RESEARCH ARTICLE

ATTITUDE OF HS STUDENTS TOWARDS ACQUISITION OF ESL IN GARHBETA-I BLOCK OF PASCHIM MEDINIPUR DISTRICT

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Manuscript Info	Abstract
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Learners' attitude towards second language (L2) predicts their language performance because learners' positive attitude helps them to achieve communicative competence in L2 while negative attitude prevents them in achieving. In general opinion, they will perform better in L2 if they shares positive attitude towards second language acquisition (SLA). In order to identify the same, the present study examines the HS learners' attitude towards SLA in Garhbeta-I Block of Paschim Medinipur district. To collect data, a self developed questionnaire has been used and administered among the randomly selected HS students of government and government aided schools of Garhbeta-I Block. The data has been analysed by using descriptive statistics and 't- test'. The study has reflected positive attitude of learners towards SLA and disclosed that no significant differences exist among the learners attitude towards SLA in regards to their gender, streams of learning, educational advantages as first or next generation learners and their economic status of the family. On the basis of statistical analysis, the study thrashes out major findings of the study and discusses few significant implications.

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Introduction:-

In the Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics (Rechards & Schmidt, 2013) 'language attitudes' has been defined as follows:

> "The attitude which speakers of different languages or language varieties have towards each others' languages or to their own language. Expressions of positive or negative feelings towards a language may reflect impressions of linguistic difficulty or simplicity, ease or difficulty of learning, degree of importance, elegance, social status, etc. Attitudes towards a language may also show what people feel about the speakers of that language." (P. 314)

For learning English as a second language (ESL), learners also need serious attention and positive attitude as learning any other language. Moreover, SLA becomes much easier with learners' positive attitude in L2 because positive attitude also boosts our internal elements for SLA. Krashen (1982) refers to three such internal elements that help in SLA i.e. "filter", "organizer" and "monitor". "Filter" indicates dealing of social environment by the learners, such as how the learner gets influenced in a social context and the way the learner reacts in various social

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environments. The "organizer" deals with the arrangement of the learner's language system and the uses of incorrect grammatical constructions as provisional precursors of grammatical structures and the systematically occurrence of errors in the learner's utterances as well as a common order in which structures are learnt. The "monitor" refers to the conscious learning part in which the learners rectify their speech as they perceive their mistakes according to their learning.

Few researchers have addressed that in West Bengal and especially in non-English medium schools, ESL learners generally face serious problems and loose the positive attitude towards SLA. They comparably become more comfortable in writing skill but fail to achieve competence in other language skills i.e, listening, speaking and reading though, they are learning English from pre-primary level. But very less focus has been provided on their further development learning and acquisition. Sometimes learners bears positive attitude towards SLA but necessary measures have not been taken for better L2 performance. This study sheds light on this particular issue in Garhbeta-I Block (henceforth Garhbeta) whether HS students of government or government aided schools are sharing positive attitude towards SLA or not.

Statement of the problem
The researcher has stated the problem as attitude of HS students towards acquisition of ESL in Garhbeta of Paschim Medinipur district.

Literature Review:-
Karahan (2007) investigated in an article about the Turkish students' attitude in EFL context. she studied the relationship among EFL learners' language attitudes, their starting age of language learning and their first starting place of learning English. An adapted questionnaire on language attitudes was devised as survey instrument among randomly selected 190 eighth grade students of a private primary school in Adana, Turkey, where English is very serious taught. Mann Whitney U test and Spearman's rho correlation coefficient tests were used for analysing the data. The findings revealed that sampled students had mildly positive attitudes and female students had comparatively higher rates. They showed positive attitude towards English culture and importance of English; but they were intolerant towards Turkish people who spoke English among themselves. Ellis (2010) said about the 'nature of the SLA/LP relationship both more generally and more concretely' (p. 182). Ellis formulated a set of eleven principles to show the relevance of SLA topics to Language teachers, how they could relate their practical knowledge to the technical knowledge of language teaching etc. This research work primarily aimed to be of assistance to teacher educators to apply technical knowledge of SLA in classroom, enhance or formulate their own theories in helping language learners by the help of linking the works of SLA researchers. Sinha (2012) studied to measure out students' motivation and attitudes SLA at the H.S. level in West Bengal. Multistage random sampling techniques were adopted and three hundred eighty three respondents were selected randomly for the final data. The study showed that the intensity of the motivation in broadest sense incorporates the behavioural, cognitive, and affective components. Socio-cultural milieu occurred as influential factor for learners' inherent cognitive power, which is constituted by motivation and attitude. Saha (2015) in his doctoral thesis pointed out the basic problems that the learners face in acquisition of English as a second language. The study focused on the comparative in-depth analysis of the proficiency level of four basic language skills- listening, speaking, reading and comprehension, writing. Stratified random sampling had been followed as sampling technique to collect data from 600 respondents of Under Graduate 1st semester students. Findings of this study showed that students' acquisition of speaking skill was worst among the four basic skills. According to researcher, proper modification in curricular, system and policy etc. greatly needed in education for better second language acquisition among learners. Rajasekaran & Kumar (2020) considered in understanding 'how language practices manifest themselves in an urban middle-class English-medium school with multilingual and non-English-speaking students' (p. 202). They examined the students' communicative practices to discover some of the patterns in language acquisition across three grades and different income levels by using questionnaires, observations, video recording and closed and open-ended interviews. They analysed all these against the organisational structure of school and its cultural settings, and in broader sense socio-economic and political context of the education system too. Their findings suggested that strict adherence to particular language for learning by excluding other languages or by isolating social and linguistic identities could be counterproductive and unsustainable. They also implied that we should help our education policies and practices to support the multilingual practices of students and by 'association, their diverse identities, greater the possibility of building a strong and confident citizenry' (p. 202).

Objectives of the Study:-
In order to conduct the study, following objectives have been framed:
1. The study would locate whether gender as a factor affecting the attitude towards SLA among HS students of Garhbeta.
2. The study would also focus on assessing the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their streams (i.e. Science & Arts)
3. The study would analyse how educational background of family can also impact the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA.
4. The study would seek to understand the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their economic status of the family.

Research Questions
This study proceeds to find out answers for the following research questions:
1. Do the SLA really occurring among the HS students of Garhbeta as same or a particular gender group is acquiring more than the other students?
2. Can stream like science or arts be the deciding factor for SLA among HS students of Garhbeta?
3. Has there any difference in SLA among HS students of Garhbeta in relation to their educational background as first generation learners or next generation learners?
4. Has there any difference in SLA according to their economic status of the family of HS students of Garhbeta be it economically stable family or not?

Hypotheses of the Study:
This present study has formulated four hypotheses as follows:
$H_0 1$ There is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to male and female.
$H_0 2$ There is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their stream of arts and science.
$H_0 3$ There is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their family income of below 20,000 rupees per month and above 20,000 rupees per month.
$H_0 4$ There is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their educational status of first generation learner and next generation learner.

Significance of the Study
Acquisition of English language is a serious problem for the majority L2 learners in India. Gradually the presence of English language as a common language for communication becomes more prominent across the globe, but still a large group of Indian learners fail to acquire minimum communicative competence level in L2. The present study tries to identify the learners' attitude towards SLA. By this study, we can understand if their attitude is causing the major problem in SLA and thereby we can figure out possible routes in increase learners' performance in SLA. It may further help in developing, modifying or introducing necessary educational policies by the help of academicians in achieving desired goal in SLA.

Delimitation of the Study
The present study has been delimited in the government or government aided schools of Garhbeta of Paschim Medinipur of West Bengal in India. Researcher has framed the analysis and interpretations of this research work on the basis of data collection in this particular Block.

Methodology:-
Population
The researcher has identified the Garhbeta of Paschim Medinipur district in West Bengal as population area and HS students of Garhbeta as population of this present study.

Sample and sampling
Data has been collected in Google Form by simple random sampling method from 65 HS students of different Government or Government-aided schools of Garhbeta to conduct the study smoothly.

Tool used

For the present study, the researcher has used a self developed questionnaire. The questionnaire has been framed with twenty statements in five point Likert (1932) type scale.

Data Analysis & Interpretations:

Testing of $H_0 1$: There is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to male and female.

Table No. 1:- Descriptive Statistics on Attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to male and female.

Pair of Comparision	N	Mean	sd	Std. error	Calculated 'T'	P Value at 0.05 level
Male	35	69.49	6.78	1.15	1.88	0.06
Female	30	72.2	4.38	0.8		

While comparing the attitude of male and female HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA, the calculated means are 69.49 and 72.2 respectively. Standard deviations are 6.78 and 4.38 respectively. Standard error of means are 1.15 and 0.8 respectively. To know the significance difference 't-test' is done. The result shows that calculated 'T' is equal to 1.88. 'p' is equal to 0.06 (p>0.05). Hence, 'T' is not significant. Therefore, null hypothesis is not rejected at 0.05 level of significance. Thus we can conclude that there is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to male and female.

Testing of $H_0 2$: There is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their stream of arts and science.

Table No. 2:- Descriptive Statistics on Attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their stream of arts and science.

Pair of Comparision	N	Mean	sd	Std. error	Calculated 'T'	P Value at 0.05 level
arts	18	72.33	4.64	1.09	1.35	0.18
science	47	70.13	6.27	0.91		

While comparing the attitude HS students of arts and science streams of Garhbeta towards SLA, the calculated means are 72.33 and 70.13 respectively. Standard deviations are 4.64 and 6.27 respectively. Standard error of means are 1.09 and 0.91 respectively. To know the significance difference 't-test' is done. The result shows that calculated 'T' is equal to 1.35. 'p' is equal to 0.18 (p>0.05). Hence, 'T' is not significant. Therefore, null hypothesis is not rejected at 0.05 level of significance. Thus we can conclude that there is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their stream of arts and science.

Testing of $H_0 3$: There is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their family income of below 20,000 rupees per month and above 20,000 rupees per month.

Table No. 3:- Descriptive Statistics on Attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their family income.

Pair of Comparision	N	Mean	sd	Std. error	Calculated 'T'	P Value at 0.05 level
Family income below 20,000 rupees per month	51	70.02	6.2	0.87	1.91	0.06
Family income above 20,000 rupees per month	14	73.36	3.88	1.04		

While comparing the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their family income of below 20,000 rupees per month and above 20,000 rupees per month, the calculated means are 70.02 and 73.36 respectively.

Standard deviations are 6.2 and 3.88 respectively. Standard error of means are 0.87 and 1.04 respectively. To know the significance difference 't-test' is done. The result shows that calculated 'T' is equal to 1.91. 'p' is equal to 0.06 (p>0.05). Hence, 'T' is not significant. Therefore, null hypothesis is not rejected at 0.05 level of significance. Thus we can conclude that there is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their family income of below 20,000 rupees per month and above 20,000 rupees per month.

Testing of H_04: There is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their educational status of first generation learner and next generation learner.

Table No. 4:- Descriptive Statistics on Attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their educational status of first generation learner and next generation learner.

Pair of Comparision	N	Mean	sd	Std. error	Calculated 'T'	P Value at 0.05 level
First Generation Learner	33	70.52	6.86	1.19	0.31	0.76
Next Generation Learner	32	70.97	4.85	0.86		

While comparing the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their educational status of first generation learner and next generation learner, the calculated means are 70.52 and 70.97 respectively. Standard deviations are 6.86 and 4.85 respectively. Standard error of means are 1.19 and 0.86 respectively. To know the significance difference 't-test' is done. The result shows that calculated 'T' is equal to 0.31. 'p' is equal to 0.76 (p>0.05). Hence, 'T' is not significant. Therefore, null hypothesis is not rejected at 0.05 level of significance. Thus we can conclude that there is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their educational status of first generation learner and next generation learner.

Major findings
1. There is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to male and female.
2. There is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their stream of arts and science.
3. There is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their family income of below 20,000 rupees per month and above 20,000 rupees per month.
4. There is no significant difference in the attitude of HS students of Garhbeta towards SLA in relation to their educational status of first generation learner and next generation learner.

Detail discussion on major findings
1. Study reveals that HS students of Garhbeta do not possess significant differences in their attitude in relation to their gender, though many studies across the globe have shown the effect of gender on the attitude of SLA. Academicians or teachers can therefore motivate HS students of this Block without considering gender as a deciding factor.
2. Quite in a similar way, Stream for HS students of Garhbeta is also not showing significant differences in their attitude towards SLA. Therefore students irrespective of any stream of their learning can be motivated for better acquisition of English as a L2.
3. This study also reveals that socio-economic statuses of HS learners are also not coming out as a barrier for the attitude towards SLA. Thereby, it also reflects that these students are showing a good spirit of acquiring L2 irrespective of financial conditions of their family.
4. This research work also confirms that HS learners' educational status as a first generation learner or next generation learner is not noteworthy for their positive attitude towards SLA. They are not considering of becoming a first generation of learners as a disadvantage for SLA or vice-versa.

Conclusion:-

This study has been conducted on 65 samples. But such study demands more in-depth investigation with larger samples into this arena of research. This statistical analysis accounts for the positive attitude among learners for SLA therefore they can improve their learning far better if they get motivation from teachers, parents and peer groups too. And at the same time we also need to notice various elements which can give them positive reinforcement in acquiring ESL. The frequency of responses in respect to items in the questionnaire also tells about

needs and demands of learners for SLA too. For SLA, they also need perhaps a good environment for practicing and speaking English in classroom and outside classroom. Their responses also reveals that they might have right demands for stuffs like English text books, English story books, special communicative English classes and nonetheless ICT in learning. It cannot be avoided that on the basis of mere 65 samples, conclusion can be drawn for broader understanding; but at the same time the importance of this study cannot be denied. More studies can be done on motivation, socio-economic perspectives, affective factors, psychomotor domains etc. for better understanding of acquisition of ESL among the school, college or university students.

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