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## Contents

**From the Editor's Desk**

# Should teachers (of English) retire?
# Three reasons against and one in favour of

**Teachers of English in India need not retire from teaching.**

**Reason 1.** The society in general, and the parent community in particular, is not at all happy with the school/college leaver's performance in English communication. Therefore, teachers may continue teaching English till the taxpayers (the pay masters) feel satisfied.

**Reason 2.** Life span of the average Indian is gettingelongated year after year, according to the health department's notifications. The age of superannuation has been fixed by the state/central governments based on technical reasons such as whether they are able to pa the post-retirement benefits such as pension and gratuity, instantly. There had been funny instances of state governments "generously" raising the age of superannuation of its teachers, just because the state treasury was empty that financial year end! That means, all of a sudden, without any provocation, the government has a divine revelation that its teachers possess ample pedagogic and content knowledge that can last for one more year! Nevertheless, no harm in continuing teaching, if the teacher is physically fit and mentally stable.

**Reason 3.** If they were teachers in the real sense, they have been reading, learning and studying more and more in general, their subject in particular. In such a situation, how can a teacher suddenly put a full stop for ever, to her/his reading, learning, studying and teaching, too? Impossible! How can (s)he resist the temptation of going to 'aclass/ (not the class)one fine morning just because the government has issued a memo/circular/notice? Did the so-called authorities command, "Thou shalt not teach henceforth"? The only difference for the teacher is that (s)he may not be going to 'the class' where (s)he went till the previous day; (s)he maybe going to 'a class' and teach, either the same way, or a little differently (if got enlightened, of late)!

**A few teachers of English may retire at the earliest!**

**Reason 1** Let me quote a chunk from an earlyeditorial (Volume XII.3).

"Personally, I believe that teachers can broadly be classified into five categories on the basis of their contribution to learning. The first group not only doesn't contribute anything to learning, but develops in learners, a sort of hatred towards schooling... Let's call them 'paradoxical teachers'. (Title borrowed from Shashi Tharoor—'Paradoxical Prime Minister', 2018, Aleph Books.)

The second group does not do any harm to learners; but contributes very little to learning or learners. They are labourers, whose concern exclusively is on their wages. They can be called as 'accidental teachers', to borrow part of the title of the book The Accidental Prime Minister by Sanjay Baru (Penguin, 2014). Let's forget about both of them, just like their students do.

The third group sincerely tries to impart content knowledge to learners. Their contribution is in terms of percentage of marks to the learners, which in turn, leads to the popularity of the school (percentage of pass) and gains social prestige for the school and for themselves. They are known as 'popular teachers', and rightly so.

The fourth category makes the learners work themselves, without regurgitating contents into the learners, but by guiding them as and when they need. Their aim is to enhance the learner's cognitive development. …Shall we call them the 'road-not -taken teachers' for the sake of convenience, following the traveller in Robert Frost?

The fifth category, of course, a very small minority, doesn't teach at all in the conventional sense; they identify the potentials in each learner, and limitations too; and then make them work with the help of their own inner potentials. …No tuition, but only intuition, as Emerson pointed out long ago... No harm in calling this minority as 'Confucius teachers' since the ancient Chinese philosopher by that name asserted: "Give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. Teach him fishing, you feed him for ever". That is how metacognition works in learners—they fish on their own."

Let those teachers belonging to the first two categories retire from formal service, and also from teaching, forever. Reason is obvious.

**P. Bhaskaran Nair** (Editor)

# Getting Teachers Ready for a Major Transformation in the Assessment Practice: Perceptions of Teachers on Alternative Forms  of Assessment

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## Abstract

The new theories of learning and initiatives in the field of education are largely oriented towards learners' benefit. New  approaches  to learning are not confined to  learning and remembering but putting it into practice and relating  it to real life situations. Educationists have advocated that  learning should   result in problem solving, involvement of learners and  building mental models.The NCF 2005 asks for learner-centre learning.The  National Education Policy 2020, too emphasizes on the development of  higher order thinking skills, problem solving and life skills in place of rote memorization. It  also  calls upon teachers to get ready for a major transformation  in the assessment practice. As the document states " The aim of assessment in the culture of our schooling system will shift from one that is summative and primarily tests rote memorization skills to one that is more regular and formative, is more competency-based, promotes learning and development for our students, and tests higher-order skills, such as analysis, critical thinking, and conceptual clarity" (NEP-2020, p.17). In view of this  and in the wake of technological advancement, we need to re-think our assessment process as    the same policy says"new circumstances  require new initiatives."  In this paper I would like to  propose a few new  types of assessments that could be  used in the Indian classroom. They  includepeer assessment, group assessment, self assessment,  projects, portfolios, quizzes, rubrics,  and journals.  I have collected  teachers' perceptions on these types and  I would like to discuss them in detail.The teachers who have participated are TGTs and PGTs .They are twelve in number and they are enrolled in the PGCTE programme  offered at EFL  University, Hyderabad in 2021. Responses have been collected through google form and structured interviews. The overall findings  suggest  that teachers are open to these ideas and recognize their merits. Some of them have been already using a few of these assessment types.

**Key Words:** : Theories of learning, NCF2005, NEP 2020, assessment, perceptions, problem solving

## Introduction

When  we talk about new initiatives  on education in India,  two important  crucial documents on education come to our mind. They are the NCF 2005 and NEP 2020.They hold the learner as the centre and advocate guidelines for their benefits.   These two documents  discuss different aspects of learning and aspects associated with learning including, social  contexts,  classroom  environment, teachers, technology, aims of education, curriculum,  assessment and perceptions on them. it is worthwhile to discuss these two important documents  which have laid some guidelines for  education in India. In this paper I will touch upon the broader areas on education dealt by these two documents and   focus my discussion on assessment.

As mentioned in the abstract, the new thoughts and initiatives  on education has been towards helping the child learn better.  Learning must be  in tune with learners interests and learning styles.  It  should  be  contextualized  with learners' experience and environment.   The

NCF 2005 also asks for integration of different disciplines such as arts, music, values and local forms of knowledge. All aspects of education including assessment are based on this philosophy. According NCF 2005, assessment should be oriented towards learning. Its slogan is Assessment for Learning. It should not be looked as a separate entity. Assessment should not cause fear and anxiety among students but make them participate in the process in a happy and healthy way. It should be viewed as part of learning process even by learners. The objective is to gauze how much a learner has learned, and how much more they need to learn. It also asks for continuous and comprehensive evaluation. Continuous assessment will involve a blend of formative and summative evaluation. All skills of the learners should be assessed.It says that not only learning outcome but also learning experience should be evaluated.

The National Education Policy 2020 also favours students learning in an easy and flexible way. It asks for increased flexibility and choice of study. It advocates smaller modules to be taught and for the integration of all skills and disciplines like arts, sciences, humanities,languages, sports and vocational subjects. It also advocates scientific temper, creativity, innovativeness and aesthetics. It asks for integration of contemporary subjects like artificial intelligence, design thinking, holistic health and organic living. We need to inculcate in learners seva, swachhata, ahimsa and values that will help them grow as a full person. It means giving importance to the mental, psychological, ethical, physical, emotional and societal development of the child.

The National education policy 2020 clearly specifies that the aim of assessment should be for student development. It means that assessment should help teachers and all stake holders to help them observe and monitor learners growth. It also encourages more regular and formative and comprehensive assessment. It says that the aim of assessment in our schooling system will shift from one that is summative and primarily tests rote memorization skills to one that more regular and formative, is more competency based, promote learning and development of our students and tests higher order thinking skills such as analysis, critical thinking and conceptual clarity. It emphasizes on higher order thinking skills and competency. We as teachers need to set our objectives accordingly. It also include a few forms of assessment that are beneficial for the learners they include self-assessment, peer assessment, projects, quizzes, role plays , group work, port folios and so on. It will be useful if we have some idea about each of these tools.

1. **Peer Assessmnt:** Peer-Assessment is a structured assessment tool which encourages students to assess their own peers and provide feedback to one another. It allows students to take up responsibilities and manage their own learning. With proper guidelines and rubrics, students are able to assess their peers effectively.

2. **Group Assessment:** In group assessment, teacher assess students as a group. Here, the entire group's performance is assessed instead of the members being assessed individually. By working in groups learners learn and benefit from oneanother. Their spirit of teamwork and participation is assessed. Such a practice is helpful in students' future.

3. **Projects:** Projects are given as part of assessment. Students are assessd based on the rubrics provided. Different rubrics could be creativity, product and learning that has taken place in the entire process. It is a good strategy for enhancing creativity.

4. **Portfolios:** Portfolio is an alternate tool of assessment. It encourages students to maintain a diary and record their learning experiences in it. That is shared with the teacher. The teacher also takes keen inters in the work and gives feedback. It is a good opportunity for the learners to reflect on their learning and performance.

5. **Quizzes:** Quizzes are a good tool for large classrooms. It is also good as a tool in the context of online assessment. Teacherscan create google forms and carry out quizzes.

It is  good for testing learers' factual knowledge.

Keeping with the proposals  and form of assessment,  I have chosen a few forms of assessment to see whether they are adopted by teachers in recent time and what do teachers think about them.   I have conducted a survey on this and would like to share my findings  on them.

Twelve teachers  participated in the survey. They teach at the high school level.    They have experience  from two  to ten years. Seven of them are female and 5 of them are male.  All of them  have M.A English.  83.3% are PGTs and 16.3% TGTs. 83.3 of them are aware of NEP 2020. Majority of them  have  been using these forms of assessment. More than 50% of them  use  peer assessment, self assessment, projects but less than 20 percent use portfolios, rubrics  and journals. They agree than  these forms of assessment are beneficial  to students and  they can be easily adapted. The problem in the way may be infrastructure.  But  all of them want to try these.

**Conclusion**

As mentioned in the introduction,  both the documents (*NCF 2005 and NEP2020*) are meant for the benefits of learners. They aim at holistic development of  learners and for preparing them as global citizens. When it comes to assessment they view assessment as part of learning. They ask for  reforms and introduced progressive forms of assessment. These forms of assessment are for learner centred, part of learning and participatory. They are suitable for blended learning too. They can be  followed without much problems.  Keeping all these benefits in mind,  it is for the learners' benefits and nation's welfare that we   follow them.

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*The National Curriculum Framework 2005https://www.google.com/search?q=The+National+Curriculum+Framework+2005.&rlz=1C1CHBD_enIN1016IN1016&oq=The+National+Curriculum+Framework+2005.+&aqs=chrome.*

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<u>**Signposts for Researchers in Language Testing**</u>

**1. Manxia Dong, , Cenyu Gan, Yaqiu Zheng and Runsheng Yang**
**Research Trends and Development Patterns in Language Testing Over the Past Three Decades: A Bibliometric Study**

This study used bibliometric data from Language Testing, a prestigious international peer-reviewed journal in the language testing field, to investigate research trends and development patterns in language testing. The bibliometric information included the number of publications, the most frequently researched test types and topics, the most cited publications and authors (as measured by references), the most prolific countries/regions and institutions and the most frequently collaborating countries/regions. The results showed that interest in language testing has increased over time and that regional tests and international tests have been major concerns, while classroom tests/assessments have received less attention. Research topics were wide-ranging and addressed almost all language testing related issues, among which validity/validation received the highest interest across periods. Moreover, the publications were produced by a wide range of countries/regions and institutions and included collaborative research spanning various institutions and regions, although collaborative publications across countries were relatively scarce. Based on the findings of this study, implications and suggestions have been highlighted for future research, academic agencies and this journal.
**Source:** https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.801604/full

# Revisiting ESL Reading: Tracing the Hard Spots

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## Introduction

Being a conscious activity that demands attention focused on the print, that needs full support of the eyes, that forces the mind to travel many times recursive, that seeks support from the writer constantly, and that forces thinking skills to labour hard, reading can be called a complex cognitive-linguistic skill. Though the goal is basically obtaining information, there are many more objectives underlying the processes of reading a text. If this is so in the first language, the processes get more complicated while one is engaged in reading an alien language, especially in the early stages. This paper outlines the major characteristics of teaching-learning English as a second language (ESL) from a pedagogical perspective, leaving more space for accommodating the ESL learner.

## Appropriating reading

Reading is thinking under the stimulus of the printed page (Webster: 1982). Mercer and Mercer (1989) defined reading as a visual-auditory task that involves obtaining meaning from symbols (letter and words). Reading and writing are two aspects of whole language communication process. Reading becomes (to the extent) getting the words right and writing getting the spelling of the words right.

There is no need to assert that reading is primarily a visual task: it is recognition of words; it is reproducing; it is a thinking process; it is a step to personal development; and the like. Keeping these in view, Strang et al (1961) rightly remark: "if we think reading as a visual task , we will be concerned with the correction of visual defects and the provision of legible reading materials"; "if we think of reading as word- recognition, we may drill on the basic sight vocabulary and word-recognition skills ; if we think of reading as merely reproducing, we may direct the student's attention to the literal meaning of the passage and check whether comprehension is optimal; if we think of reading as a thinking process, we may be concerned with the reader's skill in making interpretations and generalizations, in drawing inferences and conclusions; if we think of reading as contributing to personal development and effecting desirable personality changes, we are likely to provide our students with reading materials that meet their need, or that has some application and relevance to their lives". Thus reading processes range from the simplest decoding of words to interpretative extensions beyond the author's message according to the experiential background of the reader. Decoding is the process of changing visual symbols into auditory patterns whereas interpretative extensions may involve critical or sometimes creative reading, In fact, reading is not a single unitary ability. It combines in itself many small components which, if put together can make attempting the reading task a success.

## What goes into the making of reading

No dynamic activity can be perceived in fragments; nor does the sum total of the components make the whole either. This is true in the case of reading as well. Still, under the compulsion of pedagogy one is forced to trace the 'ingredients' that go into the making of reading. According to Bartel (1986), the nature of reading can be characterized as 'bottom-up' model, 'top-down' model and 'interactive model' that combines the features of both. 'Bottom-up' model emphasizes that reading begins with letters on page; letters that the reader must distinguish and organize as words and sentences and finally meaningful paragraphs. On the other hand, the 'top- down model' emphasizes that the act of reading begins within the mind of the reader which is already set to hypothesize, and predict about the nature of what he or she is about to read. Here the readers rely on their background knowledge for understanding the message. So input is not the only source of meaning.

Readers, through their knowledge of the world, make guesses of the intended meaning of the message and approach the input to confirm them and fill in the specific details. 'Interactive model' holds that an efficient reader attends to both the above models simultaneously -what's in his or her mind and what's on the page.  He / she knows when to use which type of processing and when to use both types of processing. And the choice usually depends on the reader's purpose of reading, their familiarity with the topic and their background knowledge.

**Why and how reading fails**

Unlike listening,reading is not a natural process, though both are termed as receptive skills. The habits necessary for efficient reading must be acquired during the beginning period of reading instruction. Subsequent instruction should work to improve the efficiency of reading habits and skills. The recognition of printed symbols and comprehension of the printed matter are two essential steps in efficient reading . There are vocalization, sub-vocalization, supports, head movements, word by word reading and regression.  Manya & Eric de Leen (1983), Iyer (1986), Ahuja (1991) have made detailed studies of the factors and enlisted these factors into categories on the basis of the nature of impediment involved.

Yet another special feature of reading is that the mode and the purpose of reading affect the proficiency of the person who is reading.  To achieve better results the child must have some training in flexibility in reading.  Bond& Tinker (1967) opined that 'if the pupil needs to get only a general impression or idea, or  if he merely needs to look  up a given item on a page, the speed should be relatively high.  But if he needs to grasp the concepts in a given selection thoroughly his pace will be relatively slow. This emphasizes the importance of purposeful reading. Prior to reading any unit, the child should be clear as to the purposes for which he is going to read'.

When compared to listening, again as a receptive skill, reading has an advantage. We can reread when we are not happy with the comprehension in the first reading. But at the same time, it may be creating problems too.

The tendency of rereading is likely create problem in efficient reading. Lack of self-confidence or interruption between the reading assignments compels the reader to re-read the whole matter.   Studies of Robinson (1946) have shown that re- reading is a fairly ineffective method of reviewing immediately after study.

Among the factors within the environment that help in reading efficiency, illumination is the most important one.  Broom & associates (1942) opined that 'adequate and proper lighting contribute materially to efficient performance in the physical aspects of reading. If the quantity of light is inadequate for reading the eye must  strain  to see the poorly reflected image; what is seen  is  hazy and indistinct.  If too much light is available on the reading surface, glare may result, and fatigue is almost certain to inhibit reading performance without too much lapse of time'.

Like illumination, readability of the matter is also as important as a factor essential for efficiency in reading. Many factors are involved in determining the legibility of a printed page. These factors included the size of the type, the type face, the length of the printed line, the paper and the ink used, the kind and size of illustrations and the presence or absence of decorations on the page margins.  These aspects cover the external readability.

Internal readability in the form of comprehension levels also affects the reading efficiency of an individual.   The reading materials may be of independent, instructional or frustration levels.  If the student is able to answer at least 75% of the questions in the printed material then it is suitable for use at the instructional level. If he is able to answer 90% of the questions, then the material is suitable for use  in the student's independent study. When the reader shows 50% or even less comprehension, the reading material is considered to be of frustration level.  Johnson & Kress (1971)say that 'these levels have special significance for the teacher. It is necessary to know the level of material the child can handle adequately when working on his own'.

Efficiency in reading is dependent on the student's motivational readiness. Lack of interest is an important cause of inefficient reading. To be an efficient reader, the student must first want to learn. Interests serve as internal motivation. The student who is interested in reading is usually the one for whom reading satisfies the basic needs of self-esteem, esteem of others, curiosity and success and personal adequacy. It is noted that interests are influenced by (a) nature of the topic(b) the motive of the reader; usually the more closely the topic and the reader's motives are related, the more intense will be the interest of the reader.

**Scaffold or not in reading**

Research suggests that independent reading is the major contributor to reading comprehension, vocabulary growth and to gain on tests of 'reading achievement'(Anderson et al. 1985,p.77). Unfortunately, most children rarely read. They read very little in school and outside school - they read books anyhow only a few minutes a day , if at all. In fact, one study of the after-school reading of fifth graders noted that 50 per cent of the children read books for an average of four minutes per day or less, 30 per cent read two minutes per day or less and fully 10 per cent never reported reading any book in any day. For the majority of the children reading from books occupied 1 per cent of their free time or less (Anderson et al, 1985., p.77).

With the aim of improving reading efficiency of the school leavers, Narayana Swamy (1973) conducted an investigation on reading comprehension in English at college level. The investigator found that it is possible to improve the reading ability of school leavers through reading alone irrespective of the proficiency in other language skills, it was found that all school leavers apparently need to be put through a course in reading .

Srivastava (1979) made a research study on the effectiveness of a two- week course on efficient reading offered to the senior officers of the Karnataka government in terms of improving reading speed and comprehension, with ten officers around 46 years as sample. There was

progressive rise both on speed and comprehension from the pre- test to the Post-test stage. There was a significant progressive rise in reading speed from the pre- test to the sixth day and finally from the sixth day to the Post- test stage. There was no similar rise in the level of comprehension through the improvement between the pre- test and post-test stages was significant. The improvement rate in speed and comprehension and the coefficients of correlation between the different stages of evaluation were significant and positive showing uniform progress of the participants.

**Reading comprehension skills**

Comprehension seems to be an umbrella term under which many other types of reading skills are often presented. The more the child reads, the better he is likely to comprehend, because his experiences with the printed page are enhanced. Reading without comprehension is not reading at all. Reading and comprehension should go hand in hand. Meaningful reading includes not only a literal interpretation of author's words, but also an interpretation of his mood, tone, feeling and attitude etc.

The reader must comprehend the implied meanings and prejudices of the writer. He must recognize summary statements, make references and applications and see the broader implication of a passage. Gray (1956) describes comprehension as the 'ability to read the lines, to read between the lines and to read beyond the lines'.Macmillan (1965) defines comprehension as 'understanding what is written within, between and beyond the lines.' Dechant (1964) made a division of the Comprehension skills as (i) Matching words with pictures (ii) Associating meanings with word symbols (iii) Inferring meaning from contextual clues (iv) Inferring meaning from word clues- roots, suffixes prefixes (v) Matching words with their definition (vi) Recognizing antonyms and synonyms (vii) Associating printed word symbols with other symbols (viii) Developing meaning for larger units of language paragraphs. (ix)) Finding main ideas in a paragraph (x) Recognizing and organizing facts and ideas (xi) Ability to

recognize literary forms (xi)  Ability to detect writer's purpose.

Hafner & Jolly (1972) felt that word comprehension in its broadest sense refers to one's ability to understand and to grasp with the intellect. According to them Comprehension is the intelligent interpretation which includes: Reading to get main ideas ,reading to get the important details, reading to answer specific questions, reading to follow the logical sequence and development of ideas, reading to apply what is read, reading for deduction and implication and reading to evaluate.

**Reading from a physiological perspective**

Reading is an act, a performance or a response that the reader makes to the printed page. Unfortunately, certain factors may prohibit the child in making a right response. These factors include inadequacies in certain aspects like physical, visual, auditory, emotional   etc. which can create problems in children to understand a text fully while reading. To help children develop adequate personalities and to become successful readers, the teacher of reading needs to understand the 'causes' which hinder the children from doing reading successfully. Let's  look into those causes, which prevent the readers from doing fruitful, purposeful reading.

Functions such as vision, hearing and thought are possible only through the organs of the body.  If the organ is defective, the function is likely to be impaired. This may, especially in the case of vision hearing and thought, lead to serious reading deficiency. Glandular dysfunction, haemoglobin variations, vitamin deficiencies, nerve disorders, nutritional and circulatory problems, heart conditions, infected tonsils, poor teeth, rickets, asthma, allergies , tuberculosis, rheumatic fever, or prolonged illness can lower reading achievement and postpone or prevent reading readiness.

Eames (1962)  points out that tumefaction of the pituitary gland may lead to a reduction in eye span and consequently to an increase in the number of fictions.  Hypothyroid conditions may prevent normal fixation on what is being read and thus lead to day dreaming, poor attention, slow word- recognition and general fatigue.  Diabetes mellitus is associated with visual defects, confusions, excessive regressions and loss of place.

Sometimes a lowering of the child's basic vitality is closely related to the functions required for successful reading.  The basal metabolic rate BMR, for example, affects the convergence of the eyes.  If the rate is low, the child may not be able to aim his eye properly in binocular vision and thus may frequently regress, vomit words, lose his place, and become fatigued.   And, fatigue makes it difficult to become interested in reading task. Attention suffers and comprehension is usually lowered. As nervous tension build up, the pupil becomes disinterested, disgusted and may even from reading completely.

The ability to focus the eyes correctly during reading is part of the wider problem of motor- co- ordination.  For efficient reading the child must learn to coordinate the eyes, to move them along the line of print and to make appropriate return sweeps. He must see clearly and distinctly both near and far, must be able to change focus the impressions of each eyes into a single image, and must have visual memory for what he has seen.  Smirnov (1957) makes a comment on this fact that a child must be able to sustain visual concentration, must have good hand- eye co- ordination and must be able to perceives accurately size and distant relationship.

Auditory adequacy means three things: auditory acuity , auditory comprehension and auditory discrimination ( Witty& Paul, 1939). The  child must be able to transmit the sound waves from the external ear to the auditory centres of the brain.  This is auditory acuity and may best be described as the recognition of the discrete units of sound. He also must comprehend and interpret what he had heard, and he must be able to discriminate and retain what he has heard.   Loss of hearing can aggravate reading deficiency. The exclusive use of the phonic method with a child who has suffered a hearing loss may prevent an achievement in reading.

Another problem is word blindness, which means the inability to remember word forms.

This condition may be either structural or functional in nature. It is called alexia; it is accompanied by structural    defects in the cerebrum and dyslexia, if it is functional in nature.

It is impossible to distinguish the two forms of word blindness on the basis of symptoms alone. Jensen (1943) uses the term reading disability to designate cases manifesting organic injury and the term reading inability to designate cases manifesting functional difficulties.  If the disturbance is of functional origin, only reading is affected; if the disturbance is structural (delayed maturation or neural damage) the pupil's perceptual functioning is generally affected and difficulties will arise in areas other than reading.

**Conclusion**

Something that usually ESL teachers tend to forget is the fact that reading skills are transferrable from first language to second and third and so on. If the rich repertoire of the first language, coupled with the cognitive skills the learners already possess are skilfully merged in reading classrooms, the success is likely to be more than focusing exclusively on the reading skills of the second language. The interplay between language and cognition on one plane , language and culture (social experience) on another, are blended in reading activities, children will get more interested in reading more materials, since they realize that reading fetches them many things new.

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# A Critical Review of Mallikarjun Hiremath's *Havan*
## (Translated from Kannada by S. Mohanraj)

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*Havan*, a novel written by Mr Mallikarjun Hiremath and translated from Kannada by Prof S Mohanraj is a voice of unheard pathos of a rootless Lambada community settled in Havan Thanda near Kalluru. Settings and themes in the novel of Mr Hiremath is unique. [While U R Ananthamurthy's *Samskara*, Kuvempu's *Kanooru Shubbama Heggadithi* and Alanahalli Srikrishna's *Bhujangaiahna Dasavataragalu* portray inner conflicts and quandaries of respected established communities of Karnataka,] Mr Hiremath in his *Havan* explores an inexplicable condition of life, wishes and desires, predicaments and conflicts of a wandering tribe wishing to create a centre in their centreless life.

Havan is an expedition of possibilities in the vagary of life. Having approached the novel Havan, what strikes readers most is the essential concern about the theme of exploration. Basappa master gradually reacts to the unknown Thanda with positive message and involves native of the Thanda through a process of initiation of a lambada dream – the dream of creating a core hub in the rootless life of the community to revolve around. The sense of quest is significant theme of the novel and the journey of Basappa master exhibits an intense attachment to the spiritual level of experience. While there seems to be a tension between spiritual and non-spiritual, reasons and metaphysics, body and spirit, good and evil, male and female, life and death, dream and actuality and time and eternity, Basappa master shows a forceful concern for the wellbeing of his newfound Thanda(settlement).

Havana Thanda, a strange settlement remains the focal point of the novel. The title of the novel emphasises on Basappamaster and his greater understanding of the place. Theme of topographical exploration is gradually sublimated to the level of spiritual experience. But at the level of abstraction, it becomes a journey through dream, visions and emotive response. Basappa master at the end seems to have found the Thanda as his own Thanda by right of vision.

In *The Art of Fiction*, Henry James (1884) defines a novel as a personal impression of life… constitutes its value, which is greater or less according to the intensity of the impression." A good novel possesses "the sense of reality". He further comments:

Humanity is immense and reality has a myriad forms; … 'Experience is never limited and it is never complete; it is an immense sensibility, a kind of huge spider-web, of the finest silken threads, suspended in the chamber of consciousness and catching every air-borne particle in its tissue,"(p. 4).

Havan reflects such a vast web depicting each element of the Thanda with minute detailing each strand of human sensibility concerning the community life of the Thanda.

Set in arural backdrop of hilly surroundings, far away from the mainstream people, the novel portrays a panorama of an unaffected culturally rich tradition and rituals followed by the community amid their diurnal struggle for survival, hunger and pain. Innocence of thoughts, community feelings and self-esteem in the people while maintaining traditional celebrations provide a serene picture of people attached to ancestral customs and way of life in the very setting of natural background of the Thanda.

Characters in the novel create a vivid real-life settlement. Somalya the head of thesettlement, Kasanu, Khemli, Dhulya, Damla, Duglibai, Khubya, Ruplibai, Lalibai and the

daughters of the settlement like Gowri, Zimri, Chandri, Lacchi, Rukki, Gomli are a verisimilitude reality of the settlement. While Somalya and Kasanu are two solid rock holding the traditional values with all strong inner resolve, deep inside, they crave for some progress in their way of life. Women characters showcase their physical and mental strength and presence of mind and self-worth. Retaining self-worth and live with dignity, the women characters display an indomitable spirit under all circumstances of life.

The school building against two temples of God Sevalal, goddess Mariamma and the Neem tree with a platform have symbolic in meaning indicating a ray of light amid orthodox practices in the community life. Sense of service and loyalty to masters in their traditional paths of earning against inner wishes to free selves from the economic bondage, exploitation and social tumult remains excruciating disquiet amid celebrations and festivities.

Education provides light to repulses darkness from life. Schooling provided to Hari by Somalya with all his limited resources expecting an enlightenment of the settlement, continues to be an irony of life seizing the very identity of the community. Zimri while maintains self-esteem, goes on to work without bowing her head to her both educated and rich brothers. Rukki shows her courage in rebuilding a source of income and eventually saving herself from an unwanted incident by sacrificing her life.

The narrator of the first part of the novel *Havan*, Basappa master is an explorer. His journey of life exploring his own livelihood as a teacher in the Thanda school with limited experience as teacher initiates anexpedition searching an inner spark of the community in Havan Thanda (settlement). He finds a new self in a new home in the settlement igniting a spark insideby digging down the history and culture of it while giving a new hope of light in the community life. Basappa master rediscovers himself as a member community and engages in activities for upliftment of people involving self in all welfare schemes taking proactive role in it.

Suppressed inner turbulence of poverty finds expression in the end. The narrators in the next part of the novel *Havan* delineate the inner thoughts of people. While a group of people wish to stick to tradition and culture while seeking some light of progress, the other group of people, seems to have found an urgent need to pace up with the time and capture the crest of treasure and seats of power. Loku finds a fresh zeal in an indescribable struggle in acquiring the grazing field, all unwanted political and administrative hurdles to reach his expected goal in taking the responsibility of manager in the company. Zimri fights an inexplicable misery in her run of life from her eloping with her uncle to back to Thanda and new venture of life without losing self-respect. Hari expresses his inner conflicts unable to leave his new-found identity in commotion of modern world of city people and hiding self-identity for fear of losing self-image. Kanasu, a symbol of tradition and honesty, acts as a mediator between the old and new while accepting everything that is available without losing mental balance. Somalya remains a victim of own predicament between two worlds of life and remains silent shattered soul unable to recognize Basappa master, the bearer of light to HavanThanda.

Acquiring new skills and adapting to changed condition of life remains crucial in freeing self and development of community life. Loku, the second son of Somalya Nayak, the leader of the community progresses and gains such an insight to accept all opportunities that come way at the time. He explores possibilities of capturing a position of power in decision-making local bodies to take advantage of scopes for upward movement while being a member of the community. Having analysed own tradition of life as nomadic tribe without having any root of native land, Loku takes a crucial decision to resell the acquired land for expected change irrespective of will of the seniors in the community.

Development emanates in destruction. Devastation brings conflicts and concerns. All the huts with all their awkward appearance of poverty reappear in new shape of concrete buildings with porches and terraces. Mud paths

to Thanda that symbolize poverty, disappear in the colour of concrete tar roads. Oil lamps and lanterns that flickered in deep in darkness once, loseall dark shadesunder the glow of electrical lights. New vehicles like motorcycles, cars, tractors and trucks drive away all knee crumbling pain bringing the Thanda a new life in transport. The Sevalal temple gets a palatial placeclose by Mariamma temple. The divine persona neem tree evaporatesfrom the sight in the heat of advancement.The displacement of the temples remains symbolic of ensuing sacrifice of traditional culture and adaptation of progressive air. While Somalya observes the plight of modernity in his son's house in city, Kasanu while living in concrete house in the Thanda, expresses his displeasure of the changed life.

Hope is a moving force in life. The motifs of the characters depicted in the novel Havan, however, include the hope of making a home, living in love and the joy of friendship amid all commotion of loss in the progression of Havan Thanda to an independent village as Lakhmipura and a revenue division. (185)As one of the Karnataka Sahitya Akademi Honorary Award-winning novels reflecting the horror of development, Hiremath's Havan reflects optimism amid multitude dimensions of life, love, death and the distinctive conduct of the characters in situations of conflict and hostility. Dialogues between characters, adages and the songs act as characters providing a third person narrative between the first-person narrators in the both parts of the novel. The third person introduction and first-person narration and conversation with Somalyaand other characters shows the motives of the characters. This conversation looks like dialogue. It gives an idea of what is happening, define characters and the talk about what they are doing, signifies some sort of conflict in the mind of characters and it is this conflict that generates interest.

Translation is a complex process of converting text from its original form into a language of intended readers maintaining fidelity to the text and bringing it to a matching vicinity of readers' language. This demands a translator to keep in mind a series of elements related to culture, language and the work of art resolving problems of connotations, use of vocabulary items and culture-specific idioms. G S Amur in his translator's Note of his translation of The Chariot (Teru) by Raghavendra Patil quotes D R Bendre, "translations are but shadows, and it is left to the readers to guess the substance from a vision of the shadow." This is true in the translation of *Havan* from Kannada by Prof S Mohanraj. Prof Mohanraj has created such a transparent shadow in his translation of Havan that one can see each carveand line of sadness, happiness, conflicts and dilemmas on the face of each character enabling readers to outline the original work and the inner feeling of the author. The flow of narrative, the simplicity of language and felicity of expression add beauty to the translation bringing it to the level of original work. [The word 'baptized' in page 89 could have been 'solemnized' avoiding all criticism].The translation of *Havan* into English provides non-Kannada readers a depth of the novel and a foretaste of Kannada literature.

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# Identifying Meaningful Chunks for Better Reading Comprehension

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## Abstract

As long as reading remains the mainstay of formal, classroom-based learning of a foreign language, it naturally steals certain part of the prominence that is attached to speaking. As a result, as it happens in the Indian classrooms, reading gains superiority over speaking. Therefore, how to read a text with good comprehension and conceptualization also stands in the prime position. Reading begins when we start to identify and manage signs of things. In a situation like in India, where reading still remains the main mode of learning, it is reading that naturally renders progress in speech and writing later, and thus the ultimate use of sentence become more accurate (Thompson &Wyatt, 1952). While reading a text the reader should identify smaller units of text, as the brain capacity to retain language in short term memory is very limited. Therefore, the reader must do most of their processing at the phrase and clause level. These chunks carry the sense of the sentence. Reading in chunks or sense group of a sentence is usually divided by grammar, but may also depend on the idea one is trying to convey and even breathing patterns. Therefore a good comprehension depends on the identification of these chunks or sense groups while reading. Without fast and accurate reading of these phrases and clauses (chunks), one will miss the meaning and will lose the thread of understanding. This paper focuses on the substantial value of reading in meaningful chunks or sense groups for the perfect comprehension and conceptualization.

## Introduction

It is certain that reading has influenced or altered one's world view. A group synergy of many factors is needed for a reader to read and comprehend a second language. Efficiency in second language can be attained only by working on building speed and fluency. Reading not only has a tremendous power when it comes to feeling the development of all aspects of language ability, it's important to the entirety of a human life in this day and age just cannot be over stated.

Reading is an act of code breaking and message finding. Like encoding, decoding also is a complicated process. Following the same route of the maze of the encoder is a difficult process for the reader. For good comprehension and better conceptualization, the reader has to recode the words into sensible chunks; this will help to enhance comprehension fluency and the rate of reading. Reading becomes successful if the reader is competent in breaking the code and competent in recoding sensibly,

The literal meaning of 'chunk' is a solid piece of something, a part of something, especially a large part. In linguistic analysis, 'chunk' represents connected items of words group together, so that they can be stored or processed as single concept. As it serves the large part, it carries the actual sense of the whole. Reality is perceived in clusters of fragments, so is the case with representing reality using language. Therefore conglomeration of words, inseparably intertwined in existence, represent reality in abstractions. The meaning of a collocated phrase is not the sum total of the meanings of the total words in that phrase, there is something more.

While reading is very important for a good comprehension, it is a sensible way of understanding the chunks or sense group. Without reading efficiency, the academic success is a herculean task. Reading comprehension largely depends on the technique of reading. Many reading strategies are in use, but the ignored one is the identification of meaningful chunks or sense group while reading. Therefore the learner should get explicit instructions and practice in reading in sense groups. This paper explores the need of understanding the chunks of words which are closely connected in meaning, to understand what is being read whichhelps  better comprehension and conceptualization.

**Reading is an act of meaning making and a psycholinguistic guessing game**

In reading, the reader extracts information from the text and brings information to the text, together produces meaning. But for extraction, the reader has to read the text in a sensible way understanding the meaningful chunks of the sentence, for that the reader has to apply the apt strategy of reading in sense groups. Good man(1967) argues that, there are three main sources to be stressed when attempting to make sense of a written text: graphophonic knowledge, semantic knowledge and syntactic knowledge. The reading process therefore can be described as 'psycholinguistic guessing game'.

Reading is both perceptual and conceptual process. Effective reading involves all the higher mental processes like recalling, reasoning, evaluating, imagining, organizing, applying, problem solving etc;. How the reader achieves the target ie; the process of reading is more important than product. If the reader is conscious of the process of reading, then the reader can adopt different strategies for reading. Reading in meaningful chunks or sense group is an important strategy that can be adopted for a good comprehension.

## Chunks or sense group, their relevance in reading.

Literal meaning of chunk is a thick solid piece of something. In linguistic analysis, chunk represents connected words, which carry the sense of the sentence. For a lexicographer or linguist, all words are of equal importance. But when words are in use, many categorizations have to be made among the total number of words in a given language. The actual meaning occurs when the words stand in collocation. Without the awareness of this collocation of words, the conceptualization goes astray. The group of words which are closely connected to convey the meaning and are situated in a grammatical frame work is a chunk or a sense group. The sense units are introduced by grammatical words such as relative pronoun, conjunction and proposition.

Actually the group of words or chunks, which carry the sense of the sentence, is a meeting point or an interphase shared by morphology and syntax. Deanne Milan Spears (1983) argues that, one needs to know how to read by discovering meaning through organizations, language and tone. Therefore understanding the organization of words organized by the encoder is prime in reading. An efficient reader fixes the eye on the group of words which carry the essence of that sentence for quick and easy reading.

According to Adams(1990), while reading, two mental mechanisms occur, the first is phonological processor, which deals with the relationship to letter patterns and sounds associated with them. It aids in finding the right word stored in memory. The second system is called context and meaning processor, this involves the ability to break the text into phrases and clauses that constitute syntactical chunks of text. Therefore this chunking of meaningful words arevital to extract the sense of what is being encoded. This awareness makes the perception of the concept easy, and it enhances efficiency in reading comprehension.

## Meaningful chunks or Sense groups and comprehension

Awareness of sense group is vital for an efficient comprehension. This efficiency helps the learner to read and comprehend other subjects also efficiently, leads to academic success. The process involved in reading comprehension is cognitive as well as social. According to Afflerbachetal(2008), reading comprehension involves extraction and construction of meaning, therefore it is a cognitive and social process. Similarly it involves skills and strategies, where skills are automatic but the use of strategies are under the conscious control of the reader. Therefore explicit instructions are needed to attain the art of strategies to apply in the reading comprehension process.

The strategy, awareness of sense group or meaningful chunks and it's identification, which carry the idea or sense of the sentence is prime in reading comprehension. When words get out of the lexicon and start functioning, most of them go in their own selected groups. Identification of that selected group is essential to extract the essence. Words do not stand alone, only when they stand in collocation, actual meaning appears. The absurdity of

breaking this sole or self composed units into fragments, results in difficulties of learning the language.

The reader could adopt the strategy of identifying sense group or the chunks- small group of words – and reading that small group of words at a time to understand what is being read. It is a logically and sensibly constructed group of words. Without this awareness there happens a structural ambiguity. Reading actually consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving, how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Where comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and connected text.That means extracting the sense with the help of cluster of words in a sentence helps better comprehension and conceptualization.

**Classroom scenario**

Till a few years ago, classroom reading was a skill, which was cultivated in schools. But of late, as the goal of education changed, the need for cultivating reading skill diminished. As the social attitude leaned towards attaining socio- economic wellbeing, teaching strategies also altered. This is the tragic scenario now prevailing not only in Kerala, but in other parts of India as well. Most often, importance is given only to writing skills, and not to reading and reading comprehension. As a result, it is the learner, who becomes less confident, while using the English language. When the candidate appears many public examinations after schooling, most of them failed to get required grades, because of stilted learning and teaching of the English language. Most suffers due to still less grades in reading comprehension.

The teacher could help the learner to change their reading pattern, by teaching efficient reading strategies. Explicit instructions and reflexive programmes are needed to give awareness to the readers on chunks or sense group identification, this way of sensible reading leads to perfect comprehension. Palister (1968) suggested that, the second language learner should be given practice in reading by phrases. According to him, the learner had to re-write passages, so that each column should be one phrase wide. So the learner learns which words should be grouped to form a sense group (chunks).

The teacher could help the learner to read in meaningful units, instead of isolated words. For that, let the learner listen how to read sensibly. To train students to read in meaningful units, is to breakup sentence into sense groups. While reading English texts, most readers eyes tend to look at one word at a time, which actually cuts down the reading speed, more than that, it may divert the reader to the wrong message. Therefore it is the responsibility of the teacher to give awareness on the sense groups or meaningful chunks, then its identification while reading to reach the perfect comprehension.

As a first step, the teacher could read the passage in a sensible way in the classroom for the students. After listening to the reading of the passage, the learners could be asked to read the same text. Later the learners could be guided to mark vertical lines at the end of each pause and stop. Then another passage could be given to them to mark chunks of words or sense group using vertical lines. Repeated practice of this marking of vertical lines at the proper places and thus reading meaningfully, would equip them to use markers themselves and thus read properly and meaningfully. Thus indirectly they learn the syntax of the passage. Later, the students, even without the markers would come to the understanding of the sense group or chunks by observing pause and stop which were marked with punctuations. When the learners undergo these classroom approaches, they realize and internalize, the strategy of sense group or meaningful chunks identification to go about reading comprehension and thus better conceptualization happens.

**Comprehension passage for practice**

1.  Naked truth about a turn boy

A young woman from Kakamega discovered | it was a man's world, | when she went job hunting recently. | So she cut her hair shot, | dressed up in men's clothes, | and even got herself an identity card , | under the name of Mr. Rajab. |

These vertical line markers could help the

learner to read meaningfully and this practice and instructions help them to have awareness on grouping words to sensible clusters or meaningful chunks to read sensibly and to a perfect comprehension.

2. Iam a story teller, and,I would like to tell you a few personal stories about,what I like to call the danger of the single story. I grew up on a university campus in eastern Nigeria. My mother says that, I started reading at the age of two,although I think four is probably close to the truth.So I was an early reader, and what I read were British and American children's books.I was also an early writer,and when I began to write,at about the age of seven,stories with pencil crayon illustrations,that my poor mother was obligated to read.I wrote exactly the kinds of stories I was reading.All my characters were white and blue eyed.They played in the snow,they ate apple, and they talked a lot about the weather: how lovely it was that the sun had come out now.Thisis despite the fact that, I lived in Nigeria. We didn't have snow, we ate mangoes, and we never talked about the weather, because there was no need to.

**Vertical lines can be applied after each meaningful chunks to read the passage sensibly to a better comprehension and better conceptualization**

Iam a story teller|and|I would like to tell a few personal stories about | what I like to call the danger of the single story| I grew up on a university campus| in eastern Nigeria | My mother says that | I started reading at the age of two | although I think four is probably close to the truth | So I was an early reader | and what I read were | Britishand American children's books | I was also an early writer | and when Ibegan to write | at about the age of seven |

stories in pencil with crayon illustrations | that my poor mother was obligated to read | I wrote exactly the kind of stories I was reading | All my characters were white and blue eyed | They played in the snow | they ate apples | and they talked a lot about the weather | how lovely it was that the sun had comeout now | This despite the fact that | I lived in Nigeria | I had never been outside Nigeria | We didn'thave snow | we ate mangoes | and we never talked about the weather | because there was no need to |

**Comprehension questions**

1. Synonym of the word 'obligated'.
   (a) forced to   (b) obstructed to
   (c) hold back  (d) ready to
2. When exactly did the writer start reading?
3. What was the poor mother's obligation?
4. Why do they not talk about the weather in Nigeria?
5. His characters ate apples, where as he ate only mangoes why?

**Conclusion**

Reading plays a vital role in the second language(English) acquisition. Awareness and identification of sense group or meaningful chunks facilitates reading, and provides perfect comprehension. In reading, the reader decodes the encoded massage and in seconds the reader should be able to recode the words, which stands together to convey the actual meaning of the sentence. This paper has attempted to explore the need of the awareness of meaningful chunks or sense group and its identification while reading a text for perfect comprehension and better conceptualization. And also discussed some classroom applications for attaining the goal.

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# English for all, all for English (EFAAFE)
## Inaugural Session (5 Nov. 2022)

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ELTIF launched a new phase of activity, an online workshop series EFAAFE on 5th Nov 2022 aimed at improving  the English language proficiency of teachers, students and all these who love English. Dr.AKLeena( coordinator) extended a warm welcome to all and elaborated its motto:  English for all and all for English.

Dr. Bhaskaran Nair, in his introductory speech, remembered the humble beginning of ELTIF, two decades ago, to support the rural teachers, students and parents and amazed at the surmounting support it gets from all walks of life around the world. ELTIF successfully completed, he said, more than 60 online workshops surpassing the covid pandemic. The formation of the new arm he said, sprouted from a small incident. One of the participants, Ms.Ananda on the final session of ELSSA, asked whether it was possible to conduct a few sessions on creative methodologies of teaching. He complimented her for her initiative. That request from a teacher prompted ELTIF to start the new venture within a short span of 14 days. He then extended a warm welcome to Dr. Beena Philip, Hon. Mayor of Kozhikode who had consented to inaugurate the series, and Dr.Vijayakumar, former professor, Hindustan University, Chennai, who had volunteered to conduct the first session of the series.

Dr.Leena introduced Dr.Beena Philip, one of the founder members and joint secretaries of ELTIF and current mayor of Calicut Corporation. Dr. Beena began her career as a teacher of English, in the secondary level, rose to Higher Secondary level and retired as principal from the Kerala Govt Service.

While in service, Dr. Beena was par to the Curriculum Sub-Committee of SCERT Kerala and  a member of its  state level teacher trainer team. After retirement she  worked as a teacher trainer for NCERT in Kerala, Oxford University Press and as a freelancer, too. She has authored a few books and edited a few; published some articles on ELT both in English and Malayalam. She is the most sought after trainer and her role in establishing ELTIF is always commendable. Dr.Beena Philip,  in her inaugural address expressed happiness on her reunion with, the ELTIF family, She sincerely regretted  her absence in the earlier seminars/ workshops due to tight work schedule. She added that the new online platform (EFAAFE)would provide a golden opportunity for teachers, students and all lovers of English language.

 In foreign countries, she mentioned, writing is the last part of language skills(LSRW) formally taught at school; priority is given to aural-oral skills. But, unfortunately, In India it is the other way round—speaking is the most neglected skill, both at school and university level. This shortcoming has been seriously paid attention to by the hundreds of Communicative English courses organized by ELTIF in the nooks and corners of South Indian villages. Though short-term courses, these 'English fests' offered children the courage to function in English, without being shy of making mistakes. Pointing out how English language proficiency works as a confidence booster among the youth, she cited how t English language proficiency helped her own son secure good marks in campus recruitment interviews. She also mentioned the case of a newly recruited engineer who deserved her appreciation for his excellent English in the office notes.

She stressed the need of English language proficiency as it is a main criterion for job opportunities in all walks of life. She complimented all members of ELTIF family, especially the driving force Dr.Bhaskaran Nair, who works round the clock for the upliftment of the society through ELTIF. She formally inaugurated the new venture hoping it would be a game changer in the years to come.

**Report of the ELTIF online programme: English for all; all for English (EFAAFE)**
Workshop 1 (5 Nov. 2022)

# Why do we fail to communicate in English? Part 1

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As the name of the programme 'English for all; all for English', ELTIF's new attempt is to provide support and guidance to anyone who is desirous of functioning in English, especially in speaking. As the first step, we thought that some sort of a diagnosis must be done before offering remediation. Why do we fail to communicate in English, in spite of teaching-learning the language around us (not a totally alien one like German or Japanese), for ten to fifteen years? ELTIF hooked on the right person who had been teaching in India and abroad, designing curricula and offering tailor-made courses.

Dr.K Vijayakumar began the first part of his workshop **How to overcome Communication Barriers: A few practical tips** by prompting participants to consider the following questions:

• Why do we fail to speak in English in public?
• Why can't/don't we communicate in English?
• What are the barriers to communication in speech?

He further elaborated by discussing language skills, that include both receptive and productive skills (speaking, writing). productive abilities that entail creating sentences, paragraphs, phrases, and words. Receptive skills that entail receiving information, such as listening and reading. The speaker claims that out of the four, speaking is the one people are most averse to, followed by writing—both of which are useful talents. Later, he went into further detail about the specific causes of speech anxiety in Asian contexts.

He talked about speech anxiety, which includes shyness, fear, and apprehension.Of the four language skills, speaking is the one that is most afraid of, followed by writing, both productive skills.

Tracing the reasons for speech anxiety Dr Vijayakumar presented certain interesting facts that usually

ELT practitioners are not much aware of. For instance, he says, cultureis the culprit.

Our ancestors preferred silence over speech on many major occasions, silent culture as he terms it. We were not supposed to speak overtly in public/private places. Girls were supposed to speak quietly /politely. Psychological, as well as sociocultural factors too contribute to speech apprehension. Low self-concept, low self -esteem, low self-confidence and low social status (inferiority complex)—all contribute to speech anxiety. In addition, he pointed out that although we are capable of learning many languages, we are more clannish than other cultures, which is defined as "members of a group of people or society that are friendly to each other but not to persons outside the group."

When it comes to formal use such as classroom communication, on-job communication, business transaction etc. it is the lack of purpose. Speaker needs to have a clear purpose such as informing, persuading, actuating, entertaining, demonstrating, motivating and so on.

Yet another reason for the withdrawal symptom is lack of opportunities at the right time. Neither the school nor the college provides opportunities to function in English. Humorously he commented, "English is taught as a TENOR (Teaching of English for no obvious reason)".

Another factor that does not promote second language use is the fear of getting dubbed. Most often youngsters who boldly venture into speak English in public are discouraged on the following counts. A person who speaks English among our society is dubbed as, stylish, proud,fashionable, sophisticated, egoistic and even impolite.

According to him, people from lower castes may experience low self-concept (image we have of ourselves), low self-esteem (value we place on ourselves), low self-confidence (confidence in ourselves and in our abilities), low social status (inferiority complex) in comparison to others in society (inability to stand/open mouth/self-consciousness, etc.), and so on. He also discussed trait apprehension (reluctance), state apprehension, and (fear about the surroundings, settings, climate, and noise –stage fright). The speaker made the claim that if the barriers in the environment and inborn qualities are removed, then s/he will be able to talk. Later, he talked about the necessity of reading, speaking, listening, and writing as well as the lack of language proficiency. Because practising and preparing for speech requires a lot of listening, reading, and writing. He went on to say that the speaker should have a clear purpose and organisational skills. A well-structured speech is more effective.

He also discussed the lack of opportunities and training for second language learners in the ESL classroom. Later, he discussed the influence of mother tongue on speech training in school classrooms. He opined that speaking English with our people is frowned upon. Our mother tongue's sentence structure/pattern differs from that of English. So switching to another pattern is difficult unless we use both languages frequently during the day. A person who speaks English is said to be: stylish, proud, fashionable, sophisticated, egoistic, and even impolite in our society. The speaker claims nobody wants to fail in public; we don't mind failing in private. A speech failure in front of an audience is considered a debilitating experience for a speaker (after college days). He went on to explain the factors that affect our speech, such as the length, thickness, and tie of the tongue, Stammering and stuttering,dry lips and dry throat. Activities and examples were provided to back up his claims throughout the workshop.

The interactive session in the end invited more points from the participants to get clarified. This workshop being the first part focused more on diagnosis. The next part, the speaker promised, would be taking care of remediation.

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**Signposts for Researchers in Language Testing**

**2. Soo Hyoung Joo: Current Trends in Second Language Assessment**

*New Advances in Second Language Acquisition Methodology in Higher Education*

**Abstract** The field of second language (L2) assessment has continued to evolve since the 1960s, broadening the scope of inquiry and adopting more sophisticated research methods (Chen, 2011; Kunnan, 2014). Technological innovations have allowed wider application of tools for assessment design, development, and analysis (Purpura & Banerjee, 2021). In addition to the quantitative methods, the qualitative methods have also been widely adopted, providing more meaningful information not only about the test takers' L2 proficiency but also the role assessment played on teaching and learning.
**Source:** https://journals.library.columbia.edu/index.php/SALT/article/view/9055

Report of the ELTIF online programme: English for all; all for English (EFAAFE)
Workshop 2 (12 Nov.2022)

# Why do we fail to communicate in English? Part 2

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Since the first workshop on 'Why do we fail to communicate in public?' focused on the diagnosis part, this second workshop mas meant for identifying remedial measures. This workshop had two parts—'How to overcome speech barriers' and 'Speech & Personality'.

The resource person, Dr K. Vijayakumar began by highlighting the importance of developing reading habit for enhancing speaking skills. Apart from taking care of fluency in speech, wide reading provides us with enough exposure to the sentence patterns, syntax , and the ways concepts are clothed in language.

Language accuracy, he asserted, should not be compromised. Conscious attention needs to be paid to form while trying to gain fluency. If necessary, doing exercises with the help of good self study books must be made a habit.

To avoid tension while speaking in public, Dr. Vijayakumar suggests the following measures: Be yourself –avoid aggressive posture/ be pleasant

- Look at your audience
- Focus on your ideas
- Speak in public as often as you can
- Don't worry about failures
- Talk about topics that interest you
- Also, fixing a clear purpose in mind before start speaking will give clarity in thinking, while speaking. On formal occasions such as classroom/conference presentation, ample preparation leads to appreciation from the audience. Before making such presentations, make sure which mode are you going to choose, or what proportion are you going to distribute among the usual formats—Manuscript, Memorized, Impromptu or Extempore
- Since most of us in India will be using English on formal occasions—academic, career, business, official, media—Dr. Viajyakumar suggests a few more scaffolds for making the presentation more effective. They are
- Explanation
- Compare and contrast
- Illustration
- Specific instances
- Statistics
- Testimony
- Visuals/graphs/charts
- It is known for sure that body language has a lot to contribute to capture the attention of the audience, young or old, laymen or the erudite. Movement, posture, facial expression, eye contact, and dynamism etc. play crucial role in successful oral communication.

The two - part workshop was highly interavtive and participatory. Quite a few doubts were cleared both in theory and classroom practice. Dr. Vijayakumar's experience as a coure designer, curriculum planner, materials developer, teacher trainer, language examiner, and above all, a classroom teacher was evident throughout both the sessions. ELTIF expresses its sincere thanks to Prof. Vijayakumar.

**Report of the ELTIF online programme: English for all; all for English (EFAAFE)**
Workshop 3 (3 Dec. 2022)

# Professional Development of Teachers through Open Distance Learning and Online Education

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ELTIF recently launched a new online programme following the requests from participants of an earlier online series. This time, the EFAAFE programme was meant for all—teachers, students and users of English language. The third workshop in the series held on 3 December 2022 was planned with special focus on distance education programmes—regular and online. It was meant for creating specific awareness on the potentials and possibilities of the conventional distance education programmes and the fast-emerging online programmes. ELTIF was lucky to get the right and pest person, Dr. Renga Ramanujam, Former Pro Vice Chancellor, IGNOU and Professor of Distance Education. Dr Ramanujam had been with IGNOU for several decades, and during his tenure as faculty and administrator at IGNOU and after formal retirement he travelled far and wide to spread the message of distance education programmes.

'Professional Development of Teachers through Open Distance Learning and Online Education' was the topic chosen by the speaker following a suggestion from ELTIF. The workshop focused on ODL-Online education today, online Teacher Training, Prospects of Career growth for teachers, Online teacher training and Higher education opportunities and courses offered by open universities and ODL organizations like IGNOU, COL and others.

The speaker opened up the talk from the psychological perspective of how Open Distance Learning is open to people and to places. As everyone cannot afford to go to eminent universities, DE is taking education to all. He defined Open Education as open to people, places, methods and ideas. The speaker traced the evolution of Open Education. In 1870 the University of London Working Men's Association entered into the foray of ODL. Later the visit of Harold Wilson to Soviet Russia paved the way for the establishment of Open University in 1969 which led to the development of 130 Open universities with 15 National and 14 International Universities with 26% of the student population. There was a spurt in ODL when IIT started video recording of lessons for NPTEL courses and IGNOU offered 4000 courses.

The wrong notionsor misconceptions surrounding ODL as inferior to mainstream education are slowly fading away with the collective efforts of people and governments. With the initiatives and policies of German companies to recruit students only from Open Universities enable ODL to gain value and supremacy. He presented the positive side of COVID 19 as it showed ODL as a viable option to 6.3billion students right from primary to PhD level who could not attend the classes. Money Spinning Courses of MBAand BEd were also introduced and it changed the phase of ODL. MoU signing between universities brought Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard Universities in collaboration with Indian

Universities and a lot of online training programs were introduced through these associations.

He highlighted how some state universities are giving incentives to teachers to pursue ODL. He discussed how the Army and Defence staff, Air Marshals, Lieutenants are showing interest to take ODL courses by giving the example of 2 Lieutenant Generals who have done PhD in Defence Studies.  It was also pointed out the innovative new courses introduced by universities such as YCMOU, Nasik, Maharashtra Open University, BR Ambedkar Open University, Tamil  Nadu Open University etc.,

The speaker set it into interactive mode after giving all basic, necessary information about ODL.To a question about courses for disabled learners, he pointed out the availability of a plethora of ODL courses which people are not aware of. There are 37 Assistive Technologies available to address the people with special needs including Special BEd. and other courses for persons with 7-10 % Learning Disability. Courses are devised for the disabled Learners in Sign language and Braille format adapting to the universal design of materials and methods of teaching. Responding to the question about availability of ODL courses offered by Foreign and Indian Universities and Fellowship

Programs, he listed Coursera, Future Learn and Udacity, Khan Academy, Unacademy. He talked about the various bodies offering Fellowships and teacher exchange programs namely British Council, BAIRD, DAAD, Fulbright, Alliance Francaise, Harvard, MIT and other Fellowships offered by  Ivy League Universities.

ELTIF has chosen the theme of Distance Education for its EFAAFE workshop with a specific objective. During all the hundreds of teacher training programmes (teacher self-empowerment programmes, as they are popularly known), ELTIF has been encouraging teachers of all levels—primary, secondary, post-secondary, college—to go for higher studies through various state governments' open school systems, and the distance education programmes offered by many universities. At these self-empowerment programmes, ELTIF used to guide and assist many participants in continuing their formal education. And, during the pandemic shut-down, ELTIF was fortunate enough to get the best person—the real authority—to guide the participants in the right direction. ELTIF's sincere thanks to Prof. Renga Rananujam, a former batchmate of Dr. P. Bhaskaran Nair, President of ELTIF, at CIEFL Hyderabad way back in the 1980s.

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**Signposts for Researchers in Language Testing**

**3. Parviz Birjandi, Saeid Najafi Sarem : Dynamic Assessment (DA): An Evolution of the Current Trends in Language Testing and Assessment Abstract**

Abstract—Traditional static testing, aimed at measuring the achievement of pre-determined criteria, has been widely used by language teachers for many years. Such tests conventionally reflected students' misunderstanding of instruction more than their abilities to perform a task. Disillusionment with traditional assessment has led to an examination of alternative assessment procedures that are accurate and appropriate in evaluating diverse populations' learning. Dynamic Assessment (DA) stems from the mutually constitutive relationships between methodology and epistemology. Its root is the concept of development in Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The central feature of DA is that it does not separate instruction from assessment, but instead, is in favor of a teacher-student unity that works jointly towards students' future improvement through their ZPD. The present article is a literature review which aim to look critically at the emergence of DA as an alternative approach to the previous traditional approaches. Also, after taking a look at the theoretical framework as well as different models of DA, the researcher goes on to discuss the merits and demerits as well as the application and implication of DA in the scope of language teaching and language testing. Index Terms— Dynamic Assessment (DA), models of DA, theoretical framework of DA

**Source:** https://www.academypublication.com/issues/past/tpls/vol02/04/14.pdf

**Report of the ELTIF online programme: English for all; all for English (EFAAFE)**
Workshop 4 (17 Dec. 2022)

# Mind-mapping Techniques for Linguistic and Cognitive Development

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As the title clearly suggests, the online programme 'English for all; all for English' aims at all users of the 'language of opportunity. The fourth workshop in the series'Mind Mapping Techniques for Linguistic and Cognitive Development' was delivered by Dr. B. Nagalakshmi, Asst. Professor, SDNB Vaishnav College for Women, Chennaion 17 December 2022. The overview of the presentation encompasses the participants' reflections on devising study skills, need for adopting research-based study skills, how to use Mind Mapping techniques for cognitive and Linguistic skills development, and simplifying teaching/learning ofcomplex genres using the cognitive process called mindmapping.

The speaker began with the 'pitch in for one-minute minute reflection'on the study skills observed among the students by the teachers, the study skills adopted by the students and researchers andthe studyskills observed by the parents in their children. Then she highlighted the need for adopting the research-based study skills and in particular mind- mapping techniques.

She referred to someresearch evidencessuch as Erdem's (2017) research on "Mind-maps as a life-long learning tool", Kalyanasundaram's (2017) et al., "Effectiveness of mind mapping technique in information retrieval among medical college students", Chaudhri's (2021) et al., "Applying visual mapping techniques to promote learning in community-based medical education activities" and the research work of Farrand (2002) et al. on "The efficacy of mind-map study technique'. The speaker shared how she was inspired by the book Mind-map Masteryby Tony Buzan who is an British psychologist, mathematician, writer, and brain researcher. Tony Buzan, known as the father of mind-mapping derived inspiration from Leonardo Davinci and Albert Einstein, and further developed the concept of mind mapping originally introduced by the Joseph D Novak.

Dr. Nagalakshmi explained the 'what' and 'how' of mind-mapping.Mind map is a note-taking technique which is expressed within the frame of constructive approach. She differentiated mind mapping from other concept maps which are linear whereas mind-mapping is an organic, holistic, simple thinking tooland acolourful visual diagram. The current standard methods adopted by many have got lot of drawbacks such as they are communicated in a narrative form involving noting down of ideas as they occur and are in hierarchical sequence consisting of main and sub-categories. The standard note-making lacked many tools such as visual rhythm, visual pattern, colour, image, visualization, dimension, spatial awareness, Gestalt (Wholeness) and association that are relating to cerebral cortex apart from symbols, linear patterning and analysis. Notes must have four main functions as being reminiscent, analysing, creative and interactive. According to Buzan a mind map always radiates from a central image. Every word and

image become in itself a subcentre of association, the whole proceeding in a potentially infinite chain of branching patterns away from or towards the common centre. Though it is drawn on a two-dimensional page it represents a multi-dimensional reality, encompassing space, time and colour. It is an evolutionary development of our thinking processes.

Buzan (2005) emphasizes four important features of mind map as:

• Attention to subject is provided by a picture at the center of the mind map.
• Main themes of the subject are formed from the branches related with the picture at the center.
• Branches state a key picture or keyword on the connected lines.
• Branches have a structure which is related to each other.

She related Mind Mapping to the cognitive domain for harnessing brain power. Mind Maps are an organized brain storm method (Michalko, 2001). Mind Map is a strong graphical technique which targets to utilize the brain with its full capacity.  Brain map focuses on using almost all of the features of brain, namely it models our brain whose left lobe operates with words and right lobe with images. She explained the defying nature of the concept 'Right brained, left brained' as limiting brain power. On the other hand, for brain, mind maps which are multi coloured, multi-dimensional and which provide stimulation visually are more attracting than one coloured traditional note and also more effective in remembrance.

Visual tool which can be used in determining the preliminary information, thoughts, comprehensions, cognitive structures and conceptual relations of students and in the improvement of conceptual understanding. According to Charles Sherrington-grandfather of Neuro-physiology, "the human brain is an enchanted loom there are millions of flashing shuttles weave a dissolving pattern, always a meaningful pattern, though never an abiding one, a shifting harmony of sub- patterns.  It is as if the Milky Way entered upon some cosmic dance".Mind map functions in accord with the natural structure of brain. She described the Gestolt- Wholeness concept, an in-built tendency of the brain to search for completion which is satisfied by the structure of mind map. She enlistedtheessential components neededfor preparing a Mind Map; a large sheet of plain white paper, a selection of coloured pens or pencils, a brain, an open mind, imagination, a subject you wish to explore and knowing how to prepare.

The resource person shared the mind maps prepared by her daughter on the subjects Sociology and English and also from the online resource Mind meister.  She explained how Grammar activities and games can be conductedbased on mindmap.Writing tasks such as framing sentences, writing a paragraph, story writing etc., can be designed using mind mapping.  The tasks and activities using mind map can be devised by teachers for Upper Elementary Levelfrom the online Mind Maps on Grammar. The students would be motivated for making notes in their higher studies.  She gave strategies for using mind map to unravel the genres of Literature right from the simple one poetry to the complex one of Novel and drama. She explained how BA/MA (English) students can be taught this mind mapping technique as they have to learn a wide range of Literary works. They can remember, revise the various genres, character names, plots, and themes once they master this note making technique easily.  She elicited the audience to define mind mapping from what they perceived and she gave a list of catchy phrases that best describe mind map.  She concluded the workshop by conducting a quiz on the notes, symbols, diagrams used by great brains namely Leonardo Davinci, Einstein, Darwin, Picasso, Mark Twain, Blake by showing the slides of their hand drawn pictures which they used for developing their landmarking concepts which had good spontaneous responses the participants. Altogether it was a different approach for inculcating study skills among the learners.

**Report of the ELTIF online programme: English for all; all for English (EFAAFE)**
Workshop 5 (14 Jan. 2023)

# Visuals Mediate between Cognitive and Linguistic Skills: Pictures for Early SL Classes

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The fifth workshop in the series 'English for all, all for English', organized by ELTIF focused on the use of visuals for enhancing communication skills. A professional teacher trainer, chief tutor i/c of the District centre for English, Thrissur (attached to DIET Thrissur), specialized in ELT, led a wonderful workshop of on the potentials of print materials especially pictures. Her presentation on 'Visuals Mediate Between Cognitive and Linguistic Skills, Pictures for Early S L classes' augmented and finetuned the teaching skills of the participants. Dr. Vinija's presentation centred around five specific and effective activities based on selected visuals. At the outset, she enquired whether the teachers of primary classes use pictures related to the respective units in textbooks as visuals speak more than words do. She elaborated:

• Today's multimedia environment is visually oriented.
• People learn in different ways.
• Pictures are stimulating, interesting and accessible to everyone.
• Pictures are open to different interpretations.
• Pictures provide a talking point.
• Pictures add a fun element to a lesson.
• They are great for practicing sub-skills.

Dr. Vinija designed her classroom activities in a graded order to help the learners acquire the basic language skills involuntarily. Interestingly, the first activity itself could break the inhibition of the participants since she wanted them to express their ideas on the given pictures in a word/phrase .

They are:
1) A waiting shed made of used water bottles.
2) An elephant offering its tusks to an advancing hunter.
3) A young female toddy tapper climbing a coconut tree.
4) Tiny plants growing in the keyhole of a rusted lock placed on a gate.
5) Some less privileged people peeping or looking over the closed fence of a stadium to see the extravaganza inside.

Profuse response from the participants made the session vibrant. The ice-breaking session turned out to be a learning session, generating good number of words/phrases unmindful of grammatical errors. This is a solid evidence to be replicated in a live classroom.

Dr.Vinija, in her second activity, utilized the same slides/pictures, but with a different objective – writing captions for the pictures. This task develops the power of observation, critical thinking, creativity and imagination of the learners. Active interaction from the participants made the session lively and energetic. Here the resource person successfully established the effectiveness of using the same pictures/materials for different learning purposes. Caption writing enhances the learning prowess and helps the learners remove their inhibition.

The resource person carried the participants to a slight higher level in the third activity- words and phrases gave way to short sentences. The assigned task is 'What are they saying?' The visuals are :

1) A classroom - the teacher asking something and one of the students raising his/her hand.
2) Two elderly women exchange courtesies.
3) A small boy in a pensive mood and a girl near him consoling/apologizing.
4) A father and his tiny daughter in talk.
5) A young man and a woman bidding good bye.

Varied and variety of responses galore from the participants. This exercise opens new avenues of learning and improves the creativity, imagination and communicative skills of the learners.  The speaker cleverly twisted the activity to a different angle, asking the participants about the language function used in each situation. It highlights the technical skill of Dr.Vinija to incorporate different teaching items in a single activity.

Dr. Vinija raised the bar of learning furthermore in her fourth activity. She presented two pictures. The first is the picture of a textile shop taken from a 3rd standard text book 'Marigold' prescribed by CBSE., and the second is a picture ofa village, taken from Kerala Padavali text book (Malayalam). Ten sentences each are given based on the pictures. The participants are asked to find out the appropriate ones and to correct the inappropriate ones. They find no qualms in accomplishing the task. Then she wanted them to say some true sentences  based on the first picture. It enhances the observation of the learners and their ability to construct short sentences using simple present and continuous tenses which in turn boosts their confidence. Subsequently she encouraged them to ask certain questions based on the 2ndpicture. It nurtures their skill/ability in framing YES/ NO questions. Describing such pictures stimulates their interest in doing more such tasks and interpreting pictures on their own.

However, Dr. Vinija enquires whether the primary school students be able to do these kinds of activities and how it will help them developing reading skills. Only when she got the positive response from the participants, she disclosed the fact that she had tried it and won desired results.

The final activity of the session virtually elevates the learners to a full-fledged form of language learning – words, captions, small sentences, framing questions and story-telling. Exhibiting some pictures in jumbled order, Dr. Vinija wanted the participants to arrange the sequence and narrate the story.

A) A gloomy girl and three boys behind her.
B) The girl in laughter with a green frog in hand.
C) The teacher consoles the girl.
D) The girl raises her hand with a bent head when the teacher takes attendance.
E) The girl happily returns from school.
F) The girl wonders when a boy throws something up.

The participants sequenced it in no time and narrated their version of stories. They fell dumbstruck on listening to the real story from Dr. Vinija entitled 'No Smile Today' – an entirely different version!.

Dr. Vinija, in her workshop, unequivocally asserts the relevance of pictures in the teaching – learning environment. She highlights how visual aids support and prompt learning in the early stages.

•    Support understanding when the children are listening.
•    Put across the meaning of vocabulary; prompt and support reading.
•   Provide a topic or visual focus to prompt speaking or writing.
•   Provide a visual link between L1 and English.
•   Provide support and motivation for early reading and writing in English.
•   Provide ways around communication barriers.

Stories always fascinate children. If practiced in the classroom, these activities will create magical effect. Stories help children learn the language from rudiments to upper level involuntarily.  Listening to stories, and later creating their own stories  expand their imagination, creativity, outlook, critical thinking and observation

As a honeybee enjoys nectar, without hurting the flowers, Dr. Vinija imparted picture-based learning without coaxing or compulsion. The entire session was energetic and enthusiastic. At times, she donned the robe of a participant

which triggered interaction and lifted their morale. Being the chief tutor of DIET, she had experienced the effectiveness  of visual aids and she applied it here for the benefitof the participants. She was quite confident of reaping rich dividends if implemented in true spirit in primary levels. The fabulous and fantastic performance of  Dr.Vinija deserves accolades.

The pedagogic and presentation skills of Dr. Vinijaare commendable. Her session is remarkable for its brevity and enriched content. The diligent choice of slides and theiroptimal utilization deserves  applause. The activity-oriented, interactive session was a unique package for promoting the language skills of the learners in their early stage.

Obituary

# Mohanan Puthiyaparampan (1965-2023)

(former English faculty, Madanapalli Institute of Technology and Science (MITS), AP.

ELTIF lost another of its mainstays-- a renowned teacher and teacher trainer, Mr. P. Mohanan passed away on 15th March. Rising from a very humble background, Mr. Mohanan presented himself before his colleagues, friends and especially students, an excellent example of a self-made man, a model for anyone desirous of scaling heights through self-efforts. From the humble beginning of a tuition teacher in a remote village, Mr. Mohanan became  popular as a teacher of English early in his career. It was a time students feared English, and failed the English exams. "Mohanan Master's tuition class" as it was popularly known around, ferried across many such students to the higher classes, by constantly instilling confidence in them. His way of teaching English was as pleasant as his ever- smiling face— recall his former students.

After serving as a high school teacher of English, and later a higher secondary teacher  for more than three decades Mr. Mohanan formally retired from Kuthuparamba HSS, Kannur Dt. Kerala. In between (2005-07) he went abroad and  worked  in  Yara  International School, Riyadh, Ksa. By this time, he had established his talents in various forms and positions-- State Resource Person in English (Dept. of Education, Kerala), Member of the Expert Committee for Textbook Preparation, Master Trainer conducting training for teachers of English all over Kerala, and Mentor,(Online classes conducted by KITE Victers, Kerala government.). After superannuation, Mr. Mohanan joined the Department of English at MITS (AP).

HiscontributiontoELTIFisunfathomable. He was part of more than 200 English proficiency courses in and outside Kerala. His teacher training sessions were highly interactive and impressive. During the pandemic, when  ELTIF started various online  programmes, he functioned as an active member, and later  became  the coordinator of a workshop series, and he performed his duty well. He was also a Skill Development Executive (SDE) for ASAP.

Mr. Mohanan was 58. He is survived by his wife Smt. Sajitha (teacher) and two daughters, pursuing their studies in prestigious institutions. The whole family is talented in music.

Being an inspiring teacher, he will live long in the hearts of all his students. May his soul rest in peace.

**Sahadevan Minni**
Rtd. Headmaster, GVHSS Kadirur, Kannur Dt.
(Member, Executive Committee, ELTIF)

<u>**Parenting**</u>

# How to train children to be self-supportive?

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*In Teachers, We Trust – The Finnish Way to World-Class Schools* (2020) by Timothy D. Walker, Pasi Sahlberg and Andy Hargreaves is an excellent study on how to educate children the 'nature' way, as opposed to the 'nurture' way.

Before entering into the details of the much-discussed volume, let me survey, what is happening to Indian education. As a teacher trainer, I have been interacting with teachers and children of many schools, mainly the so-called self-financing private schools. Teachers are qualified and competent to some extent to teach. Children everywhere remain the same—inquisitive, interested in doing something or other (creative if opportunities are provided, otherwise, destructive, too). But, in classroom very little of the positive qualities are showcased. Very few classes showed me children at work, creative, positively thinking, imaginatively collaborating, especially in the higher classes. They look like as if they have been haunted by something dreadful. Yes, examinations—terminal, final, entrance exams. Parental pressure and school pressure together seem to drain the creative, imaginative potentials out of them.

Of course, celebrations and fests are there, according to the school calendar. Those are ritualistic in nature; competitions rule the roost. Parental interventions and the school's eagerness to get projected turn competitions—arts, sports or games—into an unhealthy affair. Altogether, the human face of education seems to have lost. Education has become a mechanized product.

It is against this Indian background, the Finnish education has to be projected. The title of the book mentioned at the outset of this write up itself tells what the book wants to convey—have trust in teachers. This trust is a triangular flow: the Finnish society trusts its teachers; in turn, the teachers trust children. The three stakeholders—society, teachers and children—flow in a sort of fine-tuned motion, without any friction at any point.

The book tells in detail how the society at large (of course, parental community in particular) and the administrative system together bestow trust on their teachers. As we know, the problem with trust is that it works only if it is bilateral. You are trusted means, you are bound to trust back. Yet another problem is that trust has a hidden agenda! If someone fully trusts you, that means you have more responsibility to keep the trust bestowed on you 'trustworthy'. In other words, the more you are trusted, the greater is your responsibility.

It is in this context, once again we are forced to look at our own system. The superior officers beginning with the senior most teacher in your subject at school (or, the so called HoD in colleges and above), the principal, the educational administrators above them –no one trusts you! You get memo after memo(oral or written) , repeated reminders, threats, memos of explanation, and finally 'show cause' notice for something silly! Since you cannot retaliate, you vent your anger on the children (for their small mistakes). Nobody trusts one another! Things happen routinely because of fear. Where is space for children to showcase their creativity, imagination and other potentials? Children's marks and grades satisfy parents, and percentage of pass in the public exams (full A+) for the school—these two together rule the roost!

There are quite a few interesting incidents in the book cited above. One or two are given below. One of the authors who had been teaching in the

USA got fed up with the system—the system dominated by threat and fear—luckily got a job in Finland. But he had to struggle hard to get along with the education system there, where everything he had to decide, design, develop materials for himself and learners, negotiate with colleagues, learners and parents, then teach, get feedback, assess, accredit, what else! On another occasion, the book presents a few strange scenes. It is a workshop session. The room is full of simple machines and tools including those work with electricity. Small children are engaged in carpentry, modelling, etc. –doing things on their own! No instructor, no supervisor. If any help needed, the negotiate among themselves. If things are beyond their control, they approach instructors, who will always be nearby, but engaged in their own business. "Instructor helps only those who help themselves"!

One more scene—this time in the street. Young children, in small groups are walking on their way back home. A few roam around the park, while some others wait at the zebra lines and cross the road when their turn comes!

Only such a society, a parental community that respects its children, that treasures its children can bestow utmost trust on its teachers!

**A few more titles on Finnish education, if you are interested:** Wish you a good educative-reading experience!

Timothy D. Walker: *Teach like Finland: 33 simple tasks for joyful classrooms*

Tröhler, Daniel: *The Nordic Education Model in Context*

Pasi Sahlberg: *Finnish Lessons: What Can the World Learn from Educational Change in Finland*

Katja Pantzar: *The Finnish Way*

Linda Darling-Hammond: *Best practices from Finland's high-performing school system: Empowered educators in Finland*

Dheeraj Mehrotra & Dr Dinesh Kamra: *Teach Like Finland*

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**Signposts for teachers**

**More on Finnish Education System**
**1. Yongjian Li & Fred Dervin : Introduction: Contextualizing Teacher Continuing Professional Development in the 'Miracle' of Finnish Education**

**Abstract**

The introduction explains why this book is important. It first introduces Finnish education in general and details what has made the Nordic country one of the top performers in global rankings. As a consequence of its success and the global interest, Finland has started 'selling' educational services around the world. This form of marketization is discussed and we explain that it often leads to 'white lies', ready-made uncritical discourses about Finnish education. We then propose three different continua of ideology, policy and pedagogy to approach Finnish education. We argue that the Continuing Professional Development of teachers in Finland—a topic that remains under-researched—can help us identify some of the myths about Finnish education and show that the Nordic country is not as performant as it is often presented. The end of the introduction provides details on the structure of the book.
**Source:** https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-95795-1_1

**2. Hannele Niemi: The Societal Factors Contributing to Education and Schooling in Finland**
**The Finnish Education: Equity and Quality as Its Main Objectives**

**Abstract**

The chapter introduces the reasons why teaching and learning have a high priority in Finnish society and how teacher education support teachers' role to work as high quality professionals. The chapter provides a brief review of the historical and cultural movements that have had an influence on respect for education and learning in Finnish society. The chapter also provides a description of the Finnish educational system with the comprehensive school as one of its important element. The major reasons for the success of Finnish education are a combination of political will, purposeful efforts to promote equity by the educational system, high quality teacher education, teachers' professional and moral responsibility, and society's trust in the educational actors.
**Source:** https://brill.com/display/book/edcoll/9789460918117/BP000003.xml

## 'Out of Syllabus'- Session 1. A Report

(A non-conventional teacher self-empowerment programme in blended mode)

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'Out of Syllabus', as the name suggests, is a non-conventional teacher self-empowerment programme in blended mode. I came to know that ELTIF conducted about 100 fortnightly online programmes during the two-year period of the pandemic. The were presented in several series, meant for teachers, researchers, students, and all users of English language. For the last one year ELTIF has been organizing programmes in regular face-to -face contact mode. Out of Syllabus, is proposed to be in the blended mode, meant for teachers, that lasts for a year. The programme is organized in association with a like-minded academic collective, English Odyssey, Thrissur.

The inaugural session of the programme was held on 18 March,2023 at the Institute of Advanced Study in Education (old B. Ed Training College). After registration, the session commenced at 10 am with a prayer. Around fifty teachers from various parts of the state attended the programme.Ms. Meenu Vincent, Core Team Member of English Odyssey welcomed the gathering.Mr.P. K. Sreekumar, Vice Chairman of English Odyssey presided over the meeting. Prof.P N Prakash, retired Principal of Government College, Thrissur inaugurated the programme. Dr. Benny offred felicitation and outlined the objectives and functioning of English Odyssey. In his inaugural address, Prof. Prakash emphasized the need of changing our perspectives on teaching English since its role in our society is getting more and more important. Even those who have no formal education are using hundreds of words in every day life, related to health and medicine, travel and transport, trade and commerce, science and technology, mass media and social media, and so on. These fast developments urge teachers of English to look for new ways of teaching. Another development related to English language education, especially the one students and parents are concerned with, is the opportunities that language provides for higher studied inland and abroad, and career prospects.

Mr. Sreekumar expressed happiness in the organization of which he is a part—English Odyssey—collaborating with ELTIF, which has been serving the needy especially those from the marginalized and disadvantaged sections of society.

Dr. Benny Jacob, Coordinator, 'Aksharayanam -English Odyssey'also was eager to collaborate with the like-minded prganization (ELTIF). He spoke on the need for teachers to change and to take up more responsibilities on their own without waiting for the so called authorities to issue orders on how and how much to teach. He congratulated the participants—all teachers— for taking part in a programme of professional development, on a holiday.

The technical session was led by Dr, P. Bhaskaran Nair, Former Professor of English, Hindustan University, Chennai. As the president of ELTIF he outlined the features of the programme 'Out of Syllabus'. It is a sarcastic reference to the conventional teacher training with a 'syllabus' as follows: The educational authorities issue orders to teachers to attend teacher training program es at some centres, and this is followed by a relieving order by the head of the school. Whether interested or not, the teacher reports at the centre. What the so-called resource persons know, they deliver the content. The teacher has no role to play; nor his genuine doubts or difficulties are addressed. The cascade model, as it has been termed in educational circles. Only top down. By the end of the one/two/ three day or one week 'training' the teacher is issued a certificate of

participation.TA, DA, lunch, refreshments etc. are assured apart from the salary meant for 'teaching' at school those days! Whether the participant's content knowledge or pedagogical awareness has raised or not, is nobody's concern. Who taught and what was taught to the class in the absence of the teacher who went to attend the course? Don't worry.

It is 'this syllabus' of the conventional teacher training course, that ELTIF humorously refers to. Should all the teachers be forced to attend training programmes? The speaker is of the opinion that (only) those teachers, who really want to improve their knowledge and skills are to be sent for professional development programmes. Otherwise, it is a colossal waste. Those who don't want to improve themselves, let them at least engage the classes back at school. And the head of the institution whose worry is exclusively about 'the class suffering'( when teachers go to attend courses), will be really happy. (But such heads never realize that the class really suffers when teachers continue teaching without updating themselves by attending trainingprogrammes.) For heads of institutions, there must be somebody in each class, keeping children silent!

It is against this comedy shows, ELTIF provides genuine alternatives of Continuous professional development (CPD) programmes. To be more precise, there must be platforms for teachers who are really desirous of improving their professional skills. If they are ready to improve so, by attending continuous professional development(CPD) programmes

outside their regular teaching time at schools, ELTIF provides with excellent programmes. No TA or DA, no relieving order or duty leave, no lunch or refreshments. "Out of syllabus".

Next, the speaker proceeded to outline the prerequisites essential for learning a second language other than textbooks and workbooks. He asserts, even the classrooms are insufficient. Languages cannot be learnt from textbooks and classrooms alone. To learn a language the society itself has to be the text and the context. 'Out of Syllabus' focusses on breaking the conventional barriers of time and space.

Dr. Nair expressed his views on how English language has to be transacted rather than how the language should be learnt from teaching. As the audience being addressed was exclusively teachers, it was quite relevant to lead them through the road less taken so as to enable the learners become confident speakers of this foreign language. Knowing English language, as it is the most popular means of communication around the world, is not just important but the need of the hour. The speaker affirmed that knowing the language will enhance the self- esteem of the learners and will never dissuade them pursuing their passions and exploring new prospects.

The talk ended at 3 p.m. and the speaker responded to the doubts and queries of the participants. The session concluded with a self-introduction of the participants at 4 pm. It was decided to meet again. It was a marriage of two true minds—English Odyssey and ELTIF.

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### Innovative Classroom Techniques

Reports of classroom activities which engaged the learners in your lesson are invited to the column "It worked in my class". Many teachers do experiment of various ways of teaching; some fail, while some others succeed. Report of success, when shared, reach others--thus, they reach many more classes. Please do share your experience. –Editor

### Book Reviews Invited

Reviews of books are invited to be published in the journal. Preference will be given to ELT practice books, which will be useful to teachers for enhancing their professional competence. Books, which are useful to students, and which follow current thinking in learning-teaching, especially those which promote self study approach, are also welcome. Reviews must be original, highlighting the pedagogic features of the book chosen. Length limit around 1000 words. The full details of book, including current price must be provided.

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# Translation: Intricacies and Nuances: A Report

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The Tamil Department of SDNB Vaishnav College for Women (SFS), in collaboration IQAC and Vintage Cross-Literary Awareness, organized a two-day workshop on *Translation:Intricacies and Nuances* on 14-15 February, 2023.

Day 1 Session 1
The workshop began with the inauguralsession in which welcome address by Dr. Kowsalya Devi, the HoD.This was followed by a speech by Dr. Muthuvelu. The speaker stated the importance of studying literature and made a comparison between two types of students-- those who study  subjects that are expected to be  as a part of their career or heir life and those who study life itself as their subject. He said those who study literature are expected to be the guiding beacons for the society. He pointed out that Tamil is not much preferred by the students due to the perception that they do not get employed. But he opposed this by enumerating the job opportunities available which are unknown to many.

The speaker drew exotic references and illustrations from Tamil literature to relate to the topic of discussion and the dexterity of his speech made the audience astounded including those who were not having the Tamil literature background. He humorously stated that Tamil is a language suitable for lovers and lovers have been  writing letters in their beloved Language -Tamil.

The speaker traced the etymological origin, development, equivalent and usage of the term 'translation' from the four languages namelyEnglish, Latin, Sanskrit and Tamil with examples. The English term 'translation' is derived from the latin word'transducere'; 'Trans' means'across' and'ducere' means 'to lead'.  He gave the Sanskrit equivalent of the term 'translation' - 'anuvadah' that  means closely following or similar to the original. He gave the examples of 'anuragam' from music and refers to another name of the character Lakshmana from the Ramayana. He referred to 'Tholkappiam'about the mention of the term 'translation'as it is called 'Vazhinool'(abridged version) tracing the 'moolanool' (original version). He compared that the translation has to be close with the original similar to the shadow of a flying bird. He raised a thought-provoking question, 'Is translation science or art?' He drew the difference between the two clearly, by using an analogy of approaching and describing a thing by a science and an art student. A science student states what he sees whereas an art student states what he experiences upon seeing things, hence categorized 'translation as an art'.

The speaker traced the origin of the word ' translation' He identified the role of a language as mere an instrument in the process of translation and related this with a simple analogy that an idly pot can be used for baking a cake and an oven can be used for making idly. But it is the skill of the translator involved in bringing the authentic taste of idly and the flavor of cake and not the instrument with which it is made.

Hehighlighted theimportance of transferring the cultural aspects in translation. He labelled the translators as messengers of culture by making a comparison of the characters Kannagi and Portia for their eloquence and oratory in putting forth their cases. He illustrated the syntax of the target and source language by giving authentic examples from newspapersfor translation. He emphasized upon developing the practicing skill in source language and

proficiency in target language. He pointed out the problems related to bilingualism and multilingualism in the present context and narrated the story of Saduvan who was about to be a feast for cannibals, but  became their guest as he spoke their language.

The speaker proceeded to reveal some unknown facts about Bharathiyar --that he was a multilingual and had written many English articles including a satire named ' A fox with a golden tail'. The speaker himself a multilingual, shared his experience of learning Telugu, Hindi, and Malayalam and inspired the audience for learning many languages. He traced the etymology of the word 'paper' as it was derived from 'biprus' which was a type of grass grown along the river Nile and was used in the manufacturing of paper. On the other hand, the Tamil term 'kagitam' was derived from the Hindi word 'kakaj'. He told the interesting stories behind the formation of translated words. The speaker related how the thinking skill of man is reflected in translation in terms of coining  words by giving analogies. The transportation vehicle 'bullock cart' in Tamil is known as ' mattuvandi' and got its name associating with the action of pulling by the animal cow. In the same way the term 'bicycle' derived its Tamil name ' mithivandi' as it is moved by the act of pressing and pedaling. He pointed out how the term 'civilsurgeon' was used by the British for the surgeons who treat militaryand other officials rather than the general public. The term is still in use without getting rid of the prefix 'civil' though at present civil surgeons treat all people. On the whole, the speech was highly eloquent and engaging.

 Session 2

Dr. Rajeshwari, was the speaker of the afternoon session. She began her speech by asserting her strong passion for translation. Whatever she was reading she spontaneously took the role of a translator and always thought in terms of translation. She was passionately doing a lot of translations and uploaded them in archives. com so that everyone involved in the pursuit of knowledge will be benefitted and made her knowledge open-access. She shared her experience of learning Japanese and greeted the audience in Japanese. She made a comparison of the vocabulary of different languages such as Hebrew, Greek and Tamil and stated that Tamillanguage is rich in vocabulary.

She highlighted the fact that translation is a creative process happening through transcreation, She stated the necessary three components of translation are Grammatical analysis, transparency, and restructuring. Only when a translation undergoes these three, the reader of receptor language gets the same joy as that of the reader of source language received. She enumerated a plethora of job opportunities available in the field of translation in print, electronic media and film industries. She suggested the translation of legislatures, verdicts and speeches like 'Man ki bath', reportsand interviews. She discussed the numerous opportunities in the television and film industries for translators. She suggested that students can try script writing, lyrics writing and subtitle writing by knowing the basic ethics of translation. She advised the students to identify the areas that may be interesting to the readers and can translate articles related to them. Otherwise, they can look for universal themes like science and technology, numerology, astrology and astronomy. She also suggested translating short literary pieces that are relevant to the present age, short stories, poems to develop the skill of translation.

Day 2  Session 1

The second day began with Dr. Rajeshwari's speechwhich was highly insightful and informative. She pointed out the difference in the sounds of Tamil speech and how they are different in written form. And how to make out such differences in the translation without affecting the original meaning in the target language. She highlighted the status of Tamil as a classical language tracing the age of Tamil language as 16,000 years as revealed from inscriptions. She explained the meaning of 'transliteration' with examples. She differentiated the terms source language

and target language. She elaborated upon the nuances of translation. The translators should do grammatical analysis and transference in the source language and the restructuring in the target language. She also emphasized upon the importance of bringing cultural aspects in translation. She pointed out the differences of Indo-European languages and Dravidian languages by stating that Dravidian languages do not have prefixes as Indo-European languages have. The example given by her was ' non-fiction' which if translated becomes 'alpunaivu' which is wrong as the correct one is 'punaivu allatha ilakkiyam'. She discussed the grammatical analysis in detail by teaching tenses with examples forteaching the language structure of both the source language and target language. She explained the assimilation in the process of translation. She gave illustrations from 'Kurunthogai' for the audience to translate. She gave examples of active voice and passive voice in both source and target languages. When the audience asked for any suggestion of machine translators, she gave a few translator apps namely 'Vaani' and 'Pitchaikkari'. The speaker recommended the courses on Layout, Design, DTP and Photoshop for the students to get into the field of translation.

Session 2

Dr. Muthuvelu's was the final  session that began with a quote from Tamil poetess Avvaiyar that it is very rare to see good people. He traced the evolution of translation by giving the following four types of translation: Transliteration, Translation, Transcreation and Adaptation. Having explained these types, the speaker emphasized upon the point that the translators needs to identify the genre, receiving audience and content for selecting a type which is suitable for translation. While translating the vocabulary, the translators have to verify whether the words are found in colloquial expression or written form and select the words for translation accordingly. Tamil language has to create a thesaurus of words and the process of word formation needs to be intensified. He identified the unique nature of Tamil language as forming maximum words with minimal letters. He related how scientific articles, documents of law and general works and literary works have to be approached for translation. He discussed the difficulties of translation by giving numerous examples from literature and non-literature. He stated that creating a piece of writing is easier whereas co-creating a piece for a translator is very difficult. The translators have to transition themselves to that of creators for effective translation.

While answering the queries of the audience, he highlighted the problems of machine translation with examples as they are devoid of cultural aspects and insisted upon the need of human interference. He gave a beautiful analogy for the development of Tamil language as it was on the top of a hard mountain and how the hard rocks got shattered, falling into the falls and with a long travel in river becomes shiny, smooth pebble. His speech was completely a transformative one similar to the above comparison of the development of Tamil language and transformed the audience.

The Valedictory Speech was given by Mr. Balasubramanian a veteran in the field of translation whose short speech with examples from his own translation ' Karithundu' and ' En paladaikkatiai thiridiyathu yaar?' revealed his long past, passionate, 30 years Secretariat journey as translator  was experienced by the audience as if it was  presented  like a documentary.

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### ELTIF Teaching–Learning Materials

ELTIF is planning to develop a 'Material Bank for Rural and Disadvantaged Learners'. Teachers and researchers, who are willing to share their teaching-learning materials (print and electronic) are requested to mail them to *eltifjournaleditor@gmail.com*. They will be first published in the Journal, and later compiled as a handbook for teachers with the name and details of the contributors. – Editor

# The ELTIF Communicative English Workshop at GHSS Azhikode, Kannur: A Report

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In today's fast-changing world of globalization, possessing remarkable communication skills is pivotal for career prospects and the ability to speak good English opens the door to innumerable opportunities for enrolling in a foreign university, acquiring a job, and travelling around the world etc. To become an excellent English speaker, one has to go beyond the structural understanding of the language and acquire other skill sets like active listening, using the appropriate words, tonality, emotional intelligence, empathy and much more. These skills should be developed early on in school.

In the context of English language learning, it is often a daunting task for non-native learners as they are crippled by the fear of making mistakes. A language trainer should uproot this fear and create a positive environment for the students. The teacher should lead the learner to a question, one that is of utmost importance 'Why do you want to learn English?'. Answering this question helps learners to identify their needs and the greater purpose of learning the language.

Identifying one's purpose for learning the language kindles curiosity and eagerness for learning. It is more often seen that interactive sessions are more productive when compared to the stage on the stage approach. A series of such interactive sessions, was conducted by The English Language Teachers' Interaction Forum (ELTIF) at Govt. HS School, Azhikode in January 2023. ELTIF works with the spirit to help students and teachers understand their purpose for learning and teaching the English language.

The Communicative English workshop aimed to help learners shed their inhibition of speaking English and make them confident. The three-day workshop was conducted on 11th, 12th and 27th. January. The workshop was inaugurated by Sri PV Vasudevan Nambudiri (Academic Coordinator of ELTIF). Smt. Saraswathi, the Headmistress chaired the sessions, and dr. P. Bhaskaran Nair briefly enlightened the learners on the relevance of English This was followed by an interactive session by Dr P Bhaskaran Nair. The session was based on three short video clippings. The short session was attended by a few parents too, who realized the simple ways through which any parent with school education was able to provide support for children at home using such interesting, humorous video clippings. Later Sri. Valsan Panoli, Sri. Vijayan Karayi, engaged the sessions. Both of them used a lot of interesting materials, and got the whole class engaged in interaction.

A parallel session was arranged for parents in which Dr. Bhaskaran Nair gave guidance on how to take care of children's education in general, and English language skills in particular at home.

The sessions were handled in the following days by Mr. PVV Nambudiri, Mr. P. Mohahan, Mr. Sahadevan Minni, Mr. Valsan Panoli and Mr. Vijayan Karayi—all retired teachers, currently working as resource persons of ELTIF. The workshops included many engaging activities like role-playing, describing a picture, hide-and-seek puzzles and the like. In the role-playing activity, the students delivered dialogues in English. In the hide-and-seek game, the instructor, Mr Valsan Panoli displayed a chart with several sentences, and then asked various questions to the learners and the answers to the puzzle were hidden in the sentences. In the picture activity, an image of a kid's park was shown and the students were asked to describe

the scene.

Day two of the workshop was more energetic and exciting than the first day, since the tutors were able to wipe out inhibition and fear from the children's minds In the visualization and association activity, Mr Sahadevan divided the students into two groups. He asked the members of Group A to draw a house, and then asked a member from Group B to modify the picture by drawing another object that is closely associated with the house. The second team drew a tree. The instructor awarded points to each team, and the activity continued. Once the picture was completed, he asked the learners to name all the objects on the board.

The instructor Mr Mohanan made the students listen to an English song and asked them to carefully pay attention to the lyrics and asked them to add new lines on their own. It was followed by the picture puzzle, where he displayed two pictures on the screen and asked the learners to frame a word out of them. For instance, he showed a picture of a pan and a cake and asked learners to form a word out of it. This was a fun activity that helped learners enhance their vocabulary.

Sri. Vasudevan conducted an interesting activity wherein he used a scarf and wrote three sentences on the board: 'I can use,' 'I am going to use,' and 'I am able to use.' He asked learners to think of creative ways they could use the scarf and frame a sentence using the expressions given on the board. This activity helped learners think outside the box and practice forming sentences.

In the next activity, Vasudevan sir took the students to the courtyard and made them stand in a circle. He instructed them to jump when he said "an apple," retrace their step when he said "pineapple," and go around in a circle when he said "orange." This activity helped them develop their listening skills. He also asked learners to tell the plural forms of the objects seen on the ground. For instance, he asked them the plural form of the word tree, flower etc.

A lot of self-prepared materials were used by Sri. Vijayan Karayi, that attracted children and kept them engaged for a long time without getting bored.

All the activities designed by the resource persons were engaging and interactive, enabling the learners to improve their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. The role-playing activity was relatable and helped learners to understand how to use English in various day-to-day life scenarios. The vocabulary games focused on teaching them words that were useful and new. The activities were not only interesting but also graded according to their cognitive level.

The workshop gave ample opportunity for the learners to understand the usage and nuances of the language. The listening games, not only helped the students to develop their listening skills but also made them understand that a simple leisure activity like listening to an English song is in fact a learning tool. The various games made learning the language a pleasurable activity. This indeed helped learners to discard their fear of making mistakes. The students were taken outside the classroom and the instructor made use of examples from the environment and helped learners understand that learning is neither confined to the classroom nor within the margins of a textbook.

In conclusion, the workshop gave students a new perspective on learning English and also opened new avenues for the teacher to travel and explore the possibilities of teaching English unconventionally.

# Saturdays were festive days at Kavumbhagam South UP School: A report of the ELTIF - supported 'English Planet @ KSUP' Programme

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Kavumbhagam South Upper Primary School, one of the oldest in Thalssery Municiplity organized an ELTIF Communicative English programme sometime in the beginning of the academic year 2022-23.

Later that year, the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) came forward with a long-term project for promoting the children's communication skills. It has to be mentioned in this context, that Thalassery still keeps a special interest in English language  and the culture that came with the language. Thalassery was the head quarters of the erstwhile British Malabar District, a port town from where spices in bulk, that came from the neighbouring mountain-district, Wayanad were shipped to Britain. The old, huge, til -roofed  warehouses (known in Malayalam as pandikasala, which later was compressed as pandyala) are still intact on the sea shore. Thanks to the PTA which is keen on keeping that language tradition, for good.

It was first s decided to have weekend ELTIF programme for about ten weeks, but on seeing the children's enthusiasm, the programme went on for a few more weeks. The programme was inaugurated on 1July 20022 by Dr. P. Bhaskaran Nair, president of ELTIF. Smt. EM Ragini, the headmistress presided over the function; Sri. Dhanyesh, ( Teacher  ), Sri. P. Anil Kumar ( President,  PTA), Sri. Vijyan Karayi, Sri. K. Pavithran, Sri. Valsan Panoli (all ELIT resource persons) offered felicitations. Smt. Dinasree (English teacher & the coordinator of the school English club) proposed vote of thanks. About 75 students of class 5 to 7 registered for the proficiency programme.  Regular session followed the inauguration.

A parallel session was arranged for the parents, as ELTIF usually insists on. Most of the parents had completed their school education; quite a few were employed. But, the problem is that though they too possess basic English, nobody dares to put their English to use. That is why ELTIF has been organizing parental awareness programmes along with proficiency courses for students.  At the session, Dr. Bhaskaran Nair urged parents, especially young mothers to continue their formal education from where they had stopped, through the State Open School and the distance education programmes of universities. A few expressed their willingness; ELTIF offered support. Parents were briefed on the important role they have to play in taking care of the English language proficiency of their children at home.

Regular classes followed on subsequent Saturdays, except those days when the government announced holidays for children because of heavy rain and wind.

Regular feedback-- highly encouraging— reached the school from children and parents, since ELTIF programmes for children always insisted on getting children 'functioning' in English, not learning English. Varieties of activities by experienced resource persons (most of them retired teachers) kept the children engaged in communication. Stories, poems, drama, mono-act, short speeches, rhymes, puzzles, riddles, quiz etc. were some of the language generating activities.

The resource persons who engaged the sessions on various days were Sri. Hareendran PP, Sri. Pavithran K, Sri. Valsan Panoli, Sri. Vijayan Karayi, Sri Gangadharan , Sri. K. Suresh, Sri. Hiran Narayan, and Sri Arun.

The programme that started in July came to and on 11 Nov. 2022. This is one of the longest of ELTIF sessions. We thank the Management, Headmistress, teachers, and the PTA of the school for giving us an opportunity to serve the needy. ELTIF heartily congratulates all the children who participated in the programme and their parents for inspiring them.

It works in my classroom

# "No man is an island…"
## Establishing connections among things of every day life

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In the last issue of the Journal (XIII.4),   a task was illustrated that was expected to promote a cluster of skills—language and life skills—through narrating the autobiography of ordinary things of day to day life and things that usually go neglected. Here is a sequel task, again meant for the primary and secondary level.

Children in the class have already gone out and collected a few things which are not usually noticed or seriously viewed, such as pebbles, grovel, sand, pieces of dried twigs, leaves, buds, flowers, and so on. Once they have narrated briefly the autobiography of the thing they have collected (as outlined in the last issue of the Journal), this task proceeds to establish connection between or among the things they have collected. Children go round and find out which thing in others' possession matches with the one in their hand.

For example, Student A goes round with a handful of sand in her hand and finds Student B has a pinch of cement with him—cement and sand go together, and they can make something new out of the two, with the additional help of something else (here, water). Likewise, Student C with a piece of granite notices Student D with a handful of grovel; together they can make a small installation, in children's own way. Similarly, dry grass and twigs together make a roof for a humble hut; a small piece of flooring tile, a handful of sand and a pinch of cement may make a floor; a few twigs and leaves may make a nest for a bird; an empty match box and four lids of soda bottled may make a toy car.

How does language get generated in these contexts? In their mutual exchanges, they must be encouraged to use as much English as possible. "I have a bottle of water; you have a bowl of sand. Together, shall we make a dam? "What do you have? Show me. A piece of chalk? Fine. I have a sheet of cardboard. Let's draw a picture: A skull with a pair of crossed bones. We'll write DANGER below it and stick it below the main switch on the verandah, outside the office room."

" I've a piece of white ribbon with me. Who has a piece of saffron and green ribbons? We can stich a national flag."

" Does any one have flowers? I have a handful with me. Come, let's make a small flower carpet."

"I've got a one metre long nylon rope; I'm going to make a clothesline by tying its both ends to these branches. Who would like to keep the washed handkerchief for drying?"

A few of these sentence patterns can be written on the board, so that children can use them to begin with their interaction. Later, after meaningful repletion, in real contexts, these patterns are likely to get internalized.

Please remember, this is not the age-old pattern practice and drill. Children are free to choose the frame according to their needs. Secondly, they are negotiating in meaningful situations. For example, the one who has collected a pinch of cement is looking for someone who has a handful of sand, so that they can build a dam or a wall, by adding a little water, too.

Besides language skills, this task promotes cognitive skills such as match making and critical thinking. A bud and a dry leaf, apparently may not go together; but the teacher hints at a kinship between them—the dry leaf as the old grandma of the bud. For a long time, the grandma had been cooking food for the entire family, the bud included.

To the children: Nothing exists in isolation; everything is connected with something else, in one or other ways. So are human beings, too.

**Signposts for teachers**

**Priti Shah: Top Current Trends in Teaching ESL in 2023 (Edited version)**

1. Change the Goal of Teaching English
   We have to focus on English as a means of communication instead of becoming a native speaker of English.
2. Early Start in Teaching English
   We should start teaching English in earlier grades like K.G. Because, in earlier grades, students can learn fast.
3. Change in Teaching Culture
   There is less focus on teaching the cultures of English. Both the local or international culture dominates in teaching English classes.
4. Changing View of English Teacher
   It has been noticed that their teaching and linguistics determine teachers' effectiveness rather than being a native speaker of English.
5. Change in Teaching Content and Text Design
   Teachers use a range of descriptive texts in the classrooms. The use of the English language, as well as the use of various accents in texts or listening activities, encourages English learning.
6. E-Learning
   E-books should be introduced for learning because this is a digital era. Everyone is having a smartphone and a tablet.
7. Strategic Teaching and Learning
   Teaching in English language classes focuses on language content, outcomes, and learning activities. There should be significant student teachers' interactions outside and inside the classrooms.
8. Teachers as Life-Long Learners
   Now, these days teachers are involved in getting a lot of training because everything keeps on changing. To be employable and remain competitive, teachers are involved in technical training.
9. Teaching Through Conversations and Role-Play
   A lot of changes have to be made in the teaching method. As teaching is student-centric, so involvement of the students is required.
10. Teaching Through Summarizing and Evaluation
    If a teacher is continuously teaching in the class without asking questions and without students' involvement, it creates monotony in the class. So, student participation is significant
11. Teaching with a Sense of Humour
    Teachers should teach in the class with a sense of humour. They should create a friendly atmosphere in the class. Students always feel comfortable when the teacher is friendly in the class
12. Teaching Language Through Literature
    Most of the students are good at technical English, but they are not in general English. Learning Language through literature, reviews, dictionary, discussions, and analysis helps the students to improve their communication skills.
13. Teaching Through Games
    Teaching through games is one of the best methods to teach students. Teachers should include games like puzzles, vocabulary games, and jumbled words.
14. Teaching Grammar through Inductive Method
    In the inductive method, the examples are given first, and then the rules are described.
15. Blended Learning
    As now these days, teaching methods have been changing fast, the teachers use modern technologies for teaching. Online teaching is purely technical, blended with teaching and information.
16. Mobile Learning
    Now, these days mobile app or mobile-friendly version is more accessible by the people or students.
    Wordable , Essential English ., Trio Pro English Website and Mobile Apps
17. Gamification
    Certain learning apps use games to teach LearnMatch, which uses training sessions, leagues, friendly matches to make vocabulary learn.
    Get set! Phonics uses songs, games, and rhymes to develop awareness in children.
    These learning apps also helps in teaching ESL English as a secondary language.
18. Embodied Learning
    Embodied learning is based on the idea that learning involves using mind and body collaboration. It is not based on just remembering. Learners should be physically, socially, and emotionally engaged.
19. Inquiry-Based Learning
    Inquiry-based learning means learning in a complex world. Perspectives use real-life stories to motivate children.
20. English as a Lingua France
    When the concept of Lingua Franca was discussed, many teachers, writers, and trainers have objections. It was controversial.
21. Multiliteracies and Trans-Languaging
    English is considered as a common language for communication all around the world.
    But, the teachers are encouraging the students to use their communication languages. This requires social skills.
22. Supporting Learners of Specific Needs
    Learning English: English for Health and social care workers provides knowledge of policies and procedures in the medical industry.

Source: https://www.henryharvin.com/