

Journal of English Language Teachers' Interaction Forum

Volume XIV.2. (April - June 2023) ISSN 2230-7710

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From the Editor's Desk

Parental Intervention in the English Curriculum at the Primary Level

After taking the initiative of teacher intervention in the English curricula of schools, way back in the beginning of this century, and trying out various means of putting it into practice for the last two decades, ELTIF launched programmes for parents, as well—Parental Awareness Programmes. Those programmes were initially meant for making them aware of creating an atmosphere at home, conducive to learning in general, and learning English in particular. For example, small scale book exhibitions were organized in schools as a part of the short term courses in Communicative English. Parents were encouraged to buy story books, and subscribe to children's magazines, and so on.

As a second phase of the parental awareness programme, ELTIF is launching Curricular Intervention Programmes for parents, in which they are expected to directly supplement classroom learning. The basic assumption behind this programme is that almost all parents, especially mothers, of the primary school children in Kerala have completed their secondary schooling; a few had their higher secondary education too. Graduates and postgraduates too are there among parents. Some of the parents may be working in the public or private sectors, as well. Secondly, though they have the basics of English, very few of them converse in English in public or even in close circles. Thirdly, these parents too are desirous of interacting with non-Malayali speakers when they encounter them in their own native place as well as when they move out of Kerala. The main reason behind this desire is the fact that they know well that sooner or later, their children will be moving out of Kerala for higher studies; and later they will be getting employed in the major cities in India or abroad. Going by the current social practice in Kerala, the middle-aged and aged parents (including retired hands) are supposed to go and stay with their children, mainly taking care

of the grandchildren. These are the basic assumptions that prompted ELTIF to get parents involved in the teaching learning process of English—they will be 'teaching' their children, and as a result, they too will be 'learning' English, the real life way.

The main features of this intervention programme are as follows.

- (1) Parents will be made aware of the potentials of English language as 'the language of opportunities'.
- (2) Facts related to their children's inadequate mastery over English will be pointed out.
- (3) They will be convinced of the fact that learning a language does not need a classroom or a teacher (may be necessary in the case of subjects like maths and science). Only a partner is needed. Anyone who can communicate in that language is the 'teacher'.
- (4) The need of home support will be emphatically stressed.
- (5) Parents and children will be encouraged to communicate in English as and when possible.
- (6) Children, along with parents will be encouraged to watch TV programmes in English.
- (7) There will be periodic interaction between the resource persons of ELTIF and parents—minimum once a month directly, and one hour online, too.
- (8) Support materials—print, audio, video—will be provided.
- (9) *The potentials of smart phones will be made use of, optimally.
- (10) Parental awareness programmes will be partly made as woman empowerment programmes as well, with the support of social workers, organizations and institutions.

Mother-child bond is the psychological foundation on which this intervention approach has been based. Those moments in which a child is exclusively in the company of her mother, with no one else to disturb their solitude, the child starts constructing a world exclusively for the two; naturally the mother wilfully accepts that close-knit construction, follows the restrictions and freedom allowed to her for the smooth functioning of that two-member world. That world may be that of fantasy, myth or reality; anyway, it is their own world. It may assume numerous shapes and environment; it may be a replica of the classroom in which she is the teacher and the

mother is the learner; it may be a clinic in which she is the physician and the mother, a patient; it may be a story telling session in which both of them are characters. It is into this world, ELTIF is trying to experiment with English by making it the medium of communication for a few minutes or more. It is an experiment with osmosis, I would like to call it a cultural osmosis—a natural flow, that helps the living organism(s) sustain, even without their conscious knowledge of that flow.

P. Bhaskaran Nair
(Editor)

*About a decade before the outbreak of Covid19, ELTIF had conducted workshops for village women (mainly mothers of school children), on the productive and effective use of the smart phone in education. ELTIF remains indebted to the Department of English, Payyanur College for its support in this regard.)

Signpost for parents and teachers

How parents can support English language learning

With support from both teachers and parents, children have more chances to use and improve their language.

Can I support my child if I don't speak English well?

Yes! You can help your child to gain in confidence and feel more motivated by giving them lots of praise and opportunities to practise English. It's easier for children to learn when they get encouragement at home. You could also all learn some English together. If you are enthusiastic about learning the language, they will be too.

How can we practise English at home?

- **Learn little and often:** regular practice really helps children to learn a language. Keep activities short and fun (for younger learners 3–10 minutes). However, if your child is enjoying working on their own, let them control their own activity times.
- **Build confidence:** children are sometimes afraid of making mistakes in front of their classmates. They often feel more comfortable trying things out with their parents. Praise them to create a sense of success and encourage them when they take 'risks'.
- **Focus on your child's interests:** teachers prepare lessons that they hope will interest the whole class, whereas you can really focus on your child's interests. Choose materials together that your child will enjoy the most, whether dinosaurs or dancing!

How involved should parents be with their child's English language learning?

There is a difference between 'instruction' and 'education'.

- Instruction is about telling a child what to do and how to do it.
- Education is about guiding a child to their full potential as they become more independent.

Parents play a vital role by giving children the courage and confidence to do their work, providing encouragement and helping them develop study skills.

Homework tip: If your child gets stuck, don't rush in with the solution. Sometimes a child just needs a minute by themselves to work through the problem. If they are still stuck, discuss how they could find out more. For example, they could use a dictionary, glossary, past paper example answers or internet research.

(Contd. on p.7)

Unpacking the Mystery of Researching: 'You can do it' Codes for Teachers

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***Thought seed**

Suppose you are given a coupon of Rs 2600/- to be spent in a supermarket. How would you want to spend it? What steps will you take? What items will you choose to buy? What rationales will you adopt in choosing the items you want to buy using this coupon? Supposing the coupon restricts you from buying certain items like vegetables, what would you do? Would you choose to buy items that fall under the category of 'buy-one-get-one-free'? Why/Why not? With a wide variety of choices in front of you and with a restriction of Rs 2600/- what are the options available to you? Would you put in a little more money from your purse and buy more than the coupon's worth of materials? Why/Why not?

Isn't life all about choices and rationalising them? choices all the time? There are usually some parameters that are applied in accordance with time, place and purpose. What do you think? There might also be someone who would just 'grab' something that lies close by. Why do people do that? Think deeply. How are choices generally made when an array is available?

All of us as teachers are actually researchers, notably action researchers who are perpetually required to 'solve' problems on our toes, that appear in front of us in our classrooms on an everyday basis. Unfortunately, we are not formally taught how to research or use research for professional development and we therefore don't value these experiences of ours in the language classroom. The primary reason for this can be traced to the nature of our educational

degrees.

The nature of research in English language education and literature is very different from each other. Most of our undergraduate and postgraduate degrees are in literature, but we are expected to teach English as a language, research, and report it for professional development. More importantly, many of our teacher education courses do not teach us how to do this and we rarely have degrees in the field of English Language Education.

This column aims to help such teachers who want to research the English language classroom but are scared, find it too complicated and even cumbersome or feel confused about the what and the how of research in English Language Education. Research in literature implies that you just have to select an author, identify the 'texts' poems, novels, plays etc. and analyse them thematically or stylistically. This is not possible in ELE. We do have to analyse texts, but the texts have to come from our classrooms.

At another level, many of us are so overworked that even if we are willing to read up in the area, and learn how to research the language classroom, the books on research methods are not really user friendly; they confuse us more, and at the same time, often burden us with loads of unusable information. What I plan to do in this column is to put forward the possibility of 'you can do it' codes. These 'codes' will help us slice away years or months from our research time that many people take while walking the whole Royal Highway. In

*A thought seed is just that: a seed that is planted in the mind of the reader, left to grow, and fruit when it will. Thought seeds, unlike tasks, which are often pedagogic, are anthrogonic, (meant for adults) and open ended; they may present a problem, but there need not be a clear solution that has to be found. This notion of thought seeds has been used in the field of language education by Dr. Shree Deepa, who was inspired by the idea of dropping seed balls in a forest for them to germinate at will. (Deepa, S. 2022. Thought seeds in Anthrogonic Learning Contexts. Journal of Indian Education. Vol.48, Issue No.2. (forthcoming).

this issue, I present three cheat codes for all of you to use and gain from.

You can do it code 1 : I am the best researcher because I have easy data!

Many of us feel that we are NOT the best researchers and often feel that someone else we know is way better than us. This is not true. As practising teachers, we need to understand that every day is an opportunity to do research and that a couple of our own classes, carefully documented, with a clear purpose, is enough for us to use as data. Very often, we feel that only a PhD scholar can do research as s/he has a supervisor, and is affiliated to a university; as such, they are better than us, as practising teachers, they have better insights and have access to research articles etc. The truth is that such research students have to struggle and spend hours and days contacting teachers and getting ethical permission to get into a class like yours, to just observe what you do. Very often, they will want to interview you as a teacher to collect data for their research. Many a time, such research students do not get permission from either the school or the host institution for various reasons and might have to place multiple requests. This means you and I are sitting on a goldmine of data that will never run out; we just need to know how to use it as a resource without any fear. The mystery of the search for data leads royally to our own students and our own classrooms that we are teaching in every day. Yes! Teaching is our top most priority, but if we are able to document certain things properly, we can easily write them up in the form of a research paper and get articles published. That will be a valuable contribution to our discipline; we can also use it for our professional development. Our students' responses, ours and their feedback, their compositions and examination or test paper answer sheets, their questions while we teach, our own teacher's diary, our classroom and homework tasks and the student responses, can all be treated as research data to write up a paper. Just imagine the volume of data that we are sitting on!

Code 2: My area of interest is my research area.

Very often many teachers struggle to find a 'research area'. If you approach a published person or your HoD or a journal, they will ask you about your research area. This could create confusion in us, where we may think that one research area is better than another by placing an artificial hierarchy of these areas. We must understand that as a cheat code, there is no such hierarchy in research in the Humanities; the areas that we are interested in, whether writing, reading comprehension, or vocabulary development become our research areas. In other words when we teach or even as students we would have been drawn to a particular area that would have bothered us. Certain areas would have raised a number of questions in us: why is it like this? why not like that? What can I do to better these situations, etc., that are related to the classroom? Such casual questions, when we attempt to answer them in our own ways, either through guesswork or through experiments to provide possible answers, become the research areas that we could be interested in. There is no rule that we need to pinpoint and focus on only one research area, but it would be a good idea to stay with that one narrowed down area, and finish writing a paper or two or more in that specific area before we switch areas. This way, you may even become an expert in that area. If you have a problem narrowing down and pinpointing to one specific area, you could just reach out to a senior colleague or anyone else that you idolise, to help you finetune your research area. Research is adding something new to the discipline either through a proof of hypothesis (guessing the probable) or through re-searching using a different lens and rationalising your findings. Now, having said that, I would like to state that although we are sitting on a goldmine of data, not every description of a task/activity can become research. For our tasks and student responses to be used as data, we must be able to rationalise our choices and actions; we also need to narrow down our limits, select something manageable and then stay within the limits that we set for ourselves. That is when it will become a researchable manageable area.

As in the thought seed, the coupon we get is the opportunity and also the limit that all of us have to access different kinds of data from the classroom; do we mindlessly spend it on a whim or carefully try to rationalise the spend so that we derive maximum benefit from the coupon? This choice of rationalisation lies with us, but it requires careful planning and execution using researching and writing conventions.

The areas that bother us most, the areas that piques our interest and the areas that seem plausible to us become our research areas that eventually get converted into specific research topics or titles. There are no shortcuts to this because unless it interests us, we cannot do justice to the area/topic/title of our research. Careful thriftiness and a little bit of logic that we use in the case of the coupon in the supermarket is the same logic that we use in selecting our research areas based on our unique tastes and needs. This is what makes for TRUE research for it enables us to add our unique flavour to existing research. Who can do it better than us?

As teachers, very often, we try something out in class; this could be an extra activity to keep a few bright students occupied, or it could be a different way of teaching something to help students come to grips with what we are teaching. Every one of these activities need not become the focus of a research topic, for we may not be interested in researching all aspects of language teaching. One teacher may be interested in creating new tasks/activities, while another may be interested in trying out a new method. A third may be interested in focusing on the use of technology, and a fourth in formative assessment practices. The question that will come to mind here is, "How do I decide what to focus on in my research?"

This is not difficult at all. As a budding researcher, you just need to think of the areas available in language education that interest you, one or more of the skills and sub-skills of language, grammar or vocabulary, the use of technology, investigation of student attitudes, etc., anything that occurs to you as researchable. Put all of these on a huge shelf. You again have

to choose within limits that could be time and amount of data, just like the limit on the coupon. Which of these items, or rather research areas would you choose to buy and why? Go back to the thought seed above to help you understand better.

When we narrow down and need to pinpoint an area, it is best to choose the area that disturbs or bothers us the most. You might ask, why is this important? Such a choice is crucial, particularly if you are selecting an area for your doctoral thesis. Remember that you have to live, sleep, and eat with this topic till it is done. If you lose interest halfway through because you find it boring, it will be like living out a love affair that is over! You may have been told to read, find research gaps in the literature and select your area! I disagree completely with this. It is not only boring but an arduous task. We will land up ploughing through tons of articles in the area we have chosen, read them and find that in the end, we are totally confused. We would also have lost, either conveniently, or unfortunately, a couple of months and sometimes, even years. Today, with a range of search engines, locating and downloading a range of articles in the area concerned is the easiest of tasks. But locating a research gap in that voluminous literature is the toughest one, what I would describe as both well nigh impossible and also futile!

It is always better to find something that bothers you: if it is something small, write an article. If significant, write a thesis, do a post-doc or apply for a project. Once you know it is researchable, you can find the arguments in the literature to support your arguments, findings, etc. At the same time, such 'freedom' does not mean that you try out a few activities in class to teach vocabulary or grammar or listening; list them and state that it is research.

Code 3: What is not research?

Very often, as research students and teachers, we download stuff from the net, paraphrase and write up a couple of paragraphs and even pages on that particular topic and then submit them as research articles or assume that it can be featured as a chapter in a thesis. Even with a

reasonable exercise of reading up many articles in our research area, if we just attempt to paraphrase the articles, that will not lead to such writing being accepted by reviewers (in the case of journal articles) and examiners (in the case of a doctoral thesis) as a good writing up of our research! To add to this conundrum, we often also feel that a good description of the activities that we have used in our classes, the ones that have worked for us without any evidence of how they worked, what students felt about the tasks, is sufficient as documentation. We add a note or a statement that says, "believe me, it worked" and feel that this is sufficient documentation, that the listing of tasks/activities is enough to make it a research paper. This is not research. To transform the documentation of such a listing into a paper, there has to be a theoretical rationale behind the tasks or activities, along with evidence, in terms of student responses to the tasks, or the responses of other teachers to prove that the method adopted actually worked or is likely to work. Let us take an example from either vocabulary or grammar teaching, or the enabling of any one of the skills. A careful search on the internet will provide a range of activities, for each one of these areas. Listing a few of these, after collating arguments from the literature available on any one of these aspects, does not a research paper make! Instead, if, for example, you believe that playing language games with words can enable better vocabulary learning to happen, select a

few relevant games and play them in your class over a period of time (twice a week for three months or every day for a month, as you see fit). Remember to keep a record of all games played (all materials used) and all student responses. You will then need to analyse their answers and see what kinds of words they learned. You may also want to give a short vocabulary test before and after the first and last 'game playing' period to use as a check on whether vocabulary growth has actually happened. If you can, you could actually talk to your students and ask them whether they liked playing these games, whether they felt it was fun or boring, what they liked about it, etc. This informal (either whole class or individual) discussion, when documented and analysed, will serve as secondary data with the games played and the student responses featuring as primary data. All the other aspects of language can also be 'enabled and researched' through the use of interesting materials or methods. Thus, any aspect of teaching that bothers us as teachers can become the basis for a research paper. The range of possibilities is endless. We will explore together a few case studies to understand better what research in the classroom is all about and how data can emerge from classroom activities.

Till then, put on your research hats, think deeply about the presented codes and wait for the next column.....

Signpost for parents and teachers

How parents can support English language learning (Contd. from 3)

What types of rewards are most effective when learning English?

Rewards can sometimes produce one-time actions, rather than developing long-term study skills. It's really important to praise effort, not just results and intelligence.

This means praising your child if they have kept going when they've found something hard, or found a way to solve a problem by themselves. Research shows that children who receive this type of praise make the best progress in their studies.

Teachers usually can't offer rewards other than praise. Parents have many options – and the rewards don't have to cost anything. For example, you could try:

- activity rewards: your child earns extra free time to do their favourite activities
- social rewards: your child earns extra quality time together with family and friends
- asking your child to think about how they would like their effort to be recognised. Their ideas may surprise you!

(Contd. on p.13)

Revisiting Translation Methods for Language Learning

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Abstract

This paper explores the possibilities of reviving the traditional translation method in learning English as a second language. Translation and bilingual approach in language teaching help students to enhance comprehension and acquire language skills. India's National Education policy 2020 has given due emphasis to native languages and using bilingual approach in teaching. Considering these factors, this article contests reviving translation methods and adapting innovative ways of teaching to yield better results in the classroom. To substantiate this, the article exemplifies how a short story in bilingual form can be used as a suitable text for classroom discourses. Through various activities, regional literatures in translation can be an effective tool in understanding the structures of the target language, vocabulary, strengthening grammatical skills and developing thinking abilities. Students' responses towards this method suggest that teachers should reconsider and revive their outlook on translation methods while teaching a foreign language.

Keywords: Translation, regional literature, pedagogy, language skills, pedagogy

Introduction

One of the debates that continues till today is if translation is a reliable method of teaching a foreign language. Translation received criticism because of its linkage to traditional grammar translation. The traditional Grammar-Translation Method (GTM) made its appearance in second language classrooms in the 1880s. Grammar-Translation Method makes liberal use of mother tongue to teach grammatical rules and structures of the target language with less attention to textual meaning and pronunciation (Prator and Celce-Murcia, 1979). Until recently, translation was out of favour amongst second language teaching fraternity. According to Brown (2002), translation as a tool in teaching-learning activities became popular in the recent era and dismantled the popular belief that it is outdated and unsuitable within the context of foreign language teaching. Even today, teachers are hesitant to use this approach as it is thought to be a mechanical transfer of linguistic meaning from one language to other and regarded as monotonous and uninteresting activity. However, in the recent past, studies and experiments has brought fresh insights into

this conventional practice and has revealed that translation could be used as a pedagogical tool along with other traditional practices in the language classroom. Mc Donough (2002) contests that appropriate use of translation in reading and writing exercises would bring conducive learning environment.

The Translation Method and its Revival

The translation method received severe criticism and lost its favour to 'natural' and 'communicative' approaches to language learning. Translation method was criticized as being time consuming, misleading and hinders student's cognitive thinking capacity. Translation was considered as inefficient, unreliable and irrelevant. Malmkjaer (1998, p.6) points to the major reasons for the diminishing popularity of translation. Some of them he contends are: Translation does not co-relate with the four skills of language acquisition and apart from being time consuming, it can also mislead and therefore arise confusion among learners. He further states that translation would limit student's thinking and reasoning capacities and therefore he argues that it can serve the purpose

of only training the translators. This argument is further taken by Duff (1994) who states that such unpopularity of translation was primarily because it was text-bound and confined to development of only two skills; reading and writing, thus limiting communication in the language classroom.

Of late, there has been considerable revision in the way translation was thought to be. There are "significant and visible signs of a revival of translation in language teaching according to recent literature and applied linguistics" (Malmkjaer, 1998, p.1). The significance of this method was felt by both linguists, researchers and teachers. Schaffner (1998) defends that the translation and related activities when used properly can bring huge impact on the learners. He claims that if suitably used, such a method can improve student's vocabulary, develop verbal communication, understand structures of both native and target language and thus help in overall understanding and comprehension. Schjoldager (2004) indicates that recent studies have pointed to the emerging popularity of translation and its wide usage across the globe. Translation is understood not as harm but as a pedagogical tool in language learning process. Alan Duff, in his book, *Translation* (1994) argues that using translated texts and translation to decipher knowledge aids in language development and is a helpful communication activity. Another researcher Ross (2000), relegates translation as the fifth skill and claims that it is the most important social skill much needed for communication and understanding across people and societies. Hence, it is an essential tool in foreign language teaching. According to Leonardi (2010, p.17) translation has a huge role to play in the present context of globalization and increasing multilingual culture. Further, Leonardi (2011) acknowledges that translation as pedagogical tool can be conveniently employed to meet the language requirements of school and college students. Researchers like Nolasco and Arthur (1995) also argue that translation activities in the language classroom promote: Desire for communication; students to speak and write independently; students to be creative and

focussed on what they say.

Considering the above-mentioned studies and arguments on translation, this article explores the possibilities of using translation method to teach/learn English as a second language in the Indian context. As the National Education policy 2020, recommends the use of bilingual mode and mother tongue in teaching-learning, this article examines the scope and benefits of using translation as a pedagogical tool. In order to substantiate the argument, I discuss my practical approach on adapting a regional text available in English translation and its native version.

Adapting Translation methods by using Bilingual Short literary Texts

Short story acts as a wonderful literary tool in the teaching of language. Literary texts according to Widdowson (1983), can have different interpretations and when used as a teaching tool can generate different ideas among the learners, thus enabling more creative and motivated sessions in the classroom. Thus Short story can be explored as a substantial genre for teaching language skills. Short stories mirror and illuminate human lives (Sage, 1987) and gives aesthetic pleasure. Ariogul (2001) points that usage of short stories in language classroom serves the following purposes: it facilitates learners' reading task as it is short and simple compared to other literary genres; promotes the learners' attitudes and knowledge towards other cultures; develops critical thinking ability. Also, short story develops the learners' cognitive analytical ability (Sage, 1987).

For experimental purpose in the classroom, Tamil writer Ambai's short story *Journey 1*, the English translation done by Lakshmi Holmstrom and the original Tamil text (*Payanam 1*) was used in the language classroom. The target audience came from the vernacular medium background and severely lacked the essential language skills. As the target students belonged to this linguistic background and came basically from Tamil medium schooling, such a text was handpicked. Students were informed about the translation

works carried out by Lakshmi Holmstrom who is a literary critic and translator of major works from Tamil to English and that the chosen text was used to improve their language skills. The following classroom activities were undertaken by 35 students as a part of their learning.

Activity 1: Reading Aloud

This task was assigned to recognize the sounds of the language; here in this case, both Tamil and English. Students were asked to read aloud first the regional text and then move on to read the English translation. Loud reading enables to articulate and register the sounds and at the same time, students could distinguish between the sounds used and formation of words in regional and target language i.e., English. Loud reading is a helpful activity as it enhances articulation and pronunciation. Understanding appropriate usage of tone, stress, pause and intonation while reading created a sense of awareness about the rhythmic nature of language. Students were encouraged to use appropriate pauses while reading the texts especially paying attention to punctuation, spelling and sentence structure. Although at the initial stage students faced issues in articulating the relevant sounds and usage of words, eventually they did better.

Activity 2: Narrating the storyline in bilingual mode

The purpose of this task is to enable learners to articulate the story in their own words so that the nature of comprehension of text can be understood by the teacher. Students attempted to narrate the story first in Tamil and then in English. When it came to English, students were slow in their description; hence they were allowed to fill the gaps using Tamil words.

Activity 3: Recognition of word formation

This task was an important tool in building vocabulary. Students learnt the usage of prefix, suffix, synonyms and antonyms which helped them to derive relevant meaning from the text. Learners worked in pairs, firstly chalking out the word building nature of L1 and then moved to look at L2 word formation. This activity exposes learners to bilingual lexical access,

bringing the required comprehension and awareness about languages.

Activity 4: Understanding & Translating phrases and idioms

Phrases and idioms play a pivotal role in a narrative. First the students were familiarized with the concepts of phrases and idioms. Then they were asked to give suitable examples in L1. Later they were asked to extract the phrases and idioms used in both the texts. This exercise allowed them to understand the nuances of translating a regional text to a foreign language like English. The chances of having similarity across languages ((Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) was observed by learners.

Activity 5: Framing an alternative story

The class was divided into five groups. They were asked to discuss among themselves and find if there could be any alternative of retelling the story in a different perspective. Students used Tamil and English to discuss and gather the points while discussing. Later they gave their version of the text, first in L1 and then in the target language. This means that they could design a different ending to the story. This activity kindled their imagination, creativity and working in teams. The flexibility to retell and bring in an alternative narrative allowed students to learn with joy and enthusiasm.

Using the bilingual mode and engaging students in activities had brought a new learning environment. In normal circumstances, teachers hesitate to use bilingual mode as it is felt that translation method limits one's thinking capacity in terms of foreign language. Translation was misinterpreted to be misleading and discouraging students in acquiring a new language. However, using suitable texts like a short story available both in regional language and in translation can become an exciting teaching/learning tool in the language classroom.

In the study conducted, the bilingual translation mode along with activity based learning helped learners to acquire speaking, reading, vocabulary and grammatical skills. Individual, and group work facilitated

learners to participate, narrate and enjoy language learning. Loud reading and retelling strengthened articulation, pronunciation of words and kindled creative thinking. It also boosted their confidence and passion to learn. The fear and hesitancy to speak in front of others gradually got minimized. Learners were also curious to read other texts of the same/ different authors. For example, students were eager to read Journey 3 and Journey 4 of the same author. In this process of reading, learners could also note the liberal use of some Indian words in the English narrative also. Words like choli, pallav, prasadam, veshti,thayi, paatti resonated socio-cultural tendencies. Students also noted the metaphorical meanings in the text which helps a descriptive narrative. For example:

1. There were still traces of fear on his face.
2. The sun was sinking, floating in an orange sky. Cool circle of fire.

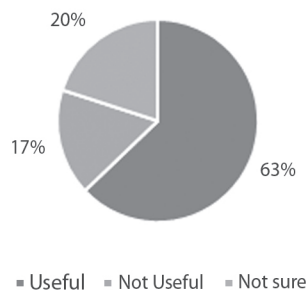
(Journey 1, p.282)

Students became keen to read more stories by same writer and other writers too, available in Tamil and English translations. Reading habits form an important tool in language learning. Pronunciation and vocabulary were enhanced through consistent reading of texts. Mickulecky & Jeffries (2004) point that reading exercise is a significant tool as it can enhance students' general language skills in English; assist students to think in English, enlarge students' English vocabulary and improvise their writing. The various activities undertaken encouraged students to use English comfortably. But at the same time, a few students showed lethargy towards reading two texts and at times

found the grammatical structures and tenses of the two languages confusing. Also, the usage of two mediums consumed more time to complete a given task. Nevertheless, most students enjoyed working with parallel texts. Understanding words, phrases from L1 and its English translations brought curiosity, interest, and zest for learning the L2. By contrasting two languages, students get familiarized with the linguistic structure and linguistic phenomenon of the native language and the target language. They were able to comprehend the differences in sound, word formation and structures of language. Obviously, a regional text provides them scope to relate to the cultural nuances. This familiarity with L1 and its cultural meanings enables to gradually learn a foreign language. Taking students from the known to the unknown can be an effective way of administering language skills.

It is observed that literature can play a significant role in the language classroom. Obediat (1997), argues that literature can influence learners in obtaining competencies of the target language, understand the usage of idiomatic expressions, speak accurately, and enable fluency and creativity. Also, Custodio and Sutton (1998) note that literature paves way for opportunity to interrogate, criticize and explore. Using such translated works also enables them to understand things from a cultural context. The values, beliefs inbuilt in the cultural system gives them insight into their own cultural consciousness. Towards the end of the sessions, the 35 participants were asked about the learning experience using translation. 63% of the students said it proved beneficial for them, 20% said that they found it

Students' response to effectiveness of translation



uninteresting and time-consuming exercise and the rest 17% were not sure if such translation method benefitted them. Refer appendix at the end to understand the kind of exercises done by students in the language classroom. The feedback given by the students at the end of all the sessions is graphically represented below. The responses indicate that bilingual mode and translation method can prove useful in acquiring the skills of L2. English being taught as a second language in India can have greater impact if translation mode is carefully adapted. Considering the National Education Policy 2020 emphasis on using bilingual mode and reviving native languages, adapting translation method by using regional texts and its translations in the language classroom provides scope for gaining the desired outcomes. However, the teacher should know his/her audience well in advance. If the learners are from the same background or a rural landscape, this would be beneficial. But it may not be so in a heterogeneous classroom in a metro city where students come from varied cultures and ethnic backgrounds. Hence the choice of using translation method largely depends on the learners themselves. A suitable translation based on the text used should be carefully dealt with. As rightly pointed by Urges (1989), we should not merely reject 'translation' but we should assimilate translation into a larger sphere of thinking and learning. Urges concludes that translation method can prove beneficial to understand the target language, particularly to locate the inherent ideas in a text.

Therefore, it is pertinent that Teachers understand the nuances of using translation in language learning process and be willing to adopt newer strategies for better teaching-learning environment. In view of New Education policy's recommendation to use bilingual

mode and native languages, the translation method could serve as an effective pedagogy in classroom discourse. The NEP 2020 has clearly stated its significance thus:

...the language of transaction between teachers and students will still remain the home language/mother tongue wherever possible. Teachers will be encouraged to use a bilingual approach, including bilingual teaching-learning materials, with those students whose home language may be different from the medium of instruction. (NEP 2020 p 13)

Conclusion

This article points that the traditional translation method can be revived for better learning outcomes. Rather than relegating translation method as mundane and an outdated technique, a deeper insight into it by using innovative teaching strategies would benefit students in a language classroom. Bilingual and translation methods help students in comprehension and acquire the language skills. The outcomes from the practical experience of using a bilingual text in the form of short story justifies this idea. Although few students exhibited reluctance, hesitancy and lethargy in having to explore two parallel languages, yet the overall responses were positive as noticed in the feedback. Further, regional texts provide relevance to cultural context, thus enabling students to grasp at a better pace. Therefore, the study defends that with utmost care and appropriate approach, translation method can be effectively used for second language learning. Usage of parallel texts and bilingual mode enhances students' ability to interpret, assimilate and acknowledge the linguistic similarities/differences in the structural makeup of the language.

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Appendix : Class activities

1. Read the original Tamil text Payanam and then read aloud the English translation titled Journey 2. Paraphrase the first paragraph in your words.
3. Find the Tamil equivalent for the given words and give the synonyms in English.
a) Drenched b) motifs c) distress d) scandal
4. Identify the conjunctions used in the text.
5. Use prefix/suffix to form new words: open, connect, cover
6. Identify the phrases used in the text and use it to make a new sentence.
7. Rewrite the story in your own perspective.
8. Identify some Tamil words from the text which the author has not translated.
9. Narrate a similar journey that you undertook in the recent past.
10. Work in pairs and write the theme of the text.

Signpost for parents and teachers

How parents can support English language learning (Contd. from p. 7)

Will my child copy errors in my language pronunciation?

No. Children can hear differences in pronunciation and their accents are influenced by lots of different things – their teachers, their peer group, actors in films, and so on. Children's accents can easily change as they are growing up. From teenage years onwards, pronunciation is more difficult to master. Remember, there is no single 'correct' English pronunciation. In countries such as Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the UK and USA, there are over 100 different regional and local varieties of English. Furthermore, the majority of people who use English come from other countries all over the world. English speakers are used to hearing lots of different accents – it's a really important part of learning the language. **Source:** <https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/learning-english/> ■

Identity Crisis in Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*

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Introduction

Manju Kapur, Shashi Deshpande, Arundhati Roy, Githa Hariharan and Shoba De adopt to scrutinize the problems besetting the Indian women. Her debut novel *Difficult Daughters* won her international acclaim and commonwealth prize for the best first book 'Eurasia' published in 1998. By foretelling journey as motif, Kapur has taken profound insight into woman's inner turmoil to find a place, an identity and individuality of her own in society. For centuries, women were always back staged by patriarchal world. Literature and art - and scriptures too - consider women as a meek and docile creature. One who appears to be against this ideological of a framework of feminine is considered as immoral. On the one side, in Hindu mythology, examples cited are of Sita, Savitri to reveal Pativarta and on the opposite if one goes against these conventional norms, one is considered as the daughter of temptress, sinful Eve in Christian Mythology.

In *Difficult Daughters*, Kapur's Protagonist Virmati, an educated middle class girl expounds her rebellious ideas against this male-dominated society and tries to gain her identity. She experiences a journey to her inner self. Dr. Ashok Kumar says, "A major preoccupation in recent Indian women's writing has been a delineation of inner life and subtle interpersonal relationships. In a culture where individualism and protest have often remained alien ideas and marital bliss and the women's role at home is a central focus, it is interesting to see the emergence of not just an essential Indian

sensibility but an expression of cultural displacement. Manju Kapur has joined the growing number of women writers from India on whom the image of the suffering but stoic woman eventually breaking traditional boundaries has had a significant impact". (Kumar 48)

Difficult Daughters stresses on the woman's need for self-fulfilment autonomy, self-realization, independence, uniqueness and self-actualization. Located primarily in India of the 1940's, Manju Kapur speaks of the idea of independence aspired to and obtained by a nation and independence yearned after by a woman. Among the writers who have portrayed the 'new woman' who is tending to take the 'road not taken', and walking on their 'own road', Manju Kapur undoubtedly arrests attention. Kapur says that she is interested in the lives of women, whether in the political arena or in *Difficult Daughters* domestic spaces. One of the main preoccupations in all her books is how women manage to negotiate both inner and outer spaces in their lives - what sacrifices do they have to make in order to keep the home fires burning and at what cost to their personal lives do they find some kind of fulfilment outside the home.

Difficult Daughters represents the emergence of new woman who is no longer the "chaste wife whose suffering can only make her more virtuous, the nurturing mother who denies her own self, the avenging Kali or a titillating strumpet" (Rao 242). Based partially on the life of Kapur's own mother, the novel

movingly evokes the multiple frustrations encountered by the central character, Virmati, in her efforts to educate herself and establish a domestic space, she can call home. Born in Amritsar in Punjab in 1940, Virmati, the daughter of a father of progressive ideas and a traditionalist mother seeks human relations that would allow her to be herself. Her desire for self-expression and self-realization is condemned to failure by her own family as well as that of the man she marries. Through Virmati's character, Manju Kapur has dealt with the theme of travails in self-identity vis-à-vis socio-cultural identity. In this context, Toni Morrison remarks – Tell us what it is to be a woman so that we may know what it is to be a man. What moves at the margin? What it is to have no home in this place? To be set adrift from the one you knew. What it is to live at the edge of towns that cannot bear your company? (Morrison 201)

Difficult Daughters, set against the bloody backdrop of partition in the cities of Amritsar and Lahore, remains a powerful portrait of a society where shame is more important than grief; the novel spans three generations of women and unveils their sense of disillusionment. The three generation of women (Kasturi, Virmati and Ida) symbolize the three stages of Indian independence. Kasturi, the mother represents the pre-independence and is shown as a victim of the offensive control of patriarchy. In the beginning, Kasturi is being presented as an epitome of motherhood who bears pain and suffering.

“Kasturi could not remember a time when she was not tired, when her feet and legs did not ache” (Kapur DD 7).

Through these three female protagonists, Manju Kapur has revealed the life circle of a woman who is devoted from beginning of her life. As a child, a girl has to do domestic, household activities [as Virmati does], after marriage, she has to bear pain to give birth to child [as Kasturi's condition is revealed after having 11 children] and after being mother, her whole life is dedicated to her whole family. A very pointed statement brings attention: “How trapped could nature make a woman? (Kapur DD 77)”.

The women in this novel, one may delve into family history and examine grandmothers and great grandmothers. Virmati spends her time as nurse / mother, while her mother, Kasturi, spends her life reproducing; Virmati sets upon a course of education that doesn't radically change her way of thinking, but gives her the initiative to demand to make her own mistakes. The catch is that she marries a man with two children. Their love is found out. Harish emerges unscathed. Virmati on the other hand is ostracized, and kept imprisoned at home until she agrees to marry someone of her mother's choosing. She refuses, holding firmly on to her love for Harish. As per wish, she is sent to higher study. Her lover marries her after five years as a socially accepted second wife. Education for girls was always seen as a path to immorality. As for Virmati education is concerned, as a way of escapism. But her family is convinced that it led to her moral degradation. Her falling in love made her a fallen woman. Manju Kapur successfully portrayed early twentieth-century Punjabi life and has effectively captured the relationships.

Virmati, the daughter, symbolizes the country's struggle for independence on macro level. Psychologically, she reveals her rebellious nature against deep-rooted conventions of morality especially for a girl. She undertakes her journey to the path leading to one's individuality but to her, it leaves in the midway with no achievement. But her image is of a woman unfettered: “Here she comes running, out of prison and off the pedestal; chains off, crown off, halo off, just a live woman” – remarks Charlotte Perkins in an article on the new woman. As Susan Polis Schultz says: “The new woman arises full of confidence, she speaks eloquently, and thinks independently, full of strength. She organizes efficiently and directs proudly.” (Schultz 39)

Ida, Virmati's daughter is the product of post-independence era and establishes herself as an independent woman. She starts her journey to find an insight into her mother's past, denies her and revolts against the ways and follies. The opening line reveals her anguish: “The one thing I had wanted was not to be like

my mother. Now she was gone and I started at the fire that rose from her shriveled body, dry-eyed, leaden, half dead myself, while my relatives clustered around the pyre and wept". (Kapur DD 1).

The novel traces Virmati's quest for freedom and identity, her desperation for a space of her own to study. Her desire to shed the surrogate motherhood, imposed on her. Being the eldest daughter she is burdened with family duties because of her mother's incessant pregnancies. The girls: Virmati, Indumati, Gunvati, Hemavati, Vidyavati and Parvati. The boys: Kailashnath, Gopinath, Krishnanath, Parkashnath and Hiranath.

"Ever since Virmati could remember she had been looking after children. It wasn't only Baby Parvati to whom she was indispensable; to her younger siblings she was second mother as well" (Kapur DD 6).

The one cause for Virmati's frustration was her mother's continuous breeding. Virmati was never remained free. At times Virmati yearned for affection, for some sign that she was special. But – "When she put her head next to the youngest baby, feeding in the mother's arms, Kasturi would get irritated and push her away. 'Have you seen to their food – milk – clothes – studies?' . . .

'I am just going', protest Virmati finally. 'Why can't Indumati also take responsibility? Why does it always have to be me?' 'You know they don't listen to her', snapped Kasturi. 'You are the eldest. If you didn't see to things, who will?' (Kapur DD 6-7)

A constant sufferer Virmati, nurses a desire of being as independent, defiant and assertive as her cousin Shakuntala. Shakuntala sows the seeds of freedom in Virmati. She symbolizes modernity as not following the conventional norms which limits daughter to an early marriage and then home and family. She encourages her for independence and for equal rights for women, thus epitomizing the post-colonial emancipated 'New Woman'. New woman breaks the customs of the tradition bound society. Since the establishment of the society, woman is divided into social security, political awareness, and economic liberation.

In this context, Simone De Beauvoir comments: "The situation of woman is that she a free and autonomous being likes creatures – nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assure the status of the other. (Beauvoir 167)

Both Shakuntala and Virmati come out of this ideological framework of being typical Indian woman. Shakuntala takes part in the political Gandhian Movement whereas Kasturi's ideology is confined to patriarchy and she thinks 'marriage' as the duty of every girl rather than studies. She remarks –

"Hay re, beta! What is need to so a job? A woman's shaan is in her home. Now you have studied and worked enough Shaadi. After you get married, Viru can follow.' (Kapur DD 16) For Kasturi, Education means developing the mind for the benefit of the family and nothing more than that. But Shakuntala, like new woman, shares her view with Virmati: "These people don't really understand Viru . . . women are still supposed to marry and nothing else" (Kapur DD 17).

Lajwanti and Kasturi, on the opposite, get into clash with Shakuntala's ideas. They behold the stereotypical opinion that only a man is free to do a job, to go outside and to do his desired task whereas a girl has to take every step according to the norms of society. She does not have her own life. In one of the passage Kasturi says:

"All the time in lab, doing experiments, helping the girls, studying or going to conferences, I tell her she should have been a man" (Kapur DD 16).

Catharine Stimpson has called the attention towards the "omissions, distortions, and trivializations of women's experiences and the spheres to which women have historically been consigned, such as private life and the family" (Stimpson 17). Trying to find a woman's space and quest for her identity, Seemanthini Niranjana in Embodiment underscores a Lingyat woman Sharadamma, in this context in contrast with the activities of men: "Who will cook, and care for the children and home if the woman? What will happen to the household if we don't the dharma of men is different . . . they only do outside work. Virmati feels

influential impact of Shakuntala and at once blurts:

'I want to be like you, Pehnji . . . I wish I too could do things. But I am not clever' (Kapur DD 17-18).

Virmati comes to know about her inner desire to find a self- identity. So it was now useless looking for answers inside the home. One had to look outside to education, freedom and the bright lights of Lahore colleges. Thus, Shakuntala's visit plants the seeds of aspiration in Virmati, seeds to find her true place in society. For Kasturi, Virmati's practical education was complete but Virmati wants to study further even if she has to fight her mother. But Virmati was under household burden. All time, there were demanding noises. Eventually Virmati fails her FA (Fine Arts). She shows a great fuss. Kasturi tells her that it is over now. Virmati, at the age of 17, was engaged to a canal engineer, Inderjeet. Virmati was outraged and frustrated at her failure, on this Kasturi says:

"Leave your studies if it is going to make you so bad tempered with your family. You are forgetting what comes first" (Kapur DD 21).

Thus, during her search to find an individual space, Virmati has to face many obstacles. Family plays an important role in the novel. For the sake of family's name, Virmati is forced to sacrifice her study, her freedom. She is taught to be an ideal daughter. In the words of R.J. Kalpana in her article Motherhood: "The family is at once the source of women's affirmation as well as their subordination. They are heralded as martyrs of the struggle and as a source of regeneration and yet they are denied leadership position" (Kalpana 30). Family, the fundamental unit of society, can be seen as perpetrating the larger patriarchal power structure. The institution of marriage makes woman an object of barter and subverts the right of woman to name children after the man. In this way, an entire sex lost its identity, in terms of socio-political and economic position and was vulnerable to exploitation.

Virmati, in the novel, rejects both institutions. She rebels against stereotypical ideas provoking the honor of family relating to daughter. She

goes against her family's will of arranged marriage with an engineer, Inderjit and falls in love with a Professor, Harish who is already married, who first appears in her life as her parent's tenant. The Professor was married as a child to an illiterate woman, whom he had tried to educate and had miserably failed. Professor's wife has no name till the middle of the book – she is the woman whose life's mission was to cook for and feed her family and keep the house clean. So the Professor falls in love with his student Virmati who is passionately interested in studies. Professor and Virmati were in the same college where –

"Virmati always sat in the front row with the four other girls who were in the Professor's class and that was the only place he saw her in college, flower-like, against a backdrop of male students . . . The Professor drank in the symbolism of her posture greedily. It moved him so deeply that he remembered it in all its detail . . . the Professor's desire to possess had extended to her heart and mind". (Kapur DD 46-47)

The above lines point towards the greed to possess Virmati, in Professor. Freud discusses women as "sex objects to men. Men, he suggests split women symbolically and erotically into, mothers and sisters, on the one hand and prostitutes on the other" (Freud). The first attraction is Virmati's flower-like structure. It is to be noted that for centuries, female body is perceived as an object to be possessed by man. Seemantini Niranjana speaking about Foucault (1978), "the body is the site of a range of institutional and regulatory discourses. The body becomes the very medium through which femininity (in its cultural form) is constituted" (Niranjana 109-110). V. Geetha talking about social attitude says: Women's bodies were often routinely viewed as objects of male desire and lust; a fact that was particularly evident in media images of women. Women's groups pointed to the range of sexual crimes that were directed at women - child abuse, incest, marital rape – to argue that their social existence was invariably sexualized and therefore not seen as worthy of equality or justice. The family and larger kin group, they noted, actively aided this

sexualization of women's bodies by valorizing against women, they insisted, which secured the patriarch's power, both at level of family and society. (Geetha 191)

Virmati's thought of her fiancé has been replaced by the thought of Professor. She was aware of Professor's paying attention to her. She was caught in Psychological conflict as on the one side there was – family, customs, norms, and traditional values; and on the other was – her illicit love for Professor, her desire to educate herself. Days passed and Virmati's confusion grew.

“She would sometimes wish that . . . but what could she wish? Early marriage or no education. No Professor and no love? Her soul revolted and her sufferings increased” (Kapur DD 54). Her thoughts were splitter, by now, into two socially unacceptable pieces. Virmati has finished her BA and her marriage date was fixed. Professor insists her to tell Inderjit, her fiancé about their relation. Virmati thinks that “It was not his fault, how could he help it if he had been married off at the age of three” (Kapur DD 55).

By gathering all her courage, Virmati defies her marriage. Her ideas come into conflict with Kasturi who always reminds her – You are the eldest, Viru, your duty is greater. You know how much the younger ones look up to you. Your grandfather and father both have confidence in you; otherwise would they have given you so much freedom? They thought school and college would stronger than you. It won't change you. Now what will they feel when you want us to break our word and destroy our good name? How will they understand it? (Kapur DD 58- 59)

Due to her modern outlook, Virmati becomes the victim of violence. Under ‘mental slavery’ in the male-dominated structure Kasturi grabbed Virmati by the hair and bangs her head against the wall –

“May be this will knock some sense into you! . . . What crimes did I commit in my last life that I should be cursed with a daughter like you in this one?” (Kapur DD 59).

In the words of Kalpana in her article “Phallic Reflections”: Seen in relative terms to the male,

female is denied the opportunity to forge an identity of her own. If and when she dares she comes face to face with the last weapon in patriarchal arsenal: violence. In most simplified form, violence is defined as abuse and it takes on many guises, from physical assault to psychological domination to social subjection to cultural oppression. (Kalpana 68)

Like Shakuntala, Virmati herself demands to go to Lahore for further studies. Kasturi is shocked to see this transformation in Virmati. “What had come over the girl? She had always been so good and sensible . . . what kind of learning was this that deprived her of her reason?” (Kapur DD 60).

The novel also traces history of India during independence and pre-independence days. By adapting the technique of flashback in a smooth manner, we get glimpses of history like – “Sultanpur, West Punjab, 1904 . . . Child marriage is evil . . . Their Swami Dayanandji had said that marriage was a union between rational, consenting adults . . . when Kasturi was praying to a picture of Christ was no small matter, he (Kasturi's father) agreed, it was exactly in this way that the British sought the dominion over their mind” (Kapur DD 61).

Though, pre-independence era is known as Modern era due to the intervention of Britishers, but traditionalistic ideas avail under the surface of modernity.

“During Kasturi's formal schooling was never forgotten that marriage was her destiny. After she graduated, her education continued in home” (Kapur DD 62).

The novel has a backdrop of history. “In 1849 the British formally annexed Punjab, completing a process that had begun with the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh ten years earlier. They set about establishing their control in a manner that would persuade the Punjabis that, of all possible political options, British rule was best” (Kapur DD 71). The novelist depicts the history of pre-independence day points that Manju Kapur has explored how the ideology of Britishers had shaken the roots of tradition and thus changed the stereotypical thoughts. Kapur very skillfully, explains her psychological condition. When Virmati finds

no solution to her problem of taking decision, at last she only tries to commit suicide thinking that death can bring solution to her worries:

Her mind wandered to the thousands of mosquitoes that hovered around the drains and all the fruit and Halwai stalls in the market. Then to her father's shop, the old house, her old school, her new house, her new college, incoherent pictures jumbling about in her unhappy mind . . .

“The waters going strangely and mysteriously on, having a being in which her own would soon be inextricably mingled . . . Now that she was actually going to merge her body with the canal she felt her confusion clearing.” (Kapur DD 75-76)

Meanwhile this news of Virmati leaves Professor to nothing whereas she (Professor's wife) was wishing evil for others. Kapur's tinge of Ramayana indicates her own classical epic style with which she deeply and profoundly describes everything. Eventually, Virmati is saved. She reveals her desire to study further and not getting married. At this desire, Virmati is locked and her sister Indumati's marriage is being arranged with Inderjeet. Due to this act of Virmati, her family has to face disgrace. Virmati feels penance at her fault. In the locked godown, she communicates with the Professor through letters carried by Paro. In one of the letter, Viru says:

“Mati and Pitaji want me to promise I will have nothing more to do with you, then they will let me out . . . A man who is already married and a traitor to any woman. He is a worldly person caught in his own desires. I am just like the sacks of wheat and dal here, without my own life” (Kapur DD 93).

Virmati becomes a pendulum between education and marriage. When she is compelled to marry the canal engineer, she protests and writes a letter to Professor Harish whom she loves dearly and says: I couldn't think, and all I heard around me was talk of marriage. If I was to be a rubber doll for others to move as they willed, then I didn't want to live. I thought of what you taught us about Sydney Carton, and how noble and fine in seemed at the moment of his death. His last words echoed in

my ears all that day. So you of all people should understand my actions! (Kapur DD 92)

Like an Epistolary novel, Manju Kapur has devoted a complete chapter of her novel *Difficult Daughters* to the letters of Virmati and Professor Harish. In one of the letter Virmati says 'no' to Harish for further love meetings and ends up with him as she comes to know about the pregnancy that brings calm and soothes Kasturi as for Kasturi, her daughter is safe now, but it shakes Virmati completely as on the one side Professor draws his intense love on Virmati and on the other, he is also involved with his wife. How can a man be faithful and loyal to both sides? Professor, very cunningly does not want to leave young Viru and also not his domestic and devoted wife.

This attitude of Harish is a criticizing one. Here, Stereotypical ideology related to gender bias is depicted by Kasturi-

“It will be a boy, and this is what, everyman wants, even if he is educated” (Kapur DD 104). Thus, a girl is neglected in our society; hence, the result is female feticide. Professor, on the other side, justifies himself by saying the words that he does all this 'to bring back domestic harmony'. But now Virmati inclines towards her deep rooted traditions and norms –

“I am proud that I belong to such a family, and I must keep up its traditions” (Kapur DD 107). Thus, she finds herself in cultural identity. Now she thinks: “This is the real punishment for what I have done” (Kapur DD 109).

But after that Virmati is treated more harshly. She just holds each happening occurring around her and keeps mum but soon she takes her decision to go to Lahore to do her BT (Bachelors of teachers Training) in spite of several unprecedented hurdles.

Kasturi makes one last attempt to make her daughter see reason before they departed. She appeals to her:

“If you cannot consider your duty to us, at least consider yourself”.

Kasturi curses her by saying: “God has put you on earth to punish me” (Kapur DD 111).

In Lahore, Virmati, like Shakuntala, finds 'autonomy' and 'freedom'. Here, she is also under the impact of Swarnalata who is an ultra-

committed feminist and who takes her to a meeting in Punjab Women's Students Conference where she, after listening to her speech joins a combat in her mind. She feels – Am I free, thought Virmati? I came here to be free, but I am not like these women. They are using their minds, organizing, participating in conferences, politically active, while my time is spent being in love. She felt out of place, an outcaste amongst all these women. She thought of Harish who loved her. She must be satisfied with that. (Kapur DD 142- 144)

Nowhere, Virmati finds her identity in the arena of 'new woman' and also in her traditional family she feels herself an outsider. She realizes that "These larger spaces were not for her" (Kapur DD 144) whereas Swarnalata comes up as an assertive character: "I was very clear that I wanted to do something, besides getting married. I told my parents that if they would support me for two more years I would be grateful. Otherwise I would be forced to offer Satyagraha along with other . . . but they agreed because they knew. I meant what I meant" (Kapur DD 107-108).

In Lahore, Virmati, very innocently, convinces at Harish's words. She goes to meet him but she reacts adversely on Harish's irresolute attitude. She directly scolds him when he shows his helplessness to marry her: I break my engagement because of you, blacken my family's name, am locked up inside my house, get sent to Lahore because no one knows what to do with me. Here I am in the position of being your secret wife, full of shame, wondering what people will say if they find out, not being able to live in peace, study in peace . . . and why? Because I am an idiot . . . I can bear anything but this continuous irresolution. Swarna is right. Men do take advantage of Women! (Kapur DD 149)

The last line in the above passage clearly indicates the original side of Harish. Harish always seduces Virmati through culture, sending her Petrarchan sonnets and through referring to Machiavelli and the Greek tragedy. The Professor, in actuality, wants to have Virmati not as his wife but as a woman to gratify intellectual needs. However, although

Virmati believes that she and Professor are bound together by the bonds of intellectual compatibility, it is only the physical lust that overpowers them, whenever they are together. It is interesting to note that Virmati talks of her identity, her freedom but her freedom is confined only to her body and heart. She does not attempt to utilize her education as Shakuntala did. Dr. S. Prasanna Sree comments: Virmati struggles between the physical and moral; the head and heart. Finally she gives way to her heart and body.

Virmati is engaged to an engineer initially but series of incidents propel the family members to postpone the wedding. This incident paves way for Virmati to begin an illicit relationship, with the married Professor living next door. Virmati undergoes the trials and tribulations of a love that has little hope of social acceptance. The Oxford returned Professor finds little to share with his uneducated wife and is unable to resist the charms of Virmati, who is innocent and hungry for knowledge and love. Virmati who appears "flower like against the back drop of male students" the Oxford returned Professor forces himself into her mind and heart by spreading his anguish and desire at her feet.

Bound at the hands of her love, Virmati becomes pregnant and due to this startled finding in her belly, she does not appear well in her exams. Manju Kapur has equalized her condition to that of 'Fool' character of Shakespeare's plays: Now, each of Harish's words echoed in her mind with an irony he had taught her to recognize in Shakespeare's texts, Tragic irony, comic irony, how he had loved to expand on them. Which species was this? It lacked the epic proportions of tragedy, and the love-courtship-marriage theme of comedy. In either case, she was the fool, that much at least was certain. (Kapur DD 154)

Virmati's state is revealed in a psychological manner and nature around her adds pain to condition rather than soothes her: "For a long time Virmati lay on the damp coolness of the thick khadi sheets, surrounded by the white net cocoon that once used to make her feel so safe. The moon was bright and make her ache with sadness for herself, for that thing inside her that

she couldn't name for the fear of making it Rani, so strong on moonlit nights, came floating into her. The beauty added to her pain . . . Eventually her tears stopped and she lay drained and corpse-like . . . Like Lady, Macbeth, she had murdered sleep" (Kapur DD 162).

Virmati splits into pieces when she finds her love Harish for whom she revolted against each emotional and social part of her life is indifferent to her state. She herself goes for an abortion to be done. After abortion she realizes half the meaning to be called woman and the illusion of romantic love. Ida says: "That was all she wanted to do. Forget, forget, forget, and forget. She felt a deep emptiness inside her, which she construed as yearning for the Professor. Oh, how she longed to meet him, to throw herself on his chest, babble out her story, feel his love and sympathy, his regret that he wasn't there pouring over her in a great tidal wave that would cleanse her of all guilt and sorrow!" (Kapur DD 173). Ida, listener of the story, thinks of her own abortion when her husband Prabhakar insisted her to do so. Her words - 'that death haunted me for years . . .' reminds us the same condition of Heroine in Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*. She feels she is departed from her womanliness. After her abortion, Virmati thinks that

'It is all my Karma' (Kapur DD 173).

She becomes hard toward Harish on meeting but Harish again justifies by saying— My mother insisted the baby's mundane be done in the village, nobody there has seen him, you know and I thought it was a good opportunity to go, since you had decided I should leave you alone. Now you are being unfair! . . . I can't help it if something happened. I was so careful. (Kapur DD 176)

It is important to note that Virmati lacks 'resistance'. She does resist towards family and society, but fails to resist towards Harish's love. She is compelled to lead a life of compromises quite in prosecution with her ideals from which she finds no escape. P. Sudha Sree says: "There is an unresolved dichotomy in the character portrayal of Virmati, the female protagonist. While she is strong willed to resist all kind of social enough to stay away from Professor's

influence" (Sree 175). After a series of vicissitudes, including a period as a school principal in a small Himalayan state, Virmati finally marries the man she loves and returns to Amritsar to live with him. However, Harish refuses to leave his first wife. In the house of Harish, she is not considered an identity but the second wife of Harish who has snatched the rights of his first wife Ganga she has to live like an outsider in the family; marginalized by her in-laws.

In the evening, Virmati went to the angan to bring the clothes in. The line was bare except for her only hanging forlornly at the end. She took them down, and clenched her lips. She wondered dreadingly whether this isolation would continue till the end of her life.' (Kapur DD 215) Virmati's mother-in-law holds Virmati solely responsible for the marriage: "If she had not gone after him, he would not have strayed" (Kapur DD 192). And she also believes that "He was a good son. How was it his fault if he was caught in the trap of some shameless young Punjabi" (Kapur DD.193).

Virmati is being realized that she has done wrong. She feels – "I should not, cannot, will not marry you. It will not be fair. And now she had married him, but the old words were still springing to her lips, so many futile noises in the air" (Kapur DD. 212). Being the second wife of Harish, she loses all sense of identity: the continuation of her education feels no more dreams of independence. Virmati undergoes the humiliation and decides to "walk tight-lipped, mute, on the path her destiny had created out for her" (Kapur DD.196). When Virmati's father Suraj Prakash dies, she is blamed – Baoji always looked pale and tired. After what his daughter did he was never the same. Last year's so silent and listless. Everybody could notice. It killed him. Definitely it killed him. (Kapur DD 238)

The story tells the tale not only of Virmati but of other Difficult Daughters who succeed better than she did in their parallel struggle for independence in their lives. Virmati's daughter Ida is shown as leading a free life than her mother in external terms, yet inside her she

feels the same anxieties as her mother – “I felt myself hovering like a pencil notation on the margins of society” (Kapur DD 279). Ida admits that “this book weaves a connection between my mother and me, each word a brick in a mansion I made with my head and my heart. Now live in it, Mama, and leave me be. Do not haunt me anymore” (Kapur DD 280).

Ida is the narrator through whose voice Kapur speaks – In *Difficult Daughters* we do not listen to Virmati’s voice. She could not speak out, being certainly situated at the juncture of two oppressions: colonialism and patriarchy. What we have is her daughter’s reconstruction and representation. Though, at the center of the narrative we see a woman who fights, but falls and fails, Kapur’s novel shows that what happens to Virmati is the representative destiny of Indian woman. However, Gur Pyari Jandial correctly points out that it is a mistake to devalue Virmati’s struggle just because she failed, for what mattered was to have made the attempt, “to break the patriarchal mould, and for Virmati to have tried to do that in the forties was a great achievement. (Jandial 47)

The novel opens with the frank declaration of the narrator, Virmati’s daughter Ida, a childless divorcee, who undertakes a journey to know her mother’s history, “the one thing I had wanted was not to be like my mother.” (Kapur DD 1) The name Ida implies a new state of consciousness, a fresh beginning. (Prasad 163) Through Ida’s conscious decision to be different from her mother we are introduced to the question of defiance and generation gap. Every new generation seeks to defy its predecessor, and fight against the anxiety of influence, Virmati challenged Kasturi’s principles, Ida could not accept Virmati’s. Although Virmati’s case may be seen as representative up to a point yet she could not live up to it completely.

It is true that she represents the spirit of “New Woman” in India with her assertion of individuality, and yearning for education but she fails to show her strength of mind in love. She was caught in whirlpool of misplaced passion towards the Oxford returned Professor who already had a wife. Virmati was burdened

with family duties from childhood because of her mother’s incessant pregnancies and had a repressed craving for love and affection. Professor Harish had filled her emptiness with love and she helplessly fell in love with him. Despite his education and understanding Harish lacked the courage and ability to support Virmati for despite the fact that he could not love his illiterate wife, yet he could not leave her. Virmati too was aware of the hopelessness of the illicit love affair. She reproached him with harsh words when she heard the news of his wife’s pregnancy as well as his simultaneous confession of love for her, “You think you can do what you like so long as you go on saying you love”. Her decision to go to Lahore was prompted by the desire to forget him.

But Virmati failed in her mission. She succumbed to the professor’s implorations and passions in her loneliness during her stay at Lahore and helplessly yielded to the temptations of the body. Consequently she realized that she had become pregnant and was left with no other alternative but to go in for an abortion. She knew that the professor would not render any support to her in her hours of crisis and left with no other alternative she decided to take the action to save her family from shame. She regretted the fact that she who had come to Lahore for expanding her mental horizons had done nothing but ended up getting more and more helplessly involved in a useless and meaningless love relationship which had given her nothing but pain.

She wanted to do “something meaningful” in her life like her roommate Swarnalatha, who was a freedom activist, but she failed to transcend her underlying need for love and emotional dependence. (Malik 135) Kapur’s novel shows Virmati vacillating between the demands of her heart and her yearning to be a part of the political and intellectual movements of her time. She was moved by Swarnalatha’s words, who professed, Marriage is not the only thing in life Viru. The war, the Satyagraha movement because of all these things women are coming out of their houses—talking jobs fighting, going to jail.

She asked Virmati to wake up from her “stale

dream” and told her how plenty of married women were also involved in the freedom movement. But Virmati found herself locked in new prisons even as she broke old ones. She silently endured her pain and frustration. She reproached herself for being selfishly engaged in her own world of love and miseries when the entire nation was being swept by the heat of the freedom struggle but failed to get out of her emotional craving for the professor.

She felt out of place, an outcaste amongst all these women. She thought of Harish who loved her. She must be satisfied with that. These larger spaces were not for her. She felt an impostor sitting in the hall. Again, scenes from her private life came unbidden before her eyes. (Kapur DD 144)

The happiest and perhaps the most successful phase of her life was the episode at Nahan, when she became the headmistress of a girl's school. She almost attained the autonomy over her life, which she had craved all along and eventually discovered her own space to live, something similar to what Virginia Woolf identified as a “room of her own”. But she failed to restrain herself from succumbing to the demands of the relationship which she knew was doomed from beginning, but did not have the heart to deny.

Despite the shock and disapproval of both families the Professor eventually married her

but Virmati's married life was a sheer disaster. She was ostracized by her family, and forced to compete for her share of her husband's love along with his first wife, Ganga. Virmati was forced to compromise and adjust in order to adapt herself into her husband's family and eventually died an insignificant death. At the end of the novel Ida wanted to bury the ghosts of her mother's past behind her and move on in life.

Conclusion

Kapur presents the psychic distress of women through the rebellious character of Virmati when she desperately proclaims “we have to accept this is our lot in life”. In the novel *Difficult Daughters* we do not listen to Virmati's voice. What we have is her daughter's reconstruction and representation. Although Virmati does not speak out, yet it is clearly true that her character is located at the juncture of two oppressions: colonialism and patriarchy. Shakuntala, Swarnalatha are presented as truly “modern” or “liberated” women in this respect. The novel as such portrays the inner struggle of women and the ways to overcome those struggles. Virmati succumbs to the struggle and dies insignificantly and now Ida enters into the realisation and would prefer to lead a better life than her mother.

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Signposts for researchers

Stages in second language acquisition, as outlined by Stephen D Krashen

A Stephen Krashen divides the process of second-language acquisition into five stages: preproduction, early production, speech emergence, intermediate fluency, and advanced fluency. The first stage, preproduction, is also known as the silent period. Learners at this stage have a receptive vocabulary of up to 500 words, but they do not yet speak their second language. Not all learners go through a silent period. Some learners start speaking straight away, although their output may consist of imitation rather than creative language use. Others may be required to speak from the start as part of a language course. For learners that do go through a silent period, it may last around three to six months.

The second of Krashen's stages of acquisition is early production, during which learners can speak in short phrases of one or two words. They can also memorize chunks of language, although they may make mistakes when using them. Learners typically have both an active and receptive vocabulary of around 1000 words. This stage normally lasts for around six months.

The third stage is speech emergence.

Learners' vocabularies increase to around 3000 words during this stage, and they can communicate using simple questions and phrases. They may often make grammatical errors.

The fourth stage is intermediate fluency. At this stage, learners have a vocabulary of around 6000 words and can use more complicated sentence structures. They are also able to share their thoughts and opinions. Learners may make frequent errors with more complicated sentence structures.

The final stage is advanced fluency, which is typically reached somewhere between five and ten years of learning the language. Learners at this stage can function at a level close to native speakers.

Krashen has also developed several hypotheses discussing the nature of second language learners' thought processes and the development of self-awareness during second language acquisition. The most prominent of these hypotheses are Monitor Theory and the Affective Filter hypothesis.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second-language_acquisition

The Syllabus for Sympathy: A Critique of the Ableist Versions of Disability

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Can the Subaltern speak?

“No, they are to be represented.”

But who can represent them accurately?

“Don’t get worried. We will do it.”

Oh, that’s great. But may I express my genuine concern sir? How can you represent us when you have never walked in our shoes?

“Oh, that’s so easy. We can envisage all your problems and their possible solutions too.”

It’s amazing. How can you imagine something that you have never experienced?

“I told you that’s very easy for us. We are raised by knowledge. We don’t just consume knowledge; we also produce it.”

Are you God?

“We are omniscient, but not god. We are the “elite” “upper caste” “men” blessed with the ability to empathize with the realities of those inferior to us.”

Yes sir, you are right. I have heard you speaking so vehemently for people like me on several occasions. In literature, film, and various public settings, I observed your resolute presence standing up for us. However, may I ask you a simple question? Have you ever asked us what we really want? One of a person’s fundamental rights, in my opinion, is to have one’s opinion sought after. You have never consulted us on our needs. You were not only representing us for our needs but you were shaping our world. Hence what you consider to be our realities are merely your own versions of it. The fact (if there is something to be called so) is at times above or beyond what you believe.

Let me take a simple example from my own experience. I am Mani K P, a visually impaired person working as an Assistant Professor at the Department of English, Payyanur college, Payyanur. It was, I think, in the academic

year 2019-2020 when the revised syllabus for the undergraduate students under Kannur university was released. I spotted an instance of your excellence in it. It is a piece of writing in which one of you tries to demonstrate the depth of your magnanimity. The chapter in question is “School for Sympathy” by E.V. Lucas, which is part of the textbook, Readings on Philosophy, prescribed for the fourth semester UG students as a part of their common course in English. According to the chapter, a new system of education is introduced where students are guided to a certain “thoughtfulness rather than mere thoughts” and to this end, they are instructed to pretend to have different kinds of impairments over the course of a week. What a fantastic idea, isn’t it? You are right. The chapter was warmly received by the students, and your goal of fostering empathy in students through the curriculum has been accomplished. Although the chapter evokes some emotional response at first reading, for me and my community who live the life portrayed in your story, it offers a misguided ideology based on the ignorance of privileged able bodies.

The chapter seems to suggest that becoming blind is akin to being blindfolded. Dear sir, even Gandhari, the epic character, cannot be called ‘blind’ as she too, like the children at the school in this story, had the choice of unfolding her eyes whenever she preferred. What people perceive when they close their eyes is darkness, which cannot be equated to the realities of blindness. One is exposed to both the realities of light and darkness through their eyesight. So, when one’s eyesight is lost, one gets disconnected not only from the light, but also from the darkness. Blindness is an experience that may be located, not necessarily

at the middle of the binary, but perhaps away from it. Don't you feel it's ludicrous? Yes, it is. Because it is my experience.

Nevertheless, I would appreciate your capacity of imagination in the story. Although you narrate a foolish, at times unreal, philosophy, you have done it in a most appealing manner that conquers one's emotions. Some of your observations are also worth noting. Statements such as: "The blind day is, of course, really the worst, but some of the children tell me that the dumb day is the most frightening" and "But I'd no idea it was so awful to be blind. You can't see a thing. One feels one is going to be hit by something every moment. Sitting down is such a relief".

I too had the same feeling when I became blind. But your teacher might not have taught you a possibility for adaptation or reacclimatisation. Dear sir, if one loses his or her sight or any other bodily faculty there is always a chance for him or her to get adapted with the new environment. That's how we live. We are not always weeping over our inabilities. Propagating such a terrible image on blindness may cause developing a kind of phobia among people towards blindness. "Fear of blindness leads naturally to fear of the blind" (Klege 21). In another instance in the story, while engaging in a conversation with the author, a child says, "Having a leg tied up and hopping about on a crutch is almost fun". Yes indeed. It's fun for you, as you always retain the chance to be otherwise. For us, it's really difficult, but we try to manage. There is a huge difference between your voluntary poverty and our reality.

This insight that you often use in literature to shape our sentiments has recently inspired me to hunt for similar instances in stories, novels, and even movies. But what I found interesting was that many of your great findings and conclusions appear to me to be nothing more than a pile of poop.

Though I immediately reported the authorities amongst you to withdraw the chapter from the text as it contaminates the budding hearts, I realised it was not very easy. Even from 2009 to 2014, it was covered on the same university's course syllabus. Additionally, our state's

schools also teach the same chapter. However, it does not restrict to the syllabus alone. As Julia Daniels, researcher and critique puts it "Schools are designed with a non-disabled learner in mind. And narrowing forms of assessment assume a particular kind of learner (Goodley 28). This may be the important reason behind why the concept of inclusive education still remains on the horizon. "We have inherited a failed project of inclusive education in which we are (i) obsessed with individual achievement and attainment and (ii) infatuated with disability diagnoses." (30)

But don't think you have won the battle. One of my Payyanur College students, Haritha Challan, from the previous academic year called me the other day, and we had discussions on different things. One of those is relevant here. She told me that one of her B.Ed. course classmates had to teach "School for Sympathy" in a high school classroom as a part of the training session. It caused my student to remember the discussions we had during her 4th semester when I taught that chapter. She continued by saying that she had enlightened her friend about my observations on the chapter. Yes sir, you know what I did? I taught them two versions of the same story. One for the university exam and the other for the critical understanding of the great philosophy discussed in it. I am extremely happy now. She had attentively listened to me and found my points relevant. She has now imparted it to yet another. This will go on. You know, I will go on speaking through my students.

This intervention is paramount important, not because it places me at the center, but it springs from one person to a few who may, in future at least, impart it to the various fields they engage. The very structure of the society must transform in order to accommodate the sentiments of disabled people. Disability is a socially constructed reality inflicted on the impaired bodies. Watson and Vehmas thus argue that "They are no longer the problem – it is society that is at fault." (Watson 4)

Similar to the construction of 'black' against White and 'feminine' against 'masculine', disability should also be well defined in order

to usher the 'abled' bodies into the privileged positions in the social mainstream. Rigid binary is therefore inevitable to retain such a superior position. According to Anne Waldschmidt, the ideas of the disabled and the non disabled were interpreted within a framework of dichotomous bodily differences. "Healthy, complete and normal versus diseased, deficient, and deviating. It exists only when and insofar as certain (bodily and embodied) differences can be distinguished and thought of as 'relevant for health' within a given cultural and historical order of knowledge" (Waldschmidt 16).

The imagination of the well-defined "Able self" against the "disabled other" has been creeping into our public consciousness through various mediums such as literature, film, religion and indeed language. One gets indoctrinated into the already prevailing public consciousness through the process of the so-called social conditioning. This is how you get the idea of not only the disabled realities but also other subjugated sentiments such as Dalit, trans

people and so on. Although you haven't been directly exposed to these people, you believe that 'the other' that has been constructed and inherited to you through cultural institutions is true and enduring.

Dear sir, this notion of a hypothetical disabled person completely disconnected from the affairs of the abled majority has to be reconsidered. It has to be demolished through disseminating rational understanding among students at the early age itself. This is why the academic curriculum and syllabus becomes so significant.

Thanks to Kannur university for their intervention into the matter discussed above. The chapter concerned has been replaced now with a piece of writing by Helen Keller titled "Why I Become a Socialist". It is an appreciable effort because, autobiographical narratives, though often subjective, may serve the task of integrating disabled sentiments with the social mainstream.

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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

Jeyaraj John Sekar *Research Methodology for English Studies: Nuts and Bolts*

(Authorspress, 2022, Pp 476)

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Are you someone who is interested in doing research in English studies but groping for some path or are you a research supervisor in an area of darkness? This book *Research Methodology for English Studies: Nuts and Bolts* will help you eradicate the darkness in which you are in. The author sheds light along the lines of the book being an expert in the field. With 100 publications and two other books, *English for Communication Skills* and *English Usage: 1000 Doubts Cleared* to his credit he is not a novice but weaves concrete ideas after chewing and digesting a lot of books in a challenging manner. The blurb reads, this book "is meant for undergraduate and postgraduate students and PhD scholars in English Studies who do projects and write dissertations, and for teachers who write manuscripts for publication." Anyone who is interested in doing ELT research will benefit from the book. The book not only introduces the basics of research but also takes the readers to the advanced level of literary and second language research. Scholars who "struggle to formulate the aims and objectives of their research..." (p. 85) or "identifying gap from review of related literature" (p. 97) and who do not know to develop a chapter in a thesis but simply depend on or wait for the supervisor's instruction for all petty things and also who are solely dependent on Google gods should crack the nuts in *Nuts and Bolts*.

Any task needs the utmost dedication and commitment to reach perfection at the right time. Scholars who can dedicate time to reading this book in a couple of weeks will be able to do perfect research and also contribute something

useful to society. It is a well-known fact that the findings and the results that one gets after the study are done would stay within themselves. Moreover, once the PhD degree is awarded, the thesis would be in solitude in some corner of the library giving room for cobwebs! Thereby, the researcher and the work are like frogs in the well. The study should reach heights, instead. In this regard, the author clearly states the principal object behind the book. He says "... Indian scholarship in English Studies should be internationally recognized. ... They should publish their findings in international journals that are dedicated to different domains" (p.10). To get this done, a scholar should not "recycle the knowledge already created by others" (p. 36) but "should contribute something new to the existing body of knowledge..." (p. 33).

Research, nowadays, is mistaken for a degree to be obtained. As scholars poke in an unscholarly fashion amidst searches already done, the author informs the readers how not to do that. The book navigates us to the complex world of research in a simple manner. The introductory part of the book begins with a series of serious questions that any researcher would have not only in the initial stages of research but even after the submission of the thesis. The answers are addressed in an orderly manner in three sections. Like a Messiah, the author is here to rescue the scholars in research darkness from all doubts and inhibitions.

Section I of the book deals with the basics of research in English Studies. The section is further divided into four chapters. The first chapter is about the complexity of research. It states 19 literary research characteristics and

promotes language studies research. Many research supervisors being ignorant of the recent developments in language studies never encourage scholars to do research in the area of language studies. Such ignorance cannot be considered bliss. They may even suck out a scholar's interest in language research. The hitches that a researcher faces during the beginning stages are dealt with in the chapter, Teething Problems of Research in English Studies. Many obstacles may range from fixing the topic to filling in the pages to attain the target. With no knowledge of 'Meshing Quotations', there would be a downpour of lines from the primary text into the thesis. The worst thing about this is that the quotes would be just hanging with no line explaining why the sudden pop-up of these quotes. The next two chapters on Components of Research Manuscript throw light on the thesis which is in the stage of a cocoon of thoughts. To take wings one can benefit from learning/acquiring the skill of writing titles to the affixation of the author's note. The way to connect the title, the abstract, the background, the aims, the objectives, the problem statement, the research questions, the review of literature, the limitations, the conclusion, and the affixation of the author can be mastered by a close read of the units.

Section II is meant for all the Hamlets in dilemma, that is, to use theories or not. The two chapters in this section that are on the Tools for Literary Research that ought to be known before reading the primary sources are given in a capsule-like form. A dissertation should have in-built theories. New knowledge that can be gained by learning theories of language and literature can be integrated with what we see and experience around us. Be it literary interpretation or an in-depth understanding of any text, it is theories that will help a researcher. But summarizing has become the main ingredient of many shallow studies. From Structuralist theories to trauma theories, the author has explained the core elements of all theories which will help one to get rid of summarization and narration.

Section III with five chapters is on Tools

for Language Research. Anyone who is a language researcher will benefit by studying each of these chapters. The first chapter, Basics of Language Research, introduces all the fundamentals of language research starting from Second Language theories to processing the questionnaire and finding the variables in second language research and also the usage of statistical tools. The next chapter on Transactive Language Learning/Teaching is on language learning and teaching strategies that ought to be used in any learning environment, especially in language classrooms. The use of technology is also insisted. In the unit on Second Language writing the author lists "some of the key issues in second language writing and research" (p. 327). He also puts forth how feedback collected will help one grow. The chapter, Cognitive Language Learning/Teaching, deals with certain cognitive approaches to language learning and moves on to explain Language Attitude Studies and Language Assessment. Reading the last two chapters particularly will help a researcher gain insight into: how the attitudes of bilingual and multilingual people can be towards English as a second language can be probed into; the kinds of assessment and how "Fresh research initiatives are needed in certain areas of assessment" (p. 374). The chapter Transformative Language Learning/Teaching informs the readers about the theories that can change the learners' assumptions and beliefs that one has towards the learners and learning. The last chapter, Recent Trends in Second Language Learning Research presents almost all the recent trends that a learner/teacher has to employ in the language classroom. Teachers have to go hand in hand with Generation Y with mutual understanding just to help them grow. The author illuminates the readers with the idea of "how and why English literature can be used to teach the English language for communication in the light of new theories and approaches in the field of teaching English as a second language" (p. 462).

Thus, the three sections guide researchers to take the road not taken. Each section is divided into chapters which in turn are divided into

smaller units with condensed information. An impressive thing about the book is that brevity is the soul of each unit. This is because the units are short and crispy and that makes the read interesting. Yet another productive thing is that a long list of books is given at the end of each unit in the Further Reading section. This saves time exploring related books. The writer himself says "It is a special feature of this book" (p. 10).

The book is written in a simple and brilliant style that will help readers understand facts vividly. Serious everyday problems that revolve around researchers are dealt with in a light manner with a touch of humour. A common thing is that

researchers "make a slow start and a mad rush" (p. 38) at the end. Once a topic is chosen by somebody's suggestion, the researchers "feel they are in a blind alley" (p. 61). When it is time for the submission of the thesis, they tend to steal others' knowledge and finally "become a burden (not only) to the intellectual world" (p. 36) but also to the supervisor. The book is charged with sharp, well-defined thoughts (that ought to be put into action) in a precise and concise manner.

To read this book or not to read, should not be the question in your mind. To read this is indeed the need of the hour as it will help to mend the research ways and take a path in research that was not at all taken!

Signpost for researchers

English Research Paper : Topic Selection

What are the best English Research Topics? Do you want to write an impressive research paper on a unique English research topic? In general, when it comes to writing a research paper on English, there are numerous topics you can research about. However, out of them all, choosing an interesting topic that will help you grab the attention of the readers is really challenging.

If you are confused about how to choose a good English research topic and write a brilliant English research paper, then continue reading this blog and learn how to get started. Also, explore the suggested list of the top English research paper topics and ideas for writing an A+ English assignment.

It is essential for every student to have knowledge of how to select a good topic for writing an academic essay or research paper. No matter whether it is an English research paper or the research papers of any other subject, whenever you are assigned a task to write a research paper by selecting a topic on your own, this is what you should do.

1. First, identify the topic of your interest.
2. Conduct background research and brainstorm different ideas related to your area of interest.
3. Note down various keywords that will help you narrow down the essay topic.
4. Finally, analyze and get different perspectives on the topic by raising the questions such as what, why, who, and when.
5. Based on your answers to the variety of questions, prepare an outline of how your content would look like.
6. Before finalizing your research topic, keep in mind the length, due date and also check whether or not your topic meets all the assignment requirements shared by your instructor.

For choosing the best English research topic, you don't need to be so focused on a specific topic. Instead, you can modify your topic and generate new interesting research ideas to deal with by analyzing the different perspectives of the topic.

Remember, the research topic you choose is said to be good only if it is interesting and exciting to you and your readers. Also, it is advisable to go with a topic you are familiar with and have a wide research scope and different reference sources. So, when generating research paper topic ideas, keep these aspects in mind and make sure to pick a unique topic that will help you earn an A+ grade.

Source: <https://www.greatassignmenthelp.com/blog/english-research-topics/>

Parenting

Welcoming a child to a good morning

Dr. Dhanya Bhaskaran
Education Product Manager,
Macmillan Education India, Kochi
dhanyabn@gmail.com

I have read in fictional works, seen and heard in films, and witnessed in real life too, mothers and elders waking up children in different ways. Some mothers wake their children up tactfully, warmly and in child-friendly ways, though not psychologically aware of the principles or theories behind their act, while some others do it carefully being aware of certain positive and negative factors involved in it. Any day is a new day at least for a child. For an adult, on the contrary, it may be 'the next day' of the previous day, since (s)he wakes up to the world of duties and responsibilities, mostly with disturbing thoughts of the past day(s). On the other hand, a child generally does not wake up with reminding oneself of the duties or work assigned in the past. A child, by virtue of being a child, may be anticipating something new and different, pleasant and surprising. A child wakes up into a 'today'; not into the next day of yesterday.

This does not mean that children have no duties and responsibilities to think of or to worry about. Today, in an age of competition (mostly, unhealthy) even a child is drawn into the whirlpool of tests and competitive examinations. Even a five-year old has to be 'duty-conscious' to fulfil the parents' dreams. They have to 'grow big', 'study well', 'work hard', 'become somebody like X or Y' (role models or better performing peers), 'become a doctor, IT person, engineer, astronaut, scientist, business person, but should never end up as a farmer or a teacher'. Though the lists of professions and vocations are fairly long in real life, children's options are limited, or options have been restricted or curtailed by society. Therefore, they too are constantly reminded of the fact that they "have miles to go" after their sleep. The destination point has already been marked far in advance in the case of each child

whose parents are educated. Blessed are those children whose parents are either illiterate or not aware of the 'money part' of education. They can sleep for some more time.

Yes, we were talking of sleep and waking up. How to, and how not to wake up a child who has just started going to school, without spoiling her/his 'good morning' or the mornings of all in the family? A few transcripts of the ritualistic wake up calls have been listed below as set 1. You may rank them from 'the most undesirable' to 'the most desirable' according to your thinking, education, concept of parenting and so on.

Set 1

- (a) "Get up. It's time to get ready. Aren't you going to school today?"
- (b) "Oh, my God! It's already late. The school bus will come in another ten minutes."
- (c) "Are you going to get up or should I pull you out of the bed?"
- (d) "Only a mug of cold water may drive you off the bed—I know." (Exam-time special offer!)
- (e) "Aren't you going to school today? It's late."
- (f) "You haven't done your homework. Get up and get ready."
- (g) "The school bus is gone. Now, you'll have to walk to school, all alone."

Here is another set. The purpose remains the same; but the immediate orientation of the child's mind is different.

Set 2

- (a) "It seems, today there's some celebration at school. Children are going to get gifts."
- (b) "A few new butterflies have come to the garden—Don't you want to see them? So

beautiful!”

- (c) “This evening, we are going to town-- Immediately after you reach back from school”
- (d) “Today’s breakfast is your favourite one. It may get cold. Get up, and brush your teeth. Hurry up.”
- (e) “Are you going to put on the new sandals today? Great! They look really beautiful.”
- (f) “Today, I think, you are going to get the front window seat on the bus. Come on, get up.”
- (g) “Do you remember where I kept the bar of chocolate that we bought last evening? In the fridge or on the dining table?”

Quite a few more utterances can be added to

each list, based on the life shared by the child and yourself (You two alone). Anyhow, all of them can be conveniently included in set1 or 2, with varying shades of negativity (as in set 1) or with different colours of positivity (as in set 2). The purpose remains the same—send the child to school in time. But, the first group of utterances spoil the mood of the child by directly dragging her/him to enforced duties, of which the four or five-year old is not yet fully aware. The second set does not directly inform the half-awaken child of the harsh reality; instead, they remind her/him of certain real or possible pleasant experience first, and then indirectly lead the child to duty—inevitable.

Signposts for teachers & parents

Learning a second language: How parents can help

by: GreatSchools Staff

You don’t have to understand English to help your child boost his/her language skills. Here’s how parents can support language learning at home.

A parent’s attitude toward language learning is crucial to a child’s success, say language teachers and researchers. And parents don’t always recognize the value of learning a second language in a changing world.

Why learn a language? It’s likely to help your child become a better thinker, as well as giving her an advantage in the work world. Here’s what you can do to support language classes at your child’s school and language learning at home:

- Help your child make time to practice. Learning a language is like learning to play an instrument. There needs to be time to practice.
- Have your student teach you to say something in the language every day. Explaining is learning. Let your child laugh at your mangled pronunciation – and correct you.
- Find cultural events connected to the language and culture being studied
- Ask the teacher for resources your child can use at home. The Internet offers a wealth of language resources unimaginable even a few years ago. “If the teacher’s not responsive, say to your child, ‘Let’s get online together and find out what we can discover that can help you.’”
- Provide videos, books and music in the language. “You can even use these in beginning language class,” Patrick says. “You can get meaning even if you don’t get every word.” Ask the teacher for suggestions before you buy to make sure the resources are geared toward a young learner rather than an adult business traveller.
- Look for opportunities outside the classroom. Summer language camps are one resource.
- Volunteer to organize a career day that features jobs that use skills in more than one language. Think there aren’t many?
- Be an advocate. Having a great program in elementary school doesn’t guarantee that classes will be available in middle or high school to increase your child’s skills. Ask about your school’s /state’s plans to provide continuous language-learning opportunities for students at all grade levels, and learn how you can help.

Source: <https://www.greatschools.org/gk/articles/learning-a-second-language/>

Report from the field

Summer Hues: A Report of the Language Enrichment and Acquisition Drive (LEAD) Programme at Thanikkudam UP School, Thrissur

Jayalakshmi K.
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Summer Hues, a Language Enrichment and Acquisition Drive (LEAD) was a three days' camp, organized at UPS Thanikkudam, an Upper Primary School under the Thrissur East Educational Sub District in Kerala. The camp was conducted from 3 to 5 April 2023. The camp's aim was to create more opportunities for the students and parents of such a remote village to interact with and learn the global language, English. The idea of organizing such a camp came to us when we participated in a workshop --'Out of Syllabus' jointly organized by two organizations-- English Language Teachers' Interaction Forum (ELTIF) & English Odyssey. The whole program was planned and implemented owing to the efforts taken by Dr. Vinija N S, in association with ELTIF.

Three resource persons from Mysore led the classes

1. Ms. Anitha Manohari. M,
Govt Pre-University College, High School
Sector, B. Seehalli, T. Narasipura Taluk,
Mysore District, Karnataka.
2. Ms. Savitha B B,
Asst teacher of English,
G H P S Badagalapura,
Saraguru Tq, Mysuru District, Karnataka.
3. Ms. Shwetha
GHPS Kadahampapura
Gandinagara Cluster,H.D.Kote,
MysuruKarnataka.

Apart from these teacher educators, other teachers from the district of Thrissur also joined , to conduct different sessions in the

camp. They were,

1. Bindu K, RSLPS Enkakkad, Wadakkanchery
2. Elizabeth Poulouse, St. Pius X UPS
Wadakkanchery
3. Meenu Krishnan, NHSS Irinjalakuda
4. Kulirma Beevi, SPKMMGUPS
Madayikonam
5. Femy Francis, St. Joseph's CGHSS Thrissur
6. Arathy K R, GLPS Mullur
7. Sini Varghese, St. Joseph's HSS Mathilakam
8. Nithya T N, Govt. Girls LP School,
Irinjalakuda.

The program started with an inaugural session on 3rd April, at 10 AM. Madakkathara Grama Panchayat President Ms. Indira Mohan inaugurated the function which was presided over by the School PTA President, Ms. Sowmya Sujith. After the formalities of the same, the children who had come were divided into three batches according to the classes they study in. From then on, the scenario changed spontaneously in a marvelous way. During the sessions that followed, nothing became an obstacle in the communication between the children and the three eminent teachers from the other state. Literally they captured the minds and spirits of the children. Dances, songs, stories, games and what not! And that too, everything in English. The children did not feel any difficulty in understanding English, even if it was a foreign language which was quite distant and unfamiliar to them till then. Though they had previously done several activities to enhance their skills in reading and writing English, they lacked experience in the aspects of listening and speaking. And of course, those two aspects are to be given more importance while teaching, or learning

a language.

In the history of the school, it was for the first time such an initiative for enriching the English language was being carried out. For students from classes 2 and 3, the teachers adopted activities centered around different games and riddles and so on. As there was no scope for the participants to speak with the teachers in their mother tongue, they tried very well to speak in English.

The level of activities for the students of classes 4 and 5 were a bit advanced. They started by self- introductory activities, which were presented in the form of songs, accompanied by interesting dance steps. How happily the children got engaged with them and in the process, they were unknowingly acquiring the communicative skills and also the language elements. A very clear improvement was visible in the children by the end of the three days' camp.

Activities for the students of classes 6 and 7 included stories and rhymes which demanded more participation from the children. The trainers showed amazing capability in drawing quick and relevant responses from the children. It is quite commendable that Ms. Anita Maheswari had an abundant collection of teaching-learning materials which she carried with her all this way from Karnataka. The expertise with which she was using them was astounding! There were a lot of pictures of a wide variety of things, animals, persons

etc. Using these, she could catch the children's attention while presenting the stories.

Work experience classes, such making different types of paper caps, games that encouraged healthy competitive spirit, dumb charades based on suggested themes whereby mental abilities of the students were nourished, skits or small dramas empowering their performing and speaking skills and many more activities of this nature took place in these three days. The most important point to be mentioned here is that there was not a single instance wherein the children got bored by the teaching or learning activities. Or in another sense, they never realised that they were engaged in any learning process that they were used to. Rather, the trainers made sure that they were immersed in an English environment that provided the ideal atmosphere to learn the language and also kept them entertained.

All efforts from the part of the resource teachers made the sessions energetic and enthusiastic. The strategies they followed were according to the psychological approaches prescribed by the modern educationists. In fact, the teachers in the school were the ones who got benefited most out of the camp. Of course, it is a landmark step in the field of English education in the future. All the teachers and students are ready to take it as a challenge to explore, and learn more about the possibilities of mastering the global language, English.

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.

Mail : eltifjournaleditor@gmail.com

How a school undergoes change when it collaborates with a professional organization

Dr Zulaiha Shakeel

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Input provided by

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About the School

Wisdom Public School is promoted by Vision Educational Trust. It's a dream of a few visionaries to build an excellent school to create a ripple of future for society to uplift the visions of domicile. The School is committed to providing comprehensive education which seeks to develop the children into academically proficient, morally upright and socially well-integrated individuals. The value-based integrated learning approach is weaved into the educational process at the primary level to establish moral values in school.

MoU signed with ELTIF on 24.11.2023

Teacher Training Programme 1

(Held at Wisdom Public School)

A two-day workshop on Teaching Practices was organized by the school for its in-house teachers in collaboration with ELTIF on 15 & 16 October 2023.

Thrust Areas:

- Classroom Communication
- Academic Management
- Pedagogy for 21-Century Learners
- Learner-centred Teaching

Resource Person: Dr P Bhaskaran Nair

Professor of English, Hindustan University, Chennai

(Formerly of Pondicherry Central University)

Teacher Training Programme 2

SCENT - Summer Camp for Enriching and

Nourishing Talents.

Held at St. Joseph's School, Chathiah, Kochi, Kerala

Detailed Report of the Training Programme

The teachers of WPS were invited to Kerala by ELTIF to attend SCENT - **Summer Camp for Enriching and Nourishing Talents** and to take part in the teacher training programme organized by ELTIF in collaboration with St. Joseph's School, Kochi, Kerala, from 16 - 18 April 2023.

Programme Introduction:

Considering the demands of the parents and the need of the students, the school is committed to equipping the students with adequate levels of communication skills in English. A pedagogy change seems inevitable since the present teaching-learning system does not fully fulfil this requirement.

Broad aim

The proposal for an orientation programme broadly aims at

- (i) enabling all the teachers to communicate naturally inside and outside the classroom (on the school campus during the entire working time) using English, and
- (ii) to familiarise the teachers with the recent development in pedagogy.

Specific objectives

- (i) To help all the teachers to function in simple English without fear or shyness.

- (ii) To get all academic and administrative activities carried out in English in a paced manner (step by step).
- (iii) To reduce teaching time by 10%, to begin with, and 30% to end with, in terms of periods/hours/days through a higher rate of learner involvement.
- (iv) To reduce teacher talk and maximize learner talk/activities in classrooms

Duration

The proposed teacher empowerment programme is for 3 full days offline and 4 one-hour sessions online.

Names of teacher-participants

1. Dr Zulaiha Shakeel
2. Ms Gowri
3. Ms Sangeetha
4. Ms Susila
5. Ms Pathrakali
6. Ms Shobana Priyadarshini
7. Mr Buhary
8. Mr Umar Farook
9. Mr Mohammed Fayis

Details of sessions held online:

Chief Trainer and Mentor
Dr P Bhaskaran Nair
Presiden, ELTIF

Date	Time
27 March 2023	07.00 - 08.00 pm
8 April 2023	
12 April 2023	
14 April 2023	

Details of sessions held offline:

Session - I Date: 16 April 23

Dr Dhanya Bhaskaran

Senior Manager, Macmillan Education India
Topic: Teacher Emerging as a Facilitator

Session - II . Date: 16 April 23

Sister Niranjana CSST

St. Teresa CGHSS Ernakulam

Topic: How to win the hearts of the students?

Session - III Date: 17 April 23

Dr Vinija NS

Teacher Trainer District Centre for English
DIET Thrissur

Topic: Teaching Techniques & Strategies

Session - IV Date: 18 April 23

Dr Leena A K

High School Teacher St Joseph's HS Chathiah
Kochi

Topic: Theatre in English as Second Language
Classroom (ESL)

Inaugural and Valedictory Sessions:

There were quite a lot of summer camp programmes planned in SCENT. It was momentum to be a part of the inauguration in which the Honorable MP Hibi Eden was the chief guest. Seeing his humble attire and participation in the programme was delightful. Participants were honoured with books by the hosting team. We all took a group photo during the valedictory to close it to the heart.

Activities the participants learnt independently demonstrated online and during the training there

1. Board Race
2. Titanic
3. Missing / hidden words from poem
4. Story formation from 5 words
5. Story with pictures. Stick on board
6. Dumb Charades
7. Story forming from 10 sentences
8. Entry card for trip
9. Word Marathon
10. self-intro with dance, song
11. Word act by Buhari
12. Dice game to sentence formation bWord Marathon
13. Spin and Speak
14. Ramp walk
15. Vocabulary building from story

16. Connection game
17. I would like to....
18. See the picture Say the answer
19. My routine
20. If I were.....
21. A trip to Courtallam
22. Flip game
23. Word race
24. Sentence builders
25. Our Culture and Heritage
26. Cup game
27. Theatre art
28. Freeze
29. Product with name Ad
30. Activity with eyes closed
31. Product advertisement using name
32. Passing expression
33. Storytime using images
34. Word Bricks House
35. Word ladder
36. Picture description

Activities learnt during the technical sessions

Day - 1 (Technical Session I)

1. Story creating
2. Finding hidden words from poem
3. Positive and negative from video

Day - 1 (Technical Session II)

1. Catching apples
2. Bingo song
3. Small fish – big fish
4. Train clap
5. Chain reading

Day - 2 (Technical Session - III)

1. Entry card for a trip
2. Story sequencing
3. Pictorial story telling
4. Enacting a story
5. Board race
6. Star chart/hunt
7. Picture talk

Day - 2 (Technical Session IV)

1. Passing Claps – theatrical
2. Freeze and Move
3. Fire and Water
4. Product Selling

5. Cup gabbing

Individual feedback of teachers Ms Gowri

I am a Tamil teacher. Still, I wanted to be a part of English Communication Skills which I aspire to learn as it is a global language. I could interact well with the students and teachers of St. Joseph's school.

Ms Sangeetha

It helped us communicate better with our students, make teaching more effective according to students' needs and expectations.

Ms Susila

Though I am a Tamil teacher, I was curious to attend the training to learn English and build confidence. I really could participate actively in the teaching and training process. I am following specific strategies learnt from there successfully here.

Ms Pathrakali

The online training helped us a lot to get along with the host before reaching there. Otherwise, it would have been a tough experience to plan the travel thinking about how we would be considered there. Even before the actual training, we became one among you and that helped us travel and stay with you there comfortably and peacefully. And the learning was so fruitful and exciting.

Ms Shobana Priyadarshini

I came with two of my daughters who had a nice time during our sessions held there. They felt at home as they were given importance during the inaugural session with something they like. They too, participated with the children of St. Joseph's school. I could learn a lot from the technical sessions. Some of them I already knew but gained confidence to use it

Mr Buhary

During preparation, we could collect a lot of activities ourselves and practised. Trainers also trained us online with some pedagogical methods to improve on what we had already prepared.

Mr Umar Farook

The “Teacher turns to be a facilitator” session was an eye-opening session. I used to interact a lot with the students. Still, I could feel that what I had been doing was not enough during the session. I could understand the importance of why teachers to be a facilitator.

Mr Mohammed Fayis

The trainers’ energy throughout was the best model for holding the same during the class while teaching the children. If we involve the students in active learning, I could witness our energy being saved and even improved wherever required.

Overall Comments:

The training visit to Kerala helped the teachers to grow professionally. It inculcated student management and equipped them with traditional and modern pedagogical strategies. This impacted our teachers’ teaching and enhanced students learning. This also served as a cultural exchange programme that enabled teachers to learn through the partner institutions’ experts and other invited experts. It was an exciting experience with a new culture, meeting new people and growing as an inclusive teacher. We were invited to go with the children, which was a brand new cultural experience for them to enjoy and learn.

Above all, the hospitality was heart-touching. The host team was there to receive us even at odd hours (4 am) at the station. We were taken to their homes before sending us to the accommodation area.

We sincerely thank Dr Bhaskaran Nair, the ELTIF team, the Programme Coordinator Dr Leena and the team of St. Joseph’s School, Chathiah. Wishing the collaboration to continue in the future to enrich our school’s teaching-learning process and gain professional experience by interacting with the children of either side as part of a cross-cultural exchange.

Conclusion

We realized one thing—When we remain in isolation, we are quite convinced that (i) what we are doing is right or sometimes the best, (ii) what we are doing is the only good or right thing, (iii) we are the only people who do the right things, and (iv) there are no better things than what we do. All these misconceptions got erased from our mind when we started interacting with others in the field—teachers in other institutions, trainers and other better informed people. Interaction with the rest of the world, especially with professionals, is quite essential for professional improvement.

ELTIF is looking for tutors

RELTIF is looking for tutors who are willing to be part of its ‘Rural development programmes through English language education’. Students of DTED., B Ed., retired teachers and working teachers who can spare a little time during weekends and holidays are welcome to join us. ELTIF has been organizing communicative English programmes for students of all levels, self-empowerment programmes for teachers of English, training programmes for all teachers in English medium schools, awareness programmes for parents, support programmes for mothers, skill development programmes for women engaged in self employment, and so on. Those who would like to be volunteers, please contact the office bearers. (Addresses and contact numbers on the back cover page) –Secretary, ELTIF

ELTIF Teaching-Learning Materials

ELTIF is planning to develop a ‘Material Bank for Rural and Backward 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

It works in my classroom

Interviewing a local celebrity: Creative Writing Tasks for UG Students

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What does the term 'generation gap' bring to our mind? Mainly life styles and tastes, no doubt. Again, which would be better—trying to force the 'new gen' to revert to the life styles and tastes of the 'good old gen' or convince the traditionalists on the need of adjusting themselves with the changing trends and tastes? Though old, I believe that I too swim along with the 'current'—yes, I mean the current generation, too. At least, as teacher of English I am "self-forced" to go by the needs and tastes of those adolescents sitting in front of me. I can't, and I don't have to wait for the curriculum planners, syllabus designers and question paper setters to realize learner needs and aspirations. Therefore, let me teach the young undergraduate students something new and currently relevant in the writing class—Working in pairs, how to interview a local celebrity.

Step1.Identify a local celebrity—film actor, dancer, writer, singer, non-conventional farmer, sportsperson etc. and imagine that you are going to interview that person for your college magazine. Prepare all the questions that you would like to ask her/him. Quite often, your teachers may tell you to organize your ideas before you start writing. As a teacher, I would advise you list all the questions related to the facts you want to know about that person, without worrying about the sequence or order or group. Look at the following questions that I wrote as my first draft.

(a) Good evening, Ms. Anusha. Welcome to our college magazine. We are really happy to have you with us at our college. We're planning to invite you to our college day. However, shall we ask something about the awards that you bagged recently, for your

performance?

- (b) When was your first stage performance? Do you remember the details?
- (c) How about your family? We have heard that on a few occasions, when you were not much confident to perform, it was your husband who encouraged you and he has been all supportive to you. Will you please comment?
- (d) What are your plans for future? Any plans to go abroad or thinking of settling here itself?
- (e) We know that you have already worked with great theatre personalities. Among them, who has inspired you most?
- (f) What is your next project?
- (g) Would you like to tell us about your parents, childhood, and early education/
- (h) You rarely appear in public except for your stage performance. Any particular reason/
- (i) Are you thinking of directing any drama on your own?
- (j) Your grandfather was a popular folk artist. And your father wrote a few plays which were staged across the state. Do you think that drama or acting is there in your blood?
- (k) Any plans to move the film world? Any invitation, so far?
- (l) Your son bagged the best actor title at the State Youth Festival. How do you see his entry into theatre?
- (m) Your husband is a creative writer, a popular political satirist. Does he have any plan to write plays for staging?

The questions are not in any logical order. Now, you can rearrange them either chronologically, or on the basis of some other grouping. If you go chronologically, the following may be one of the right sequences.

1 a. 2 g. 3b. 4j. 5e. 6c. 7m. 8l. 9i. 10f. 11k.

12 d.13 h.

Now, you remember that a few important facts were missing— the best characters she presented on the stage, why she always preferred bold and nonconventional female characters, and not the stereotyped Indian woman, why she refuses to dance in a drama though she is really good at dancing, etc. Many more such questions can be inserted, once you

have made the sequencing as shown above.

Always remember, you must be thinking of the possible responses—mainly positive and negative. In either case, you must be ready with one or two questions related to the response. For example, “Are you interested in politics?” The answer can be ‘Yes’ or ‘No’. Think of one or two queries to follow in either case.

Signposts for teachers

How to Interview a Famous Person (edited version) By Chitra Reddy

<https://content.wisestep.com/interview-not-interview-famous-person/>

Interviewing seems an easy process, but not every time, especially when it comes to interviewing a celebrity. Although it is fun to interview a celeb, it becomes quite tedious as a lot of research work is required. It is often difficult to make famous people give you an interview unless you also renowned and a public figure. Well, need not worry as there are many ways by which you can interview a famous person.

How to Interview a Famous Person

- 1. Start with small people out there:** You should not start directly with the big stars as it is obvious you would not be able to reach out to them. So, to reach out to the bigger names in the public, you first need to interview the locally renowned people like the local singers, the artists, the theatre artist and so on.
- 2. Research on the celebrity:** You need to do full research on personality. Research would include all the work they are engaged in.
- 3. Be highly informed, but not misinformed:** You need to be highly informed about your celebrity. What kind of work they do, what extra things they are handling and so on. Make sure you are well informed and not misinformed about the facts.
- 4. Be polite while you ask queries:** Although it is something so basic, yet it needs to be taken into consideration.
- 5. Ask the right questions:** Asking the right questions is key. What if you are interviewing a celeb from a theatre background and asking questions related to science? It obviously will sound bizarre and the interview would fail.
- 6. Do not go personal or indulge in their domestic life:** Celebrities hate media indulging in their life. So, whether you are a media person or no, if you need to interview a famous person from celebrities do not even try and indulge in their personal life.
- 7. If possible, brief them beforehand about the interview:**
The celebrities are busy with their shootings and other assignments. So, they might not know what you are going to ask.
- 8. Ask queries in symmetry:** Symmetry means in a particular order. That, of course, everyone knows, but this must be kept in mind while putting questions to the interviewee.
For example, you should first ask about the place he or she has come from, then about the struggle he or she did, slowly and steadily you must reach the final question. This is how you should move step by step. So, above are some of the points that one should keep in mind when you decided to interview a famous person.

The author, Chitra Reddy: 12 years of Experience within the International BPO/ Operations and Recruitment Areas. Extensive experience in Complete Recruitment Life Cycle - Sourcing, Negotiation and Delivery. Loves Writing in my Free Time on varied Topics

*The Editor acknowledges the author's support to the Journal of ELTIF.