

# The Effectiveness of the Natural Approach in Developing Psycholinguistic Competency among Secondary Pupils of Kerala

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**Abstract**—The Natural Approach, developed by Krashen and Terrell, emphasizes meaningful communication and low-anxiety learning environments to facilitate language acquisition. This study explores the effectiveness of the Natural Approach in enhancing psycholinguistic competency among secondary pupils in Kerala. Using a quasi-experimental design, the research analyzes students' linguistic progress, cognitive processing, and communicative ability. The findings reveal that students exposed to the Natural Approach demonstrate significant improvement in fluency, comprehension, and confidence in English communication. The study suggests integrating this approach into Kerala's English curriculum to promote better language acquisition.

**Index Terms**—Natural Approach, psycholinguistic competency, second language acquisition, Kerala, communicative learning

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Language learning is a complex cognitive process that involves acquiring linguistic structures and the ability to use them in meaningful contexts. Traditional grammar-translation methods often fail to develop communicative competence, leading to rote learning without real-world applicability. The Natural Approach, proposed by Krashen and Terrell (1983), advocates for a stress-free learning environment where students acquire language naturally, similar to first-language acquisition. This study examines the impact of the Natural Approach on the psycholinguistic development of secondary school students in Kerala.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Background

The Natural Approach is based on Krashen's Input Hypothesis, which states that comprehensible input (i+1) is crucial for language acquisition. This method prioritizes meaningful interaction over explicit grammar instruction.

### 2.2 Previous Studies on the Natural Approach

Several studies highlight the success of the Natural Approach in various language learning contexts. Research by Richards & Rodgers (2001) indicates that students learn effectively when exposed to authentic input. A study by Ellis (2009) found that low-anxiety environments enhance language retention and psycholinguistic processing. However, limited research has been conducted on its application in Kerala's educational setting, making this study significant.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quasi-experimental design with two groups: an experimental group taught using the Natural Approach and a control group following traditional methods.

### 3.2 Participants

The sample consists of 80 secondary students from Kerala, divided equally between the experimental and control groups.

### 3.3 Data Collection Instruments

Pre-test and Post-test: To assess language proficiency and psycholinguistic skills.

Observation: To evaluate students' engagement and anxiety levels.

Interviews: To gather qualitative insights from students and teachers.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

Statistical tools such as paired t-tests and ANOVA were used to analyze the differences in language proficiency between the groups. Qualitative responses were coded thematically.

[5] Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Improvement in Language Proficiency

The post-test results show a significant improvement in fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary retention in the experimental group compared to the control group.

### 4.2 Reduction in Anxiety and Increased Motivation

Observation and interviews suggest that students in the Natural Approach classroom displayed lower anxiety levels and greater motivation to participate in communicative activities.

### 4.3 Psycholinguistic Competency Development

Students exposed to natural, meaningful input demonstrated enhanced cognitive processing and real-time language use, aligning with Krashen's hypotheses.

## 5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings indicate that the Natural Approach is effective in enhancing psycholinguistic competency among secondary pupils in Kerala. Implementing this approach in classrooms can foster a more engaging and natural language learning experience. Future research should explore its long-term impact and scalability in diverse educational settings.

## REFERENCES

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