachers realize the various objectives of the trainings. It can be inferred that the training programmes were well designed and well executed. The objectives of the training programmes do not end with the trainings. The ultimate aim is that the teachers need to translate into practice and to improve the quality of education. The teachers must reflect their acquired knowledge and skills in classroom teaching as well as in dealing with the students in and out of the school so as to bring about desirable changes and improvements in students.

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“I never met a man so stupid I could not learn something  
from him.”

~ *Galileo Galilei*

“Experience is a hard teacher because she gives the test  
first, the lesson afterwards.”

~ *Vernor Sanders Law*