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Enhancing the language skills of tribal welfare residential school students through the theory of multiple intelligences: A study

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Abstract

In the present paper the researcher tries to explore how different English language skills can be developed through Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory, the background of the students studying in tribal welfare residential schools and the background of Tribal Welfare Residential Schools in Telangana State. The researcher in this paper has proposed few activities based on the MI for effective learning of language. Still there are first-generation students and have difficulty in getting the required mastery over English as second language particularly in various language skills. This paper tries to explore the possibilities to improve the basic language skills i.e., listening, speaking, reading and writing through Multiple Intelligences Theory proposed by Howard Gardner in 1983 and his later edition in 1991. The researcher has chosen two different lessons to create activities from the prescribed textbook and the activities are analysed with Diner menu principles to create the special interest towards the language skills so as to improve the English language of students.

Keywords: Tribal students, language skill, multiple intelligences, Think-Tac-Toe menu, activities

Introduction

American developmental psychologist Howard Gardner published the theory of Multiple Intelligences in his book "The Frames of Mind" in 1983.

In his theory Gardner suggested that all people have different kinds of Intelligence at some level and that intelligences are used to learn in various situations.

Dr. Gardner prepared his theory of multiple Intelligences based on the idea that people learn in different ways by utilizing their different general intelligences.

The Theory of Multiple Intelligences provides variety of approaches and effective ways to learn in classrooms particularly in language acquisition by proposing tasks inter connected with activities. It also provides chances to students understand their strengths and weaknesses so as to plan their learning in an effective strategy.

Gardner's theory of multiple Intelligences has been key instrumental in implementing new pedagogic principles and became popular among teachers of various subjects in implementing various philosophical changes to integrate classroom transactions.

His theory of multiple Intelligences immensely contributed in many areas and particularly language acquisition and development through variety of activity-based principles.

The second language learning involves, learning each sub skill in a scientific manner and requires lot of attention from the side of the students and making students involve in classroom transaction has been crucial for a language teacher and became a significant role particularly for those who are first generation learners.

Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory proposes 9 types of intelligences.

Linguistic Intelligence

The people who are excelled in reading texts, reciting poems, finding the rhythms in poetic stanzas, filling in the blanks from the texts, matching the words from the text, answering short answer type and long answer type answers are said to have linguistic intelligence.

Musical Intelligence

Generally, people who have music sense, singing ability, understanding of rhythm, composition, ability of playing musical instruments, preparing ballads, ability to compose songs, tunes and reciting poems and plays are considered to have musical intelligence.

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence

The people who are experts in basic mathematical calculations, reasoning related problems, statistics, tables, diagrams, information transfer related problems, missing numbers, interpretation of graphs, analysis of charts, sequences and in tabular formations are said to have logical-mathematical intelligence.

Spatial Intelligence

People who have good skill in painting, art, designs, graphics, imaginations, color combinations, ability to narrate through pictures, graphical representations, preparing collages of events, and ability to describe moods and emotions are said to have spatial intelligence.

Bodily-Kinaesthetic Intelligence

Dancing, performances, playing skits, choreography in tune with poems and songs, enactments, creating order of photos of stories, running, gymnastics, sports and games require a special kind of intelligence and this intelligence is called Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence.

Intrapersonal Intelligence

People who have wonderful ability in choosing and following good hobbies, habits, likes, dislikes, favourites, props, SWOT analysis and rewritings etc are said to have Intrapersonal Intelligence.

Interpersonal Intelligence

People who are having considerable amount of ability in conversations with others, expressing oneself well, active in interviews, public speaking activities, ability to participate effectively in group discussions, debates, paired activities, elocution competitions and in imaginary characters are said to have Interpersonal Intelligence.

Naturalistic Intelligence

Some people love nature immensely and active in nature related activities, protecting nature, forests, seasons, animals, birds, flora and fauna, sensitization on nature. They are said to have Naturalistic intelligence.

Spiritual/Existential Intelligence

Preachers, astrologers, philosophers and experts of religious books are said to have Spiritual Intelligence.

As Gardner advocated that every human being has some considerable amount of each intelligence, they may be cultivated through different tasks.

The tasks that are provided in language class will definitely contribute for the improvement of all those intelligences with which we can develop language skills.

National Curriculum Framework for Foundational Stage-2020 also advocates that "Classrooms for young children are vibrant and full of life. Children enjoy learning through several ways - talking, listening, using toys, working with material, painting and drawing, singing, dancing, running and

jumping. As Teachers, we use all these ways to work with our children". (Page No: 93)

In government institutions heterogeneity is generally found among students and these children represent unique personalities, from different casts, religions and ethnicities. They all come to a common platform to learn and hence they required a specially designed teaching to teach language skills.

One of such institution is tribal Gurukulams in our state to cater the quality education to down trodden tribal students Gurukulams have been come in to existence.

Tribal Welfare Residential Schools are established to provide quality residential education along with boarding facility to marginalised young meritorious tribal students. Most of the students, studying in Tribal Welfare Residential Schools are tribal students. 90% of the students from Tribal Community and remaining 10% from other communities.

In Telangana various tribal communities live across the state. The important communities among them are Lambady, Koya, Gondu, Kollam, Manne, Thoti, Anlu, Erukali, Chenchu and Kondaredu. Where more than 70% population are only Lambadi's. And Kolam, Manne, Thoti and Chenchu tribes are recognised as primitive Tribes and are being provided some special privileges in the form of separate institutions and welfare schemes. These students background is different from the background of other community students. Most of them are economically weak and live in Thandas nearby forest areas and far away from towns.

Their main profession is agriculture and the parents of many students are still working as agricultural labours in the fields. With the establishment of separate institutions and proper encouragement by the government, parents are getting motivated and joining their children in schools.

Most of the parents of these students did not complete their primary education due to the major reason of poverty and the second reason is to rear their herds of cows, bull, goats and sheep as it is their customary to rear as many animals as possible. They had to stop their education and start the living on their own as there was no earning. And when they come to young age, they would get married. Consequently, they forget their minimum education and settle in their known profession of agriculture.

NEP (2020) highlights that there is less number (10.6%) of enrolment at primary level in Scheduled Tribes when compared to other scheduled communities and that number is again decreasing to 6.8% by the time, they go to college education. (Page: 25)

Parents, who own some acres of agriculture land they do agriculture by engaging other labours and those, who don't have any land have to work as labours in the fields of others. Though there is some development in their life style from pure hunting to daily wager and agriculture labour, driver and private jobs. Now they are shifting from huts to iron sheet roofing houses and some are living in vitrified roofing houses and few are living in reinforced concrete buildings.

In spite of utter poverty, non-availability of secondary schools and colleges in their locality and other unavoidable responsibilities some parents could complete graduation and even post-graduation and working in government sector and some are working as private employees in different companies. Women in this tribal community are no different from men in earning. They equally work with men in fields for agriculture and they do every work from ploughing to reaping and marketing of the goods cultivated in agriculture.

There are lot of initiatives taken by state and central governments to uplift the marginalised tribal communities in all aspects by introducing Integrated Tribal development Authorities, providing Tribal Products exhibitions at national and international festivals, providing funds to improve literacy by introducing Ashrama High Schools and Tribal Gurukulams with residential education.

Currently there are around 167 tribal institutions from Gurukulam spread across Telangana state from K.G to P.G to provide quality education to these tribal students with boarding facility. In these institutions students are now getting knowledge to expand their wings to fly into limit less sky and even some students are scaling highest mountains in all the continents and in every government department there are tribal employees and they are competing in almost all competitions on par with other community students.

As the majority of the students in these institutions are Lambadi's, apart from Telugu and English they speak Lambadi language which does not have script and is considered as only dialect

Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society has been bifurcated from Andhra Pradesh Residential Educational Institutions Society in 1998 and was established as a registered society to cater the educational needs of underprivileged tribal students. At present 160 institutions are being run by the society across Telangana State from class I to PG as a part of brain child of our honourable Chief Minister Sri K. Chandrashekhar Rao Gaaru.

There are Mini Gurukulams established especially for the girl children of tribals to provide free quality primary education from class I to V. Residential schools for classes V to X and Colleges for XI to XII standards apart from Degree colleges for degree pursuing for those marginalised meritorious tribal students. These Institutions are providing quality education in residential mode with, books, notes, 2 uniforms, 1 track suit, 1 blanket, 1 carpet, 1 trunk box, 1 plate, 1 glass along with nutritional food with chicken and mutton along with malts.

Table 1: Details of Institutions of TTWREIS

S. No	Type of Institution	No. of Institutions	Boys/Girls	Classes
1	Mini Gurukulams	29	Exclusively for girls	I to V
2	Residential Schools	24	13 (Boys) 11 (Girls)	V to X
3	Residential Upgraded Junior Colleges	61	26 (Boys) 35 (Girls)	V to XII
4	Residential Junior Colleges	27	13 (Boys) 12 (Girls)	XI to XII
5	Residential Degree Colleges	22	7 (Boys) 15 (Girls)	Degree
6	Law College	1	Girls	Degree
7	Fine Arts College	1	Girls	Degree
8	Armed Forces Preparatory College	1	Boys	V to XII

The above table describes various types of institutions being run under the Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Society across Telangana along with number of institutions, offering classes from I to Graduation.

Tribal Welfare Residential School children are much interested in skill-oriented learning. Second language learning is also possible very easily when it entwines with certain activities related to particularly basic language skills

that are listening, speaking, reading and writing. As the learning of a language depends on its basic skills, every sub skill is equally important to get mastery over a language.

The four basic skills of language are categorized in different types.

Listening, Speaking are Aural-Oral skills, whereas Reading, Writing are called graphic-motor skills in one classification. In another classification Speaking and Writing come under active skills, Listening and Reading come under passive skills based on certain theoretical properties.

However, each sub skill is to be mastered and as each sub skill is connected with the other in one or the other way, they have to be mastered to get any language in perfect manner.

Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence's theory proposed 9 different types of intelligences with verbal -linguistic theory is one of them. It also enables the learner to learn a language with different types of activities. Each sub skill irrespective of classification, being an active skill in the way of learning a language, can be learnt with little practice of activities oriented with Diner Menu Theory.

In this regard certain activities are proposed oriented with Think -Tac- Toe grid by considering the major principles of Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory. For which two excerpts from two different texts from V Class English Textbook "My English World" published by SCERT, Telangana.

Excerpt 1

An excerpt from the lesson 'The Food We Eat' from V Class English textbook "My English World" has been selected to create different tasks to implement in the classroom. The tasks were created by keeping in view the Multiple Intelligence Theory. The main focus of each task is to develop various language skills by making use of one or more intelligences. (Appendix 1)

Tasks Framed

- Listen to the lesson read by your teacher
- Watch the advertisements about junk food
- Prepare a chronicle of events that lead to diseases when you eat junk food
- Draw sketches of different food items made by mother
- What are the natural food items that we take without cooking?
- Study the colours patterns of junk food
- Write a brief note on the advantages of home-made food and disadvantages of junk food
- Create a collage of different junk food telecasted in the T.V
- Study the songs and the background score of junk food advertisements
- Explain in group what Dr. Aruna means by preservatives and additives
- Attempt a detailed study of good food
- Discuss effects of junk food on children
- Comment on the use of junk food in the present scenario
- Why do we offer fruits to gods while praying?
- Where do we get different vegetables and fruits from?

In the following table the prepared tasks are arranged in Think-Tac-Toe Menu by focusing the important intelligences that are covered through prepared tasks which further will be implemented in language class room to improve various language skills of students.

Think-Tac-Toe is one of the famous childhood paper-pencil games. It allows its two players to choose the boxes in a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal way to succeed. The Think-Tac-Toe grid has nine cells in it like a Tic-Tac-Toe game. The number of rows and columns can be adjusted in different ways. This has been now an interesting strategy in

educational system to make learners learn new things effectively. In English classroom it has lot of advantages. Think-Tac-Toe provides different ways of exploring and expressing key ideas using key skills central to the topic or area of study.

Table 2: Think- Tac-Toe Menu of Tasks under Different Multiple Intelligences for Excerpt 1

Logical Intelligence	Kinaesthetic Intelligence	Naturalistic Intelligence
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare a chronicle of events that lead to diseases when you eat junk food. 2. Draw sketches of different food items made by mother. 3. Create a collage of different junk food telecasted in the T.V 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare a chronicle of events that lead to diseases when you eat junk food. 2. Draw sketches of different food items made by mother. 3. Create a collage of different junk food telecasted in the T.V 4. Watch the advertisements about junk food. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare a chronicle of events that lead to diseases when you eat junk food. 2. Draw sketches of different food items made by mother What are the natural food items that we take without cooking? 3. Create a collage of different junk food telecasted in the T.V 4. Where do we get different vegetables and fruits from?
Spatial Intelligence	Musical Intelligence	Linguistic Intelligence
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare a chronicle of events that lead to diseases when you eat junk food 2. Draw sketches of different food items made by mother. 3. Study the colours patterns of junk food. 4. Create a collage of different junk food telecasted in the T.V. 5. Choreograph the poem Junk Food- Junk Food – Go away. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Study the songs and the background score of junk food advertisements 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Listen to the lesson read by your teacher. 2. Explain in group what Dr. Aruna means by preservatives and additives. 3. Write a brief note on the advantages of home-made food and disadvantages of junk food. 4. Attempt a detailed study of good food.
Intrapersonal Intelligence	Interpersonal Intelligence	Existential Intelligence
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare a chronicle of events that lead to diseases when you eat junk food. 2. Draw sketches of different food items made by mother. 3. Create a collage of different junk food telecasted in the T.V. 4. Explain in group what Dr. Aruna means by preservatives and additives. 5. Attempt a detailed study of good food. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain in group what Dr. Aruna means by preservatives and additives. 2. Discuss the effects of junk food on children. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why do we offer fruits to gods while praying? 2. Why food is considered as God?

The above table depicts the arrangement of prepared tasks in Think-Tac-Toe Menu by focusing the important intelligences that are covered through prepared tasks form excerpt 1.

It is also observed from the above table that there are number of activities provided and they are arranged in think-Tac-Toe grid. Here students can select boxes of items either from horizontally or from vertically.

For example, in the above grid if a student selects any one of following three items,

Prepare a chronicle of events that lead to diseases when you eat junk food.

Draw sketches of different food items made by mother

Create a collage of different junk food telecasted in the T.V

He/she uses logical, spatial and interpersonal intelligences while going vertically and horizontally to perform as these tasks are correlated these intelligences of the MI Theory which helps to learn the language in an effective way. And it is certainly encouraging to improve language skills besides helping the learners to develop the interest to perform activities.

Excerpt 2

An excerpt from the lesson ‘I Was Bad at cricket’ from V Class English textbook “My English World” has been selected. (Appendix 2)

Tasks Framed

1. Listen to the lesson read by your teacher
2. Watch the cricket match between India and Pakistan
3. Prepare a chronicle of winners of Twenty-Twenty since the beginning to till date
4. Draw sketches of different players in the match ex. bowler, batsman, keeper etc.
5. Study the distance between two creases
6. Write a brief note on how the cricket match is played
7. Create a collage of different cricket players
8. Study the commentary and the background score of live cricket match on T.V.
9. Explain in group about the qualities of a good cricket player
10. Discuss the advantages of sports and games in students’ life
11. What are the games and sports played in olden days?
12. Where do you generally play different and describe your playground
13. What are the shapes of ball, bat and wickets?
14. How do you play cricket?

Table 3: Think- Tac-Toe Menu of Tasks under Different Multiple Intelligences for Excerpt 2

Linguistic Intelligence	Logical Intelligence	Intrapersonal Intelligence
1. Prepare a chronicle of winners of Twenty-Twenty since the beginning to till date. 2. Draw sketches of different players in the match ex. bowler, batsman, keeper etc. 3. Create a collage of different cricket players. 4. How do you play cricket? 5. Listen to the lesson read by your teacher 6. Write a brief note on how the cricket match is played	1. Prepare a chronicle of winners of Twenty-Twenty since the beginning to till date. 2. Draw sketches of different players in the match ex. bowler, batsman, keeper etc. 3. Create a collage of different cricket players. 4. How do you play cricket?	1. Prepare a chronicle of winners of Twenty-Twenty since the beginning to till date. 2. Draw sketches of different players in the match ex. bowler, batsman, keeper etc. 3. Create a collage of different cricket players. 4. How do you play cricket? 5. Discuss the advantages of sports and games in students' life
Spatial Intelligence	Interpersonal Intelligence	Naturalistic Intelligence
1. Prepare a chronicle of winners of Twenty-Twenty since the beginning to till date. 2. Draw sketches of different players in the match ex. bowler, batsman, keeper etc. 3. Create a collage of different cricket players. 4. How do you play cricket? 5. What are the shapes of ball, bat and wickets?	1. Explain in group about the qualities of a good cricket player. 2. Discuss the advantages of sports and games in students' life.	1. Describe playgrounds of different games and sports in your village
Kinaesthetic Intelligence	Musical Intelligence	Existential Intelligence
1. Prepare a chronicle of winners of Twenty-Twenty since the beginning to till date. 2. Draw sketches of different players in the match ex. bowler, batsman, keeper etc. 3. Create a collage of different cricket players 4. How do you play cricket?	1. Study the commentary and the background score of live cricket match on T.V	1. What are the games and sports played in olden days?

The above table depicts the arrangement of prepared tasks in Think-Tac-Toe Menu by focusing the important intelligences that are covered through prepared tasks form excerpt 2.

From the above table it is observed that there are number of activities provided and they are arranged in think-Tac-Toe grid. Here students can select boxes of items either from horizontally or from vertically.

For example, in the above grid if a student selects any one of following three items,

Prepare a chronicle of winners of Twenty-Twenty since the beginning to till date.

Draw sketches of different players in the match ex. bowler, batsman, keeper etc.

Create a collage of different cricket players.

How do you play cricket?

He/she uses linguistic, logical, and kinaesthetic while going vertically and horizontally linguistic, logical and interpersonal to perform as these tasks are corelated these intelligences of the MI Theory which helps to learn the language in an effective way. And it is certainly encouraging to improve language skills besides helping the learners to develop the interest to perform activities.

From above tables, it is observed that there are certain tasks that are prepared to cover more than one intelligence and hence which serves the purpose of improving more than one skill in implementation. As per Gardner, The Theory of Multiple Intelligences is to empower the learners' critical thinking and imagination but not label any skill or intelligence.

Now, let us see how the tasks have been prepared based on the theory of Diner Menu to explain the importance of certain intelligences that are focused while preparing tasks to improve language skills.

The tasks are graded and prepared by keeping in view three important principles:

1. Complexity

There are simple tasks, moderate tasks and difficult tasks provided in the both excerpts.

Ex: From table No. 2, The following are the examples of simple tasks:

- Listen to the lesson read by your teacher,
- Watch the advertisements about junk food
- Where do we get different vegetables and fruits from? What are the natural food items that we take without cooking?

The following set of tasks are an example for moderate tasks

- Study the colours patterns of junk food
- Write a brief note on the advantages of home-made food and disadvantages of junk food Study the songs and the background score of junk food advertisements
- Explain in group what Dr. Aruna means by preservatives and additives
- Attempt a detailed study of good food and Discuss effects of junk food on children.

The following tasks are examples of difficult tasks, where students think and perform creatively and effectively

- Prepare a chronicle of events that lead to diseases when you eat junk food
- Draw sketches of different food items made by mother
- Create a collage of different junk food telecasted in the T.V.

- Comment on the use of junk food in the present scenario.
- Why do we offer fruits to gods while praying?

2. Variation

There are two different types of excerpts chosen from V Class Textbook and these two excerpts are completely different they don't have any relation with each other and are unique in both content and contexts.

3. Tasks

Tasks are prepared by keeping in view different types of intelligences that are crucial to teach and practice language skills of students in a very effective manner by involving students. And each task is aimed at developing all the skills that are listening, speaking, reading and writing. There are also tasks which help to improve critical thinking, lateral thinking and communication skills.

Conclusion

When we analyse the tasks, there are tasks, which are prepared in connection with more than one intelligence for example: Discuss the advantages of sports and games in students' life in the second excerpt. This task when conducted students will get aware of linguistic intelligence, Intra personal intelligence and interpersonal Intelligence similarly they easily practice language skills.

By keeping in view the theory of Gardner, we can initiate different tasks and activities with careful observation of each intelligence and the tasks prepared to make students excel in any particular intelligence will automatically lead to excel in language perception and it is clear evident that there is significant effect of Gardner's multiple intelligence theory on learning of language skills as all those tasks are mainly focussing the improvement of language by emphasizing listening, speaking, reading and writing. Therefore, it is possible to create an active environment to improve language skills of tribal students with the help of Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligence in English classroom.

Howard Gardner's The Theory of Multiple Intelligences has been one of the important psychological trend setters in the educational theorems and has lot of impact on educational practices particularly teaching language skills. All it requires clear understanding of how various activities in relation to targeted skill can be prepared and implemented. Through the above activities we can improve all intelligences with one or more than one activity. As tribal students are much interested in activity-oriented learning, they always welcome this kind of activity-based learning and hence it is very useful to prepare our classroom transaction with activities.

However, good knowledge of framing activities plays crucial role in imparting language skills as language skills are related to one of the important intelligences of Gardner's Theory i.e., Linguistic Intelligence.

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Appendices

Excerpt 1

The Food We Eat

'Food is vital for our survival. From the time that we are babies, we need good food to grow strong. Good food has many qualities. Can you tell me what they are?' asked Dr. Aruna.

Some children answered, 'It is natural.' Others said, 'It is nutritious.'

'Good,' said Dr. Aruna. 'Balanced food is good because it gives your body all that it needs. Today, there are so many different kinds of food but all of them may not be healthy for us. Do we choose to eat food for its taste alone, or to help us be alert and energetic?' she asked.

Dr. Aruna continued, 'Good food is truly tasty because it has the flavour of the things that go into preparing it. In school, either we eat the hot and healthy food that is made for the noon meal or what we bring from home.'

'What do you eat regularly? Soft idlis, tasty dosas, fragrant sambar-rice, spicy biriyani, eggs, fruit. How good they sound! They are both mouth-watering and healthy. But we don't always eat healthy food,' she said.

'Unhealthy food is sometimes called 'junk food,' continued Dr. Aruna, 'such food has lots of sugar, salt or additives and preservatives but very little that actually helps you to grow.' She gave them the names of a few common additives.

'What makes us feel the need to eat food that is unhealthy? One reason for this is hidden in the time that we watch television. How much time do you spend watching TV?' She asked. 'Three hours?' Many hands went up. 'What programmes do you watch?' She enquired. The children named a few. 'How often do you see advertisements in these programmes, and pester your mother to buy what you see there? Most chocolates, chips, soft drinks, cakes and biscuits may not be very healthy to eat. But the advertisements look very good.'

'There are advertisements telling that you will become a 'super hero' if you have a particular drink. Some may show you your favourite film star or sports hero, who is very happy having a soft drink. Though we all know that soft drinks are bad for health, we feel like having them. Finally, I leave it to you to have the food of your choice whether healthy or junk food. Which one do you prefer, a packet of old chips stored in a shop for a long time, in a colourful packet or the fresh chips that mother or granny makes?' Dr. Aruna ended her speech. The children clapped loudly.

(Source: V Class English textbook "My English World" Published by SCERT, Telangana)

Excerpt 2

I Was Bad at Cricket

Everybody at Bojyanaik Thanda was good at cricket, except myself. I tried my best, but it was no good. Every time I tried to catch the ball, it seemed to escape from my hands. It was the same if I tried to bat. My bat seemed to miss, or the ball flew off the edge of it. Each time I missed the ball, all the boys groaned. As for bowling, well, I was so bad that I was never asked to bowl.

One evening, an old man who sat on the veranda of a house near the ground watched me drop an easy catch. He shook his head slowly. 'That boy has got no eye for the ball,' he said. I bit my lip to hold back my tears. I had not always been bad. I

used to be quite good. But over the past year or so, I had just got worse and worse.

At home, Jangu, my brother began to tease me. 'He dropped such an easy catch today,' he said to father. Even our little Isru could have done better. 'Well, Somla has butterfingers,' said Jangu. 'He's no eye for the ball.' But father said, 'I had a dream last night. It was about Somla playing for the Indian side.' The next day we were playing cricket as usual. Jangu went into A. Reading bat. 'Don't think you're going to catch me out man. Why don't you go and play with Isru? Get him to show you how to catch,' he said to me. Harsha was the bowler. He bowled a slow delivery to Jangu. Jangu came forward and lofted the ball. The ball went straight up in the air. I saw I was right under the ball. I knew I must catch it. 'Get back, butterfingers,' yelled Vamsi. 'Leave it, someone will catch it.' 'I'll take it.' Vasu came running there. 'Leave it for me,' Vasu shouted. 'Vasu go away. It's mine,' I cried. This was my chance to show them. I cupped my hands to catch the ball. I was right under the ball. I shouldn't miss. 'Ha!' I screamed and fell down on the ground. Everyone ran towards me. I held my hand to my face. Blood ran down through my fingers. The ball hit me in the face. People around gathered and rushed me to hospital. The doctor observed and said to my parents, 'Take him to the town hospital immediately. He needs a surgery.' I was taken to a hospital in Hyderabad. Jangu was crying, 'Why did I say Somla has no eye for the ball? Now it might come true!' Mother consoled Jangu, 'Don't worry. Somla will be alright! He'll play with you again.' My father and mother looked after me carefully. After a week my father went to BojyanaikThanda. I sent a letter to my elder brother, Jangu.

Dear Jangu,

My eye is much better now. The doctors and nurses are very kind to me. They tested my eyes yesterday. Now, I'm alright. Of course, before surgery, there was something wrong with my left eye, the doctor said. After surgery it's alright now. Now, I can bowl and bat as you do. I'll never drop even a single catch. I miss you all. Hope, you are playing regularly. I'll join you soon. Give my love to grandma and little Isru.

With love,
Somla.

Dear Jangu,

My eye is much better now. The doctors and nurses are very kind to me. They tested my eyes yesterday. Now, I'm alright. Of course, before surgery, there was something wrong with my left eye, the doctor said. After surgery it's alright now. Now, I can bowl and bat as you do. I'll never drop even a single catch. I miss you all. Hope, you are playing regularly. I'll join you soon. Give my love to grandma and little Isru.

With love,
Somla.

I was in hospital for ten days. When I returned to my village, Jangu gave me a parcel. I was surprised. There was a beautiful ball in it.

'A new cricket ball,' I jumped with joy and hugged my brother. I practised hard day and night with the bat and the ball. Now I am a member of the Indian cricket team.

(Source: V Class English textbook "My English World" Published by SCERT, Telangana)