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From the Editor's Desk

Teachers who 'don't teach'

Personally, I believe that teachers can broadly be classified into five categories on the basis of their contribution to learning. The first group not only doesn't contribute anything to learning, but develops in learners, a sort of hatred towards schooling. They are the potential agents behind the high rate of dropouts from classes. They may be successful in anything except in teaching. Let's call them 'paradoxical teachers'. (Title borrowed from Shashi Tharoor- 'Paradoxical Prime Minister', 2018, Aleph Books.)

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

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

The fourth category makes the learners work themselves, without regurgitating contents into the learners, but by guiding them as and when they need. Their aim is to enhance the learner's cognitive development. They may neither paraphrase textbooks, nor 'dictate' notes. Giving ready-made answers to the 'sure questions' may not be on their teaching agenda. No need to say, they may not be very popular among students or colleagues, and as a result, in the community, either. But, a few students then, and more students later, recognize their contribution towards shaping their character

and personality(not marks). Shall we call them the 'road-not -taken teachers' for the sake of convenience, following the traveller in Robert Frost?

The fifth category, of course, a very small minority, doesn't teach at all in the conventional sense; they identify the potentials in each learner, and limitations too; and then make them work with the help of their own inner potentials. While all the first three groups of teachers insist on the learners' eyes fixed on them while teaching (or better to say, lecturing), the fourth group always prompts the learner to look inward, to the self. The learner's own mistakes, or better to say, deviant forms, are the best routes to reach the right point. No tuition, but only intuition, as Emerson pointed out long ago. Reflection is the process of learning which is recursive in nature. "Where did I go wrong?", "How did this particular trick work?", "Which should be the next step—C or D?", "If it clicked last time, shouldn't I try it this time as well?", "Suppose I try this one this time?"—these are some of the soliloquies and asides of the learner who is guided (not taught) by the fourth type of teachers. The teacher of course, aims at the learner's cognitive development; but first goes beyond cognition to metacognition, only to come back to cognition. No harm in calling this minority as 'Confucius teachers' since the ancient Chinese philosopher by that name asserted: "Give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. Teach him fishing, you feed him for ever". That is how metacognition works in learners—they fish on their own.

Metacognition is a gift that all human beings are endowed with; and each makes use of this ability in varying degrees in day to day life, though we may neither be aware of its existence in us, nor the fact that we have been applying it. Metacognition, simply defined as "thinking about thinking" is perhaps one of the

best ways of shaping our future by ourselves. In that case, shouldn't we, teachers try to promote that ability inherent in children for shaping their future in better ways?

To put the question in another way, why should we impose certain ways of learning on learners that we think are good or effective, when each learner has his or her own preferred ways. I said, 'each learner', not 'learners'; since there are no learning styles common or uniform to all learners. Therefore, the moment we refer to 'learning styles' we have a single individual learner in our mind. Now, the next question is 'who knows the learning styles of learner A'. Neither A nor the parents. The teacher knows or the teacher is expected to know, because it is only the teacher who observes and studies 'the learner at work'. To put it another way, a good teacher is one who observes how each learner works. Then, an inquisitive teacher arrives at the conclusion how a successful learner works. At the next stage, a resourceful teacher employs various teaching strategies and learning materials to suit the learning strategies of each learner. Here, the theory of multiple intelligence comes to the help of this resourceful teacher, among many other theories. A theoretically well-informed teacher goes one step forward and makes the learner aware of his or her learning styles, potentials as well as limitations. The learner is shown how best the positive styles can be put to use;

and how the limitations can be overcome. For example, a theoretically well-informed teacher tells a particular learner how he or she is good at memorization and that learner is encouraged to learn poems by heart. If the same learner is slow in listening and comprehending the contents; the teacher gives extra time to finish each task.

Let's think of all the qualities mentioned in the paragraph above combined in one—a good, inquisitive, resourceful, and theoretically well-informed teacher. This teacher employs the potentials of metacognition, and trains each learner to reflect on the learning strategies they usually employ; points out the effective and successful one among them and encourages the learner to use them regularly. That teacher singles out the weak learning styles and suggests better alternatives. That teacher may not have time to 'teach' the conventional way; nor is she bothered about 'covering the portion'. No need. This teacher is teaching the learner how to teach oneself. This teacher *does not teach*; but guides.

A good shepherd is the one who walks behind the herd, observing each member of the herd; not the one who walks ahead.

P. Bhaskaran Nair
(Editor)

One more online programme from ELTIF : English Language Teacher Empowerment Programme (ELTEP) Workshop

Access to opportunities was denied during the twenty months of the pandemic—everyone complains. But, what was denied to all of us was only less than half of our opportunities. More than half was open to all, in fact, welcoming us—no, urging us to make use of them. True, all of us lost many opportunities *to gain*—money, power, position, popularity... But, opportunities to *give* were on the rise. Those were the opportunities to serve the less privileged than us, the more disadvantaged than us, the greater sufferers than us, the more severe losers than us. Comparing to their loss, sufferings and deprivation of opportunities, our loss was rather trivial. The crucial question is, during the pandemic, what did you give; not what did you lose. Though direct access was denied to village children and women, ELTIF tried to reach them indirectly, through teacher empowerment programmes. English Language Teacher Empowerment Programme (ELTEP) was born online on the Teacher's Day (5th September) 2021. By that time the Fortnightly Online Lecture series had completed almost one year, again empowering teachers.

***Assessment as an opportunity to learn more about students as persons**

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Dear members of the wider ELTIF family,

I am indeed happy and greatly honoured by this opportunity to share a few thoughts at this meeting marking the restarting of the school teacher support activities after their suspension on account of the pandemic.

My only 'qualification' as far as I can imagine is a firm alignment with the philosophy of ELTIF's teacher-oriented programmes that emphasize teachers' self development and empowerment as against conventional teacher training delivered by experts. During my years of service at CIE and later, CIEFL I always felt that our practical interventions (extension services) should be seen as oriented to in-service teacher support rather than to teacher training as such. THE CIE had no engagement with the design and implementation of B.Ed./D Ed. pre-service courses. All the organizations (ELTIs and RIEs) the CIE worked with had only in-service programmes.

A principle I found meaningful in my extension mode activities (and which I now see echoed in ELTIF's stance) is that the teacher in service has found a way of dealing with the challenges and contradictions of the job of the teacher in formal education. This happens after just months, not necessarily long years on the job. A less than sympathetic way of putting it would be through the expression 'somehow manage'. I am, however, inclined to believe that the adult teacher with some self concept to preserve is making decisions and choices consciously and is not totally a manipulated puppet.

The key point here is that what the teacher perceives and understands guides her decisions and actions. In other words, her practice.

Teachers' practice will change over time as they come to know more –about learners, learning, language, curriculum and so on. Given the state's ever present concern to improve education, the preferred and seemingly sound/effective option is to provide 'new' knowledge from outside or rather above. A conscious rejection of this top down mode is found in ELTIF's emphasis on facilitating sharing of experiences among teachers.

What I share below is linked to the theme of teachers' perceptions based on experience. It is linked (almost inevitably) to the processes of assessment and evaluation. I suggest that a new perspective can be adopted.

In the conventional approach to assessment of pupil learning (whether formal or informal) the central element is the observation and interpretation of learners' responses. These responses are mostly elicited through the questions or tasks (stimuli) contained in tests. In the officially promoted CCE mode, the idea was to include responses as they occur (incidentally /naturally) during classroom transactions in addition those elicited through planned items or tasks linked to specific pre-selected teaching points. Whether elicited or emitted responses are in view, assessment of learning involves applying a standard to the responses of learners. This standard reflects an expectation. Since instruction is meant to bring about some learning, it is quite appropriate to check whether or not this expectation has been realized. The application of the standard necessarily yields in each case a finding of success or non-success. Even if we do not categorize non-success as failure leading to

*The text of the lecture delivered by Prof. Jacob Tharu, inaugurating the monthly online ELTEP workshop on 5 Sept. 2021

penalties, the basic finding of 'more' or 'less' learning stands. Thus higher or lower scores are assigned to each student, which in turn leads to ranking

The proposition I put forward is that the responses of learners can also be looked at qualitatively and non-judgmentally. This not anything very original. In the base discipline of psychometrics a distinction is made between 'maximum performance' testing and 'typical performance' testing. In all formal tests and also in domains such as sports competitions it is assumed that the individual's response is based on her best effort,--- so as to find the correct solution to a problem, compose the best written or spoken message, measure something in a lab task as accurately as possible, run as fast or jump as high as possible, and so on. In such settings high or low scores and the ranking they provide makes sense. Indeed the essential aim is to arrive at a rank list-objectively or 'scientifically'.

Measurement based on typical performance is employed in the study of attitudes, interests, preferences, values through questionnaires, and more challengingly through interviews. The aim is to find what persons (respondents) prefer or choose to do --freely and naturally without any conscious best effort. All responses are equally valid: nothing is scored high or low. Teachers, especially school teachers, spend a great deal of time analyzing (scoring) learners responses in test answer scripts and awarding high or low scores. This data is for the system (authorities) and is of little relevance for the teacher in her pedagogic role.

I believe teachers should put more effort into noting qualitative differences among students in their ways of responding to the situations (stimuli) they encounter in school settings. This could lead to an awareness and appreciation of different modes and styles of learning within class groups.

It is worth noting here that the most significant outcome of efforts to expand school enrolments over recent years (through SSA and the like) has been the striking increase in learner diversity. There has been ample policy rhetoric about recognizing, welcoming,

even celebrating diversity. Sincere efforts have been made to accommodate and support children who are differently abled. However, the mainstream syllabus remains aligned to standard requirements represented by the IIT entrance and NEET exams that are profitably exploited by the coaching industry.

In the formulation of CCE, had the second C --standing for comprehensive -- been explored more thoughtfully before rushing to define criteria for scoring indications of desirable social behaviour we might have had better sense of learner diversity in its richness by now.

We can still move purposefully in that direction without any change in the syllabus as I have suggested above. What individual teachers come to know about learner diversity ---slowly and unobtrusively-- will be their own knowledge. This can be shared with peers, in programmes organized by ELTIF, for instance. This will not be anything to report to the system since it has not been asked for. This 'fund of knowledge' generated and collaboratively enriched by teachers will belong to them and serve as a valuable resource for improved pedagogic practice.

I have not worked out any practical guidelines let alone a so called manual. The only advice I would add is that the easy connection of learner's qualities with their social status, gender or community must be avoided so that stereotypes are not created. No child should be pre-judged and labelled. The teacher must discover the unique characteristics of each child as she reveals it through her responses. I hope the perspective shared here will be found helpful in small ways in the activities that are taken up in the workshops to follow.

The idea of teachers' observing learners and getting to know more about them is appealing and may be readily endorsed. However, my larger claim that this process will enhance teachers' capacity in a way that contributes to empowerment needs more support. This, what I turn to now.

Over recent years many weaknesses of conventional education have been highlighted, especially low levels of student achievement that were usually attributed to supposed low

levels of teacher competence. The enforced shift to online education where technology took over some aspects of instruction was widely and almost vociferously welcomed. However, by the end of the summer of 2021, there were calls for the reopening of schools from various quarters, including, notably, professionals who studied education in action during the many months of providing only online instruction. It has been found that heavy investment in technology based resources to support online learning notwithstanding there was a high level of 'learning loss' especially for children from less privileged backgrounds. Lack of smart phones and computers with internet access was clearly the major factor, but not the whole story. Some inherent limitations of online education have also been noted.

Now we seem to be getting back to seeing merit in the classroom based transaction of the curriculum—in the brick building. What is special about the traditional school - an obvious and intuitively positive feature - is that it provides for children learning together. This does not happen automatically. The guidance of a teacher who has an ongoing relationship with the learners is necessary. This is, as we generally believe, the most suitable arrangement for generating wholesome and productive learning experiences. The relatively stable group setting allows students to interact face to face among themselves to carry forward the learning initiated by the teacher. One indication of the value assigned to this social environment is the high priority given in inclusive education to place the differently abled child in the physical company of peers. Of course, this is only an enabling condition, and much more needs to be done. Consider a hypothetical case. The parents of an orthopedically challenged child want to avoid the strain of daily travel to school and back. They have the resources to recruit a set of 'the best teachers in the world' from the high profile online teaching corporations—one for each subject. These teachers will not appear on the screen, but will be physically present like classical private tutors. I am sure no serious educationist would find much merit in such a

venture. The point is that the child is being denied the company of her peers. However, it must be noted that the location of the child in a group is not always an unmixed blessing. There have been many reports of children being shy and silent in class, of children (apparently different) who feel they are not accepted and respected by peers or even bullied and so withdraw into their shells. Children sitting together does not automatically lead to a supportive environment. Thus for the learning potential in the group setting to be realized, the teacher's skilled interventions to overcome negative factors and hence create a desirable environment are of crucial importance. Strengthening the capacity for such interventions should have the highest priority. There is an added urgency to this issue now.

I would argue that all teachers (who stay in the profession) have the essential resources to handle the role discussed above. This premise leads to a questioning of the bias towards 'remediation' that marks programmes targeting in-service teachers. As noted above, in reviews of the quality of school education the less than optimal performance of the individual teacher especially in state schools has often been identified as an important factor. Gaps in teachers' knowledge and skills appear to underly this shortfall. Plugging such gaps thus appears to be the appropriate solution. It is also convenient. For the system, deputing teachers in thousands to attend short term refresher courses is an easy and highly visible mode of action: far easier than providing more schools and classrooms with better facilities, increasing teacher availability, revising curriculum and evaluation schemes, and the like.

Programmes to support teachers are, without question important. My objection is to the deficit view that leads to remediation of (presumed) gaps in teachers' knowledge as the overall aim, that in turn requires inputs from experts. I am happy to be in line with ELTIF's approach that rejects such a top down model.

As noted above teachers' capacity to create a supportive learning environment for diverse learners in a class should be the priority target of programmes aimed at their professional

growth. And for this, I believe, there are resources that teachers already have that can be built upon thus reducing the reliance on infusions from outside.

Observing students in class and outside in an ongoing manner and gaining a sense (appreciation) of them as persons is something that most teachers do without much conscious effort. Note that 'observation' does not require a well formed technique and accurate recording. The term is used here to cover all the attending and noting a teacher can do. A few teachers might be exceptionally perceptive and sensitive, but hardly any one is likely to be markedly 'inadequate' in this respect. This knowledge (subjective and incomplete) stays with the teacher, and would naturally influence her interactions with individual children. The system has no interest in such informal knowledge, and so it can remain free from authorized categories and formats. Such knowledge builds up over time and gives the teacher an increasingly better informed picture of her students as persons.

As we know, for the group environment of the classroom to be supportive, individual learners need to feel recognized and accepted. Students from more privileged backgrounds are likely to have a smaller group of friends that provides them the feeling of safety and confidence; they are also more in tune with the mainstream syllabus. Thus they are better primed to participate in class and come up with 'correct' answers, than their less privileged peers. Language lessons especially have many open-ended activities. The teacher's observations

can cover even students who are not visibly and noisily participating. The suggestions they offer, questions they raise, their unspoken responses to their peers' behaviour, are some things the teacher can observe. Apart from this, even answers to written assignments and tests looked at qualitatively reveal interesting things. For instance, in a "write about someone you admire" type task, is the person chosen a local known person or a famous personality? What are the food items, outside school activities, animals, flowers, trees.... chosen for description? The teacher can bring these items into class discussions to make them more rich in scope. Thus the experiences and preferences of the relatively silent learners are brought to light without identifying particular individuals. One of the acknowledged weakness of the standard curriculum/textbooks is that the social world they portray is limited. The widening of discussions described above is one effective way of going beyond the textbook to make more learners feel at home.

I would describe teachers' engaging in (hopefully) increasingly successful interventions towards creating a comfortable social atmosphere in class groups as a major dimension of professional growth. Observing students' responses as they appear is something all teachers do without instructions and specific training. Enriching this process and the related pedagogic moves happens best when there is sharing of experience among peers. It does not call for training. Thus the new perspective on assessment discussed here can be seen as a self-sustaining source of professional development.

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

*** “Twenty years of teaching experience or one-year experience repeated twenty times?” CPD revisited and redefined.**

*The text of the talk by **Prof. Paul Gunashekar**, formerly of EFL University Hyderabad, felicitating the launch of the English Language Teacher Empowerment Programme (ELTEP) Workshop on 5th Sept. 2021

Prepared by **Dr. C. Praveen**

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Many congratulations on the unique ELTIF initiative: for conceiving Empowerment training through online mode and for helping the teachers of English, establish tangible links between practice and theory.

Today, (September 05) is a day we pay homage to a great Indian educationist, Dr.S.Radhakrishnan, the former President of India and a teacher himself who desired that “Teachers should be the best minds in the country”.

Teacher modeling can be seen as a continuum... At the one end is the ‘official teacher’ who is mainly responsible for transmission of information and skills - a kind of teacher which Paulo Freire perceived as part of the ‘banking school of education’. At the other end of the continuum, the role of the teacher that is crucial...A teacher who is no longer the person seen as the sole repository of knowledge, the uncontested judge of correctness and acceptability. She is only a member of the group of service personnel called ‘teacher’.

Fifteen years ago, the ‘National Focus Group for Teaching English: Position Paper’, outlined the route teacher education should take to establish and sustain high standards of teaching. Teacher education was perceived as ongoing, on site as well as preparatory. That is, teachers not only attend a rigorous training programme like BED but also a full fledged course induction training programme such as the English and Foreign Language University’s (EFLU) PG Diploma in the teaching of English or the Regional Institute of English South India, Bangalore’s PG Diploma in the teaching of English. However this may not be adequate. Evidently, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the way forward to

uphold the quality of teaching.

There are a few steps that can be taken to implement CPD:

1. Setting up of an Induction Scheme and a support system to the new entrant to the school faculty. Instead of going into the classroom directly, the new teacher needs to be given time and institutional support to “acclimatize to the new milieu”.The support system should include mentoring by an experienced teacher who shows the new recruit the routes.
2. Developing a vibrant regional Special Interest Group and a Pan-Indian teacher network which includes experienced practitioners. This is essential because a majority of teachers work in intellectual and academic isolation. So, setting up a special ELT Special Interest Group or joining an online network of teachers like ELTIF or ELT@I .
3. Encouraging faculty to do specialized online and distance education programmes at the best institutes.Every teacher should do a comprehensive online teacher training programme like PGCTE or short specialized online courses in various aspects of pedagogy at the best universities perhaps with sponsorship of bodies like the state governments, UGC, British Council or the US Regional English Office. This will lead to enrichment of both practice and theory.
4. Sponsoring faculty participation in national and international ELT conferences, seminars and webinars. Since the knowledge base of teaching is always in a state of flux, it is imperative that teachers are encouraged to participate in relevant academic events like the ELTIF event today to enable them to update their professional expertise

and network with fellow practitioners.

“Remember ...it is only through mutual sharing of ideas and experiences that professional growth happens”.

5. Introducing a system what is often called Peer Appraisal to promote professional quality assurance. It is like having academic or pedagogic activity monitored constructively by helpful colleagues which contribute significantly to a teacher's professional growth.
6. Lastly, ensuring what is often referred to as 'Reactive Remediation' based on student appraisal of faculty. This might sound intimidating, but it is a vital source of feedback on a teachers' academic performance and professional conduct. It is not like the formal appraisal system

in universities, but something that acknowledges the fact that students are an excellent source of feedback on our teaching.

Let me conclude with Penny Ur's words of wisdom:

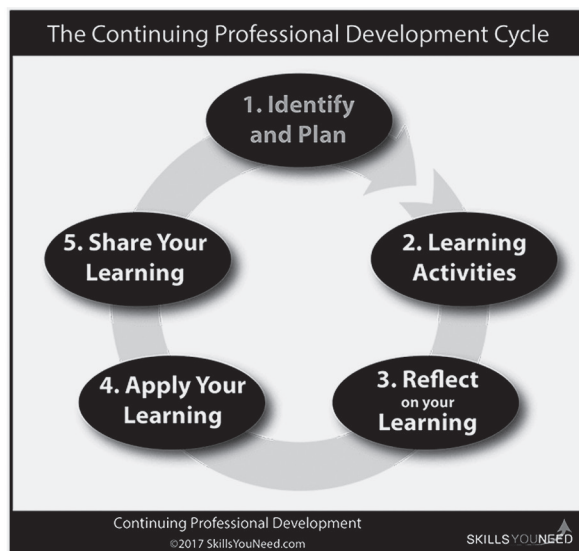
It has been said that teachers who had been teaching for twenty years may be divided into two categories: those with twenty years experience and those with one year experience repeated twenty times.

In other words, sheer time on the job does not ensure fruitful experience and professional progress...Successful teachers are those who continue to develop throughout their lives. The completion of a pre-service course is only an initial qualification and is only the beginning... Happy Teaching.

Tips for teachers

The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Cycle

The process of CPD is designed to help you identify and act on your own development needs. The Continuous Professional Development Cycle (see figure) shows that professional development is, like much other learning, best thought of as a circular series of activities. The process moves from identifying your development needs through planning and then carrying out your learning activities, to reflecting on your learning, and then applying it and sharing it with others.



Perhaps the most important thing about CPD is that it is personal.

Each individual is expected to identify their own needs, organise their own training, and learn for themselves. Part of being a professional is taking responsibility for your own skills and recognising when they need to improve.

Read more at: https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/continuing-professional-development.html#google_vignette

Reports of ELTIF Fortnightly Online Lectures

Lecture 17. 19 July, 2021 **Speaker: Dr. K. Elango**

Former Professor & Head, Department of English Anna University, Chennai

Topic: Learners, Autonomous Learners & Lifelong Learners

Report by Dr. Leena AK

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Dr. Elango began his talk by delving into three questions related to learners: 'Who are learners?' 'How do they become autonomous learners?' and 'How can they become lifelong learners?' He elaborated these points by defining learning and describing the learning process. It is rather difficult to define and describe, because learning is something which everyone does, without even thinking about it. It's something like seeing, viewing, eating, etc. But learning is an individual process, he continued, it varies from learner to learner. Discussing a couple of definitions of learning, Dr Elango stated that learning is the process of acquiring something new. This can be knowledge, behaviour, skills, values, attitudes and preferences. It need not be necessarily cognitive skills alone, it can also be a physical skill. Learning is also a transformative process; it transforms the learner. There are three factors involved in this process-- input, process and reflection, which ultimately bring about some kinds of change in the behaviour of the learner. He added, the change in our behaviour need not be massive. It can be as simple as looking at some object or a particular concept from a different perspective.

As a next point, he elaborated on the details of the first virtual brain-Blue brain. It is the artificial brain and functions exactly like the way the human brain functions. Then, he outlined the impact of Artificial Intelligence or some of the gadgets of Artificial Intelligence. Later he spoke about Humanoid robots: Sophia (2016) and Grace. The reason for mentioning these in this context was that we are going to see these changes in our lifetime. The speaker proceeded to outlining the characteristics of students and their routine patterns and described students as students when they have teachers, they want to do what they want them to do.

Whereas learners also learn without teachers. He had a view that the present education policies are casting them in the same mould, in other words, we are producing the bricks of the same theme. He said that we want to make our students learners, we need to make them smart learners. We have to promote the 21st century skills which include creative thinking, critical thinking, problem solving and decision making, among learners. Later, he enumerated the qualities of 'smart learners' and contrasted them with ordinary learners. He continued, smart learners know all the facts and figures of the past or even predict the future-not even the immediate future but distant future-even a century later. He compared them with the sci-fi writers-whatever they predicted became true and cited an instance of George Orwell's work '1984'. He also talked about google map and its timeline updates to establish the fact that all the data about us is in the public domain (virtually everything is in the public domain). We need to move students from being merely students to smart learners. He also mentioned that parents are too ambitious and want their children to be all in all or top scorers. He used some descriptive terms to refer to the current generation of 'New Learners' as 'digital native, Z/AI/ hashtag #generation. He also showed some pictures of babies to justify his point. They have the impression that the older generation are all dinosaurs or outdated species. Even centuries ago John Dewey said that if we are going to teach today's students with yesterday's methodologies, approaches, techniques, strategies, you are going to deprive them of tomorrow. Tagore also agrees almost the same way. He says, "Don't limit a child to your own idea, your own learning." As teachers, Dr. Elango emphasized, that we have to be consistently creative. We need to have different

kinds of strategies. For instance, if the teacher is meeting his/her students for a semester, you need to have 60 different strategies in your toolkit/ teaching kit. In every class. There would be such an element of surprise for your learner.

Prof. Elango talked about different approaches, theories many people articulated. Then he cited Sugata Mitra as the perfect example for introducing the 'Hole in the wall Project' and how he became successful in this particular project. As part of an experimental study, Mitra placed a computer with internet in the hole of a wall. Nobody was teaching anybody. Street children saw it and started using it. The children became literate on their own. Sugata Mitra makes a distinction between school and learning. School is just a geographical location or physical space where learning is supposed to happen; but learning does not necessarily happen only in schools, it can happen anywhere. The architecture of knowledge has undergone change. The responsibility of the teacher is to provide an open environment, natural learning environment where learners can manage their learning on their own. He also mentioned Vikas Swarup, who was enthralled by this project and gave a wide coverage all over the world. In order to show that learning is a learner's responsibility, he quoted "learning is not the product of teaching. Learning is the activity of learners." When learners are actively involved in the learning process, then only they can learn.

Then the speaker moved on to Howard Gardner's 'multiple intelligence' In his *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (1983), he opined "We have this myth that the only way to learn something is to read it in a textbook or hear a lecture on it. And the only way to show that we've understood something is to take a short answer test or maybe occasionally with an essay question thrown in". Gardner challenges this point of view. Everything can be taught in more than one way. In the 20th century, IQ tests/scores were used for various purposes. But, there are many criticisms against it. Initially, he came up with seven intelligences, later he added two more.

He said that though intelligence can differ from person to person, all of us have all these nine intelligences at different levels. One or two intelligences are dominant in us, he continued, if we are able to identify and develop these intelligences, there will be every chance of becoming smart learners. But we follow a mono-model approach, within which all learners are supposed to learn in the same way. Recent studies have shown learners study differently. There are seven learning styles, they are: Visual (Spatial) Learners, Aural (Auditory) Learners, Physical (Kinesthetic) Learners, Verbal (Linguistic) Learners, Logical (Mathematical) Learners, Social (Interpersonal) Learners, Solitary (Intrapersonal) Learners. All of us learn through all these styles, one or two styles are predominant over us. Then he said that if you could identify weak learners in your classes, if you enable them to identify the style which they can learn, there is a chance of becoming better learners. After the Industrial Revolution, we have a number of resources besides teachers and textbooks. We have printed materials- text books, reference books, encyclopedias, documents. In online mode, we have synchronous and asynchronous programs such as e-books, audiobooks, podcasts, videos, talks/speeches, PPT+voice over, wikipedia, Apps, lyrics, online lectures, LMS, infographics, images. We have mass media such as radio, television, films, newspapers, magazines, journals, advertisements. Social media like FB, YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitter, Blogs. Related to sources, we have teachers, tutors, mentors, online groups. Peer, robot teachers. He also talked about various 'Learning Platforms' There are Moocs, Udemy, Coursera, EDX, Swayam and EdTech companies such as Byju's, Duolingo, Unacademy and advised to be a learner/ smart learner.

From this point, the speaker moved to the concept of blended learning which combines online educational materials and opportunities for interaction online with traditional place based classroom methods. Flipped model has gained wide acceptance among students and teachers. In such a classroom, all the materials that are to be learnt were sent to the learners in advance. It could be PPTs, pictures. Learners

learn them as their own before they come to the class. All students are nowadays sliding towards becoming digital learners. They use multiple gadgets. Later he talked about some of the characteristic features of digital learners. According to him, they are highly tech-savvy, empowered learners, digital citizens, knowledge curators, creators and communicators, global collaborators, impatient, learners are on-the-go. The one who is a digital learner, there is every chance that he/she is becoming an autonomous learner. Then he elaborated the term autonomy which means independence/freedom/self-determination and the definition of autonomy by Benson and Dickinson. Dr. Elango opined that the earlier the better to introduce this concept. In his view, we have to introduce it at the primary level. He made a clear distinction between new learners as against the conventional students to show the change in the process of learning and learners as well. Two theoretical perspectives which have shaped the current pedagogical practices. Promoting autonomous learning situated in the digital ecosystem, he detailed lifelong learning as the “ongoing, voluntary and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for either personal or professional reasons.” He

cited the example of Satya Nadella, CEO Microsoft. He claimed that he has always been a lifelong learner. Dr. Elango continued that lifelong learners have a hunger to learn. They’re constantly improving themselves and their performance, they’re open to learning in non-traditional ways from non-traditional sources. They’re willing and able to unlearn or give up things that are no longer useful. Life today is a smart toothbrush, smart toilet. If you want to be part of a highly technology dominated world in which we are going to live in, the world as it is known, you have to certainly become lifelong learners. Learning never ends, lifelong learners are lifelong winners. He concluded his lecture by describing an animated picture of how life is going to be in 3000 AD. For men, auto shaving will be important, for women, cosmetics will be much easier, for doctors, they will be able to check your bones without x-rays and by the year 3000 AD, your computer will punish you if you type something nasty. He summed up the whole lecture by pointing out two things: we need to transform our students as learners, autonomous learners and lifelong learners. We, as teachers should not remain as teachers, we need to become educators.

Signposts for Researchers

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Reports of ELTIF Fortnightly Online Lectures

Lecture 18. 26 July, 2021 **Speakers: Dr. Geetha Durairajan**

(Former Professor, Dept. of Testing & Evaluation,
EFL University Hyderabad gdurairajan@gmail.com

Dr. Shree Deepa

(Faculty, Centre for English Language Studies, Hyderabad University)
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Topic: English as a Window to India: Traditional Vs. Modern

Report by Dr. Karthika VK

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Prof. N. Krishnaswamy memorial lecture titled “English as a Window to India- Modern vs Traditional” was delivered by Dr. Geetha Durairajan and Dr. Shree Deepa. Dr. Geetha Durairajan, retired professor, EFL University, is the series editor of ‘*All about Language Teaching*’ with Cambridge University Press and also the author of the first book in the series entitled *Assessing Learners: A Pedagogic Resource*. She is the editor of the book *Perceptions of Language Pedagogy*, a collection of essays by Prof. N.S. Prabhu.

Dr. Shree Deepa is Associate Professor at the Centre for English Language Studies, University of Hyderabad. As an English teacher, she contributed to the empowerment of visually challenged learners, and she extensively works in the area of inclusivity and multilingual education. Both, Dr. Durairajan and Dr. Shree Deepa published their research works in journals of national and international repute.

The speakers began their talk by asserting how Prof. N. Krishnaswamy’s ideas and ideologies well aligned with the new National Education Policy- NEP 2020 and how he was an academic who was far ahead of his times. The visionary ideology of Prof. N. Krishnaswamy (hereafter NK) embraced the concept of education as a process that must result in the holistic development of the individual, enhancing skills, acknowledging diversity, perceiving and practising ethical values while upholding a

sense of pride in what is usually snobbishly termed by the western discourse as ‘traditional’ Indian values or corpus of knowledge. The speakers addressed the notions, problems and possibilities that centre around the common discourse of ‘traditional versus modern’ by bringing into the context, the perception of English as a window *to India*, contrasting the much popular view of English being a window *to the world*. The speakers analyse how a number of postgraduate courses taught at the central university were based on NK’s ideology and how the students responded to these courses and the ensuing tasks as evidence to the speakers’ arguments.

NK’s views on the colonial mindset as a ‘Frankenstein Monster’, which can potentially destroy the upholder is taken as the first point. The speakers, in line with NK’s argument, question whose perspective defines the ‘modern’ and the ‘traditional’. NK’s argument is to adapt the best of both the systems but with enough caution and that is where the speakers emphasise the importance of viewing English as a window to the Indic values and knowledge systems.

NK’s concept of ‘multiverse’ as opposed to the universe is highlighted next and the speakers reinstate the importance of acknowledging the world as a multicultural, multilingual and multireligious space where the unifying force must be the clear understanding of various knowledge systems and philosophical strands

rather than bifurcating our perceptions as eastern and western by marking identities and ideologies based on the geographical positioning. Thus, making a case for the rather positive terminology of Indic versus non-Indic instead of Eastern versus Western, the speakers brought in the ways in which the colonial mindset or C-mindset get smuggled into the English classrooms.

The speakers provided the audience with a quick overview of the richness of Indic

knowledge and how the humane values, ethics and other Indic traits could humanise education which demand the world to look through the window of English to India. In short, English must be perceived as a tool to know more about the Indic wealth of scientific and humanistic knowledge and philosophies and the classrooms should not be spaces for C-mindsets to interact and dismiss what is Indic as traditional with obvious contempt in its tone.

Extracts from *Finding Alternative Ways of Teaching English in India* by Prof.N. Krishnaswamy, published in the Journal of ELTIF Vol. IX.1 (Jan. – March 2018)

ELT, the innocent acronym has been the arena of politics in the departments of English and departments have been divided into two- a cell for language and a prison for literature! ELT was pushed to mean English Language Teaching though it means English Language teaching as well as English Literature teaching. Without language there is no literature since all literature is in language; they are the two sides of the same coin; literature is one of the manifestations of language- 'the highest function of language'. This false dichotomy, this lang-lit controversy has been made the subject of many seminars and conferences and many of our 'learned scholars' are busy attending these conferences and workshops. The never-ending battle goes on and on to keep the politics alive while the students are still waiting to learn plain English!

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It is interesting to note that English was first offered as a subject of study in England only in 1828 at a newly started University College in London that was founded in 1826. The course offered was not on English literature but on the English language. It was only in 1831 that English literature was first offered as a subject of study at King's College, London, which later became London University. Before 1828, only classics in Greek (the classical language of Europe) and Latin (the language of the Church) were taught as subjects at Oxford and Cambridge. Oxford and Cambridge did not allow the new subject of English literature to be taught till the end of the nineteenth century; literature, at that time in England, meant only the study of great books in classical languages like Greek and Latin and not 'mere chatter about Shelly'. English was only a 'vernacular'. Oxford allowed English as a subject of study only in 1894 and Cambridge in 1911. But, in the three universities started in India in 1857 (Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta) English was introduced both as a medium of instruction and a subject of study! British literature did not get any big recognition even in England till the end of the nineteenth century.

ELTIF Fortnightly Online Lectures Series

Lecture 19. 10 July, 2021 **Speaker: Dr. B. Kerala Varma**
(Formerly of Dept. of English, Govt. College Kottayam)

Topic: Appreciating Contemporary Poetry

Report by Dr. Leena AK

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Poetry in the English class across the curriculum is yet to get its due consideration in both teaching and learning. Beginning with locating the poet in the literary- historical background, and then elaborating on the biographical details of the poet, and ending with a paraphrase of the poem, teaching hardly focuses on the 'poetry' in a poem. What makes a text 'poetry' still needs to be explored. It is in this context, a session on poetry becomes relevant in the ELTIF online lecture series.

Dr.B. Kerala Varma, a former faculty of Govt College, Kottayam delivered a lecture titled 'Appreciating Contemporary Poetry' that examined the features that distinguish the new mode of writing. Understanding contemporary poetry requires a little knowledge of modernism, postmodernism and so on. He explored historical circumstances or events which led to the birth of modernism. Obviously, the historical situation gave rise to the modernist movement. According to him, there are many reasons for the birth of modernism. They are

- Impact of world wars
- The theories of Kafka, Camus
- Great spread and growth of capitalism
- Second wave industrialism
- Sigmund Freud and psychoanalysis

He elaborated and justified all these points citing examples from English and Malayalam literature. He detailed the modernist features of literature such as

- Western hegemony
- Introversion and interiority
- Alienation
- Glorification of the past
- Faith in the totality and completeness of work

He delved deep into the topic by looking at some of the influential writers of modernist era like Camus, T S Eliot, James Joyce, W B Yeats, E E Cummings, Wallace Stevens from the West, M T Vasudevan Nair, P P Ramachandran and M Mukundan from Malayalam literature. He read out some of the poems of the above-mentioned writers also. The revolution in the sphere of the theory, that has made people look at things in a radically new way discussed as postmodern writing owes its birth to the amazing multiplicity of theories. Later he discussed the historical features of postmodernism such as skepticism towards grand narratives and universalist assumptions, systems of value and knowledge-contingent and socially conditioned micropolitics, awakening of the marginalized groups, not so much absorption in the self, intertextuality, the use of parody and pastiche. He provided appropriate examples for intertextuality, parody and pastiche to explain these literary terms. He also talked about a certain kind of objectivity closely associated with modern and postmodern writing.

Later Dr. Varma discussed the language of poetry and how it is totally different from that of prose. He explored the metaphorical richness of poetry. For elaborating on that, he detailed Robert Frost's poem Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening and established how language use is unique in poetry from that of prose. He elaborated 'I slept in the valley of despair', and the suggestiveness of language. He continued that it could be written as 'I was desperate'. He quoted several examples from several poems. To cite the implication of room, poets use womb or grave, they also use the implications

of body in home. He discussed the relationship between body and home, about visiting and belonging. The poet would be rather a visitor, he explained the pain of the poet of being a visitor. It can also be suggested as confinement. He cited another example from the poem of Kamala Das which explains that 'I would be reduced to the state of beggar'. Dr. Keralavarma recited the Love Poem by Louis Gluck, the Nobel Prize winner of 2020. He discussed the important phrases of the poem such as 'as though the dead come back, afraid of blood, women like brick wall after another'. He also focused on the red things in the poem- blood, scarves and brick all these are red. He also recited The Drowned Children, another poem by Louis Gluck, in which the poet describes an instance where a few children were drowned but the poet is not surprised. Initially, the readers may feel that the poet is unsympathetic towards these children because, according to the poet, these children have no proper judgement, they are not able to discriminate, they are not intelligent enough. Therefore, this is not unnatural. The poet is trying to be rational. She wants to think about these children in a different way. At this juncture, he quoted Wordsworth and his concept of prenatal existence. Children are so close to God in the beginning, we come trailing clouds of glory. Why the poet is not worried about the death of children because they are still close to God, or they were safe in their primary home. The rest of the things the poet dreamed. The speaker opined that when we grow older, we become farther away from Him. Later he read out Dear Big Gods by Mona Arshi and The Seven Stages by Meena Kandasamy and referred to Mohana Krishnan Kalady to show the rejection of a glorious hero figure. He discussed the poem

Kali in some detail. He also talked about the political dimensions of these intellectual speculations. The lecture provided as many examples as possible to justify the points.

During the question answer session he said that the perception of reality is engendered and the question of originality, also. We are exposed to the world of duplicates with modern techniques or in other words, we can simulate everything. There are all kinds of false imitations of things. When these imitations are multiplied and passed on, then duplicates take place. At present, there is no claim for originality in any field. For elaborating these points, the speaker referred to the novel One Hundred Years of Solitude. Nowadays, what is believed is simulated. What is all around you, you are drowned into the consumerist society. Gradually poetry also responds to these changes.

According to Dr Varma, Indian English poetry matured enough to suppress our own ethos. In the beginning, it was a pure imitation of western style and thought. Kamala Das was true to herself and extremely realistic in her expressions. Now, poetry is too realistic and he quoted the two lines of a Malayalam poem by Joseph to justify that. He concluded his lecture by reminding the participants that our poetry is really matured. To make this rich lineage known to the world, we need more translations. We are not supposed to be overwhelmed by the western influence.

It was a rich experience to listen to a one hour lecture on what is poetry, what makes a text poetry, how poetry can be approached and presented to an audience, how the reading of a poem demands special efforts, how images and metaphors are to be discussed in a class instead of dissected and so on. It was a perfect blend of theories of poetry and the pedagogy of poetry.

On the Theory of *Rasa* in Poetry

Bharata, the ancient Indian aesthetician, is of the view that *rasa* is the essence of poetry, as is evident from his statement in the sixth chapter of his *Natyasastra*—“*na hi rasadrata Kascidarthahpravartate*” -- no meaning can proceed from speech in the absence of *rasa*... The word *rasa* is the simplest and at the same time the most bewildering expression in the Sanskrit language.. *Rasa* literally means, juice, essence of elixir, whether the relish is of the Aryans' drinking of the *soma juice* or yogi's communion with the cosmic soul; or the reader's delightful experience of a beautiful piece of literature it is *rasa*.

ELTIF Fortnightly Online Lectures Series

Lecture 20. 24 July, 2021 **Speaker: Dr. Raja Vishwanathan**

Faculty of English, National Institute of Technology Warangal.

Topic: Relevance of Soft Skills in Teaching and Learning ESL

Report by Dr. B. Nagalakshmi

Assistant Professor, SDNB Vaishnav College for Women, Chrompet, Chennai-44

Prof. Raja Vishwanathan made a presentation on “Relevance of Soft Skills on Teaching and Learning in the ESL Classroom” for ELTIF online lecture series on Language, Literature and Culture studies on 24-07-2021. He opened the session with the note of how soft skills are of good importance to teachers for teaching and he has travelled back in time to share his experience as a teacher of soft skills along with his interpersonal experience with student-friends, peers and colleagues. He based his argument on ‘Zero Sum Game’ which means in life someone wins and others fail. Being a victim of the system he strongly defied the ‘Zero Sum Game’ and believed in a win-win situation for both teachers as well as students. His speech was spiced with anecdotes of humour, hard realities, bitter truth, inspiration, motivation and kept the audience on interactive mode throughout the session. He opened the session with an anecdote of humour and immediately took to deep thought from the light moment with the questions about what makes the teachers to be remembered by the students and what qualities of friendship are being cherished. His persuasion for interaction gave a good number of adjectives for both the questions. He traced the common thread between the two as most loved teachers and friends had the qualities of empathic, empathetic, understanding and compassion. His inference was that the teachers who are humanitarian are much sought after teachers than those who are scholarly. It is in the hands of teachers to choose to be humane, altruistic, and compassionate or not to be ruthless, merciless and competitive though they are brought up by a mixture of these qualities based upon their parental exposure. He emphasised

upon why the teacher is expected to be the torch bearer of morality, humanity and emphatic; scholarship adequately buttressed by compassion regardless of a teacher’s caste, gender, ethnicity, colour and race. He pointed out the hard reality that students give up developing interest in a subject and detest the subject if the teachers are not lending a helping hand to pull the students to overcome some difficulties while negotiating the subject. Their hatred towards such indifferent teachers makes them hate the subject. He illustrated how Albert Einstein made an illustrious scientist after his teacher discouraged him as unfit for studies at the age of 15. He presented the stark reality of how teacher’s lack of empathy and indifference has had severe toll in the life of students where they go to the extreme of committing suicide with examples from various regions of the country. He showed a picture of small children bearing the stigma of punishment, eyes laden with sorrow instead of joy for using the mother tongue. He pointed out the atrocities of private and convent schools giving corporeal punishment among students for using mother tongue, and for not able to speak English. He highlighted how this happens at the length and breadth in our country and how schools create fear among children and kill their joy and childhood. He shared some rare facts and prejudice beliefs even among scientists by referring to how Albert Einstein’s science was labelled as ‘Jewish Science’. On contrary to this how even intelligent Nazi Germany scientists were sympathetic and humane. He alluded to this point through the words of Nobel Laureate Lioness Pauline who said there is no quasi-crystals but there are only quasi-scientists. He insisted on the need for

combining scholarship with humanitarian approach. From this he moved to teaching method of English in Indian context by taking cue from chat box interaction on English-only-syndrome. He justified his stand in developing English without contempt for Indian Languages. He gave tribute to his professor Dr. Ananthan from Vivekananda College, Chennai for adopting bilingual method for teaching of English stories, and poem Shakespeare's play by drawing illustrations from Tamil literature and explaining mellifluously. He explained Krashan's Affective Filter Hypothesis with practical and relevant examples and emphasized upon how learning happens only when one disseminates fear or hatred for doing something. By listing all the factors that affect the students, he said it is applicable to teachers also. He illustrated the case of ELT expert Suresh Canagarajah who was once the victim of linguistic imperialism later overcame and changed it to the best by pursuing ELT in Texas University and became a professor in Pennsylvania University, USA. He referred to his work Teacher Development in a Global Profession- An Autoethnography published in TESOL Quarterly. Vol. 46, 2 June 2012. Canagarajah who was a bitter critic of linguistic imperialism wrote a book called Resisting Linguistic imperialism in Language Classes. In this book he has shared those bitter, painful moments he experienced while teaching English by code switching, using Srilankan English in Jaffna which was made into sarcasm by the American Teacher observers who had visited school under collaboration scheme. Those two life changing questions 'What teaching method do you use? What is your target language?' made him later to come out with the ground

breaking works questioning the fallacies of centre based knowledge and belief which is similar to the work of Robert Phillipson. He drew example from his life with reference to the reading of a novel "To Sir, with Love?" by Braithwaite in his school days which he understood the meaning after a decade when he became a teacher. His elicitation for the meaning of the words in the novel 'A spring board to eternal misfits' was responded positively as 'committing suicide' by a participant. He realized how it would be to face the situation of sudden loss of someone and in a subtle way hinted at the need for being empathetic towards fellow beings. He highlighted a list of skills which can be called as soft skills and insisted on the need for treating students beings with kindness and humane by drawing illustration from Bernard Shaw and Shakespeare. He enlisted the roles teachers as Mentors, In-loco Parent, psychiatrist, nurturing parent, friend, facilitator. He referred to the tragic suicide story of successful entrepreneur and a celebrity and stated how it is easy for the students to succumb to failures and take extreme steps. He persuaded the teachers to play extended roles to end up such disaster. He suggested to use comic strips and theme based participation for inclusivity. He brainstormed ideas for teaching paragraph writing. He explained the art of taking the learners from familiar to unfamiliar with two metaphors for teaching paragraph writing from briyani making and playing football. He wrapped up by strategies for boosting confidence of the learners and reaching out to weak learners through remedial classes and building trust with the learners.

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

ELTIF Fortnightly Online Lecture Series

Lecture 21. 7 August 2021 **Speaker: Dr. P. N. Ramani**

(English Studies Consultant & Member, Executive Committee, ELTAI)

Topic: Theorizing from Reflective Classroom Practices – A Step Towards Indigenizing Approaches to ELT

Report by Dr. Sajida Sultana

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Research, theorization and classroom practices — each has its own academic independence, no doubt about it. But, how long can a nation wait for getting its youth, especially students start functioning in the language of global opportunity? How much can a its economy spend on armchair theorizing and ‘research for the sake of research’? How long should teachers wait for the ‘Godot’ called the appropriate methodology?

Classroom practices are key activities to be foregrounded for any discussion related to the teaching and learning of English in India. For decades, there has been an inevitable disconnect between imported theories and their actual implementation in our classrooms. The time has come to prevent this disconnect. Reflecting on and theorizing from classroom practices would enable practitioners as language educators to derive approaches and methods appropriate for our contexts.

Dr. Ramani, with his rich experience in various second language classes in India and abroad, doing and guiding research, writing and publishing in ESL theory, producing instructional materials, organizing conferences, seminars and workshops looks at the kernel issues in Indian ELT in his own way.

Dr. Ramaniaims to focus on classroom practices as the key activities to be foregrounded in any discussion related to teaching and learning of English in India. He initiates the talk by providing an overview of the ELT practices in India with emphasis on the key aspects of the two dominant approaches and methods in the twentieth century – Structural approach and method, and Communicative approach and

method. Further, Dr. Ramani also discusses the features of Eclectic methods, and the Translation method. He then moves to examining the impact of these methods and approaches since 1960s until the present. How effective are these approaches and methods? How relevant are they in the Indian ESL classroom? How aware are teachers about the potentials and limitations of each newly introduced method?

The result of these seven decade-old experiments cannot be called quite satisfactory nor cost-effective, but leaving confusion in teachers, lack of relevance of the content taught to the students in their personal lives, and the policies being influenced subsequently. The question Dr. Ramani raises is whether we need to enable learners to learn a language according to such changes.

The main reason for these issues to arise is the absence of theorization at the local level. Discussing TESOL White Paper (2012), Dr. Ramani brings in works of ELT experts like K.J. Chick (1996), Prof. Canagarajah (1999), P. Martin (2005), and Prof. Kumaravadivelu (2003) to emphasise the problems, and the current state of the ELT.

According to Dr. Ramani, the solution to resolve these issues is to encourage theorizing from teaching to help us evolve our own indigenous approaches of ELT. Theorizing begins with the act of teachers expressing their assumptions about their classroom practices and by reflecting on their practices. Theorizing forms a basis for making teaching practice effective, and in turn, contribute towards a teacher’s continuing professional

development. It also empowers teachers to have a stake in the policy making process.

Teacher competence needs to be redefined. The old mode of transacting content plus informing about the new development in pedagogy alone may not suffice to meet the changing demands of the society. English need not be confined to a classroom, it is to be treated as a means of social negotiation, argues the speaker.

Dr. Ramani stresses on the interlink between the concepts of practice and theory; practice

leading to theory or theory of practice. A teacher development programme also needs to provide the required capability to a teacher to reflect on their practice. Teachers' beliefs, tools for reflection are other aspects discussed in the lecture. The talk helps us to understand Dr. Ramani's vision of teachers as critical thinkers in their own right who take inquiring stance to their practice and make meaningful contributions to the professional knowledge base.

Signpost for Researchers

Theorizing from the classroom by Esther Ramani

ELT Journal, Volume 41, Issue 1, January 1987, Pages 3–11, <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/41.1.3>

Abstract

This article outlines a possible methodology for integrating theory and practice in teacher training. Rejecting the theoretical-input model found in most teacher-training programmes, the author argues that we need to encourage teachers to theorize and conceptualize their own practice, as a basis for articulating, examining, and revising their assumptions. The article tries to show how classroom data in the form of a live or video-taped lesson, an audio-recording or a lesson transcript, are the ideal resource for initiating and sustaining the process of theorizing.¹ The article seeks to show how the intuitive and subjective responses of teachers to classroom data can be used to raise theoretical questions, which can be then linked to current conceptual issues. These questions will suggest the areas that need to be read up or investigated for clarity and deeper understanding. Such an approach to theory, which is rooted in teachers' own intuitions and which encourages them to move from the specific to the general, is seen as being more meaningful than one which is based on theoretical inputs from trainers. A teachers' workshop, in which the methodology was tried out is described, and the implications for teacher training are considered

Seminar-Conference-Workshop Notifications

Notifications of seminars, conference and workshops in English language, Literature and Cultural studies will be accepted for publishing in the Journal. University and college departments of English and allied subjects may please contact the Editor at eltifjournaleditor@gmail.com

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

ELTIF Fortnightly Online Lecture Series

Lecture 22. 21 August 2021 **Speaker: Dr.Madhavan Punnapurath**

Former Professor of Linguistics, EFL University, Hyderabad

Topic: On the Referential Theory of Meaning

Report by Dr. B. Nagalakshmi

Asst. Prof., SDNB Vaishnav College for Women, Chrompet, Chennai

The ELTIF lecture this time went into the deeper levels of language—its nature and functioning. Classroom perspectives usually tend to ignore the inquiries into roots. But, Prof. Madhavan preferred to draw the attention of his audience to the philosophical underpinnings of language. ‘Meaning as reference’, thus gave the audience an intellectual treat.

Dr.Madhavan began his presentation on a humble note saying he could contribute little to the forum of ELT fraternity, as his area of interest and specialization is formal linguistics. But the lecture ended by transporting the participants into the unexplored realms of philosophy of language.

The speaker explained the significance of the topic of referential meaning; meaning is the most elusive and challenging aspect of the systematic study of language. He stated that the studies on sounds, syntax and morphology have made remarkable advancements, but not the study of meaning. Even the great linguist Noam Chomsky is skeptical about the possibility of a comprehensive theory of the meaning-making aspect of language. Meaning is inevitably related to syntax; but it has more relevance to pragmatics than to formal linguistics.

Prof. Madhavan proceeded to the notion of locating meaning in an utterance as there are different perspectives on relating meaning to language. Some may locate it in the cognitive domain of the speaker, whereas for others it is what is transmitted between the speaker and listener. Actually, it does not exist in any of these domains. One approach, the referential theory, relates meaning to the object or the entity referred to by the linguistic expression. This line of thinking stems from the analytic philosophy that flourished between the latter

part of 19th century and the earlier part of the 20th century. He traced back how the findings in the fields of mathematics and logic led to the development in the field of human language. The studies of the German philosopher-cum-mathematician Gottlob Frege, and the British philosopher Bertrand Russell laid the foundation for this referential theory of meaning in language. The speaker explained how the denotation of the noun, the adjective and the verb could be arrived at using the tools of the set theory, giving examples of each of them. The system is known as truth conditional semantics. Frege’s emphasis upon the need of an additional notion, sense along with reference was explained by him using the illustrative statements (1) and (2) below.

1. The morning star is the evening star.
2. The morning star is the morning star.

The first statement is a contingent truth which when substituted in the second one and becomes a necessary truth. He elaborated the working of truth conditional semantics and emphasised the point that a proposition can be either true or false. This was illustrated using the proposition ‘Snow is white’ which is a linguistic expression, its denotation is the truth value TRUE. This is called as meaning. Therefore, understanding language is not only bound by meaning, but also by understanding the world. A well-known analytic philosopher of the twentieth century, Ludwig Wittgenstein famously said, “The limits of my language are the limits of my world”.

A brief, but interesting narration of events from the life of Wittgenstein led the participants to another world of unknown facts in the life of the genius. Though Wittgenstein pursued his studies in aeronautical engineering, later his inquisitiveness and thirst in the field of mathematics and philosophy propelled him to

the field of philosophy. His fundamental questions in mathematics could not be handled by his professor in Manchester University and he was guided to discuss them with Bertrand Russell of Cambridge University. Wittgenstein's queries made Bertrand Russell to realize that he is a scholar of high potential. Later he transitioned to the field of Philosophy by enrolling into the course of BA Philosophy and scaled great heights. He published only one book in his lifetime, in German, which was later published in English with the title *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*; the book became a classic.

The speaker elaborated upon how a model-theoretical semantics could be developed in principle, as a toy grammar. The Model M can be represented as a set

$M = \{a, x, P, F, g\}$ in which 'a' stands for an entity, 'x' for variable, 'P' for predicate, 'F' assigns values to the entity, 'g' assigns values to variable.

The details of application of the rules of syntax and the corresponding rules of interpretation are details are quite technical.

Then he explained the principle of verification of a proposition P, if the state of affairs described by P are obtained in the world, P is true, otherwise P is false. This was illustrated by $P = \text{'snow is white'}$, which on verification turns out to be true in the world, for snow is only in white colour and not seen in any other colour. Therefore, P can be called a meaningful proposition. On the contrary, there are some propositions which are not verifiable; they are called opaque. He gave the following examples to illustrate this case.

- a. I believe the earth is flat.
- b. Truth is God.

These belong to the class of 'ineffable'. This was further related to Ludwig Wittgenstein's famous statement in TLP, 'what can be said can

be said clearly and what cannot be said we can pass over in silence'.

A language has a lot of propositions which are not verifiable and, hence likely to fall into the realm of mysticism. The domains of religion and faith are taken out of meaningful proposition. The Vienna Circle of philosophers, an epitome of empiricism, was attracted by the philosophical theories of language and the thoughts of Wittgenstein as they altogether discarded mysticism and accepted only verifiable statements. The posthumous publication of Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* highlighted the concept of "language games" and from it sprung Pragmatics as a distinct discipline.

The speaker recommended the biography of Wittgenstein by the British philosopher Ray Monk to those who wanted to read more about the life and ideas of Wittgenstein. He concluded the session by triggering the interest among the participants to know more about Wittgenstein by mentioning that his sixty-page book has generated more than 60,000 pages of scholarly response. During the question-answer session, he elaborately discussed with illustrations some interesting issues relating Derrida and meaning, contributions of Indian philosophers to the reference theory, and the existence of the world of meaning in the minds of people who are born deaf and dumb.

Dr. Madhavan had his specialization in Linguistics at CIEFL Hyderabad, where he did his MLitt. and PhD. The areas of his interest are Theoretical linguistics, Syntax, Semantics and Philosophy of Language. Prior to research, he had been working in the Department of English, Sree Kerala Varma College Thrissur, and after his PhD, he joined CIEFL as a faculty of Linguistics and continued till 2020. He was a Fellow at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla (2016-18).

Signpost for Researchers

Ludwig Wittgenstein quotes

- "The limits of my language means the limits of my world."
- "A serious and good philosophical work could be written consisting entirely of jokes."
- "Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of our intelligence by means of language."
- "To imagine a language is to imagine a form of life."
- "I act with complete certainty. But this certainty is my own."

ELTIF Fortnightly Online Lecture Series

Lecture 23. 4 September 2021 **Speaker: Dr K.C. Muraleedharan**

(Former Head of the Department of English, Payyanur College, Kerala)

Topic: Rethinking Curriculum: Changing Perspectives on English Literary Studies in the Context of Globalization

Report by Dr A.C. Sreehari

(faculty, Department of English, Payyanur College, Payyanur, Kerala)

Dr K.C. Muraleedharan is an indigenous academic who made major contributions to reformulating the English curricula of Kannur University since 2009. He was in the expert team of the Kerala State Council of Educational Research and Training as well. The topic “Rethinking Curriculum: Changing Perspectives on English Literary Studies in the Context of Globalization”, is a moment of introspection for him into the long and complex tradition of English literary studies in India with a focus on what has been happening since 1990s in relation to his engagement with English language and literature as a teacher.

In his lecture he invited the attention to Prof.N.Krishnaswamy's bold and unconventional inaugural address of the online lecture series of ELTIF on “English Teaching: Past, Present and Future” on Nov.7, 2020. His comprehensive presentation of the origin of English education in India and the ideological function it served right from the days of Macaulay was really thought-provoking and he emphasized the need for radical changes in English literary studies curriculum. He told us stories from his own long career where he attempted fearlessly to radically reformulate the field of English studies through new kind of textbooks. But one such text book which students found inspiring was withdrawn the very next year following stiff resistance from the English teaching community. This experience is not an isolated case. This is because languages, literatures and cultures always carry an invisible ideological baggage, invariably hierarchical, whether it is our mother tongue or one acquired like English. Those who can see into the ideology may want to appropriate it in various ways like formulating a different textbook or introducing a curriculum shift. In this sense curriculum is not simply

bound to classrooms or official sites of education as a field but it is a course a culture is running since it started its race and can be traced to all activities of the past.

A set of textbooks offered for study is the palpable, visible expression of curricular interests, embodied curriculum. It opens into a culture and it carries within itself the various ways in which that culture constructed itself and its others; it is something more than just books, these are semiofficial statements of world views the elite of the culture wants to transmit to generations of youth. To make a sense of the developments and debates in English literary studies over decades, the academic work of curriculum designing and syllabus revisions have to be understood historically within the larger context of the history of education and pedagogy and the politics of empire and nation. Education, pedagogy, empire and nation are discursive practices and human endeavours. These institutions, formations and practices are generated through the operation of social, political, cultural forces within the larger narratives of capitalism.

One means of understanding the shifts in curricular designs is to critically interrogate the educational and pedagogic practices set by the colonial and national agenda within the ruthless logic of capitalism in its various stages. Three seemingly major shifts in the history of education, pedagogy and curricular practices in English Literary Studies can be seen to have happened and they are aligned ideologically to the pre-colonial interests and world view, colonial interests and changing perspectives on life, world and the human being and nationalist concerns and late capitalist, neoliberal concerns or concerns of globalization and conflicts with “humanity.” But at the same time, one

may find generated within themselves some movements and potential streams of resistance that worked to subvert the established order also. So, the historical terrain of curriculum designs is a contested space marked by ruptures, departures, and continuities as well in certain aspects.

Pre-colonial education system prepared the material grounds for its own decline and final fall by creating its others within the system as is seen from its salient features. It was religion specific, working within religion, caste and gender hierarchy. It was shaped to perpetrate domination and exploitation and hence very exclusive. A skewed and limited concept of the human was its fundamental aspect, robbing humanity, dehumanizing or even demonizing the 'other' in ancient and medieval India. Its worldview was God-centred and hence there was non-admission of human agency in everything including the understanding of these processes as unchangeable with the result that alternative materialistic world views and their exponents were almost wiped off existence. The precolonial education system working within caste legitimized a world view and certain values which are presently identified as brahmanical now.

A close look at the pre-colonial and colonial educational practices brings up certain discontents as well as practices that challenged the earlier skewed attitudes. The pre-colonial education was associated with religion or closed caste communities, these indigenous systems gradually expanding and encountering its others. The amorphous curricula and world view in the pre-colonial times have been challenged in the colonial restructuring of the Indian education system opening it up selectively to the contesting others but the curriculum and texts prescribed and reading strategies employed can be seen to implicitly justify the conquests and legitimize colonial presence in India. They depicted a world with Europe as centre and the specific texts and authors offered as part of the curriculum validated the colonial world views leaving no room for indigenous history and literature. The image of the orient, as Said argued, constructed as

inferior, static, violent, infantile, and less masculine and without history became the standard worldview of the Indian elite too. The impact of the euro-centric curriculum was that colonialism was accepted as a necessary historical evil, a means of diffusion of the more sophisticated European civilization and modernization and not spoilation and cultural destruction. That is, agency was transferred from God or Brahmins to the Europeans, the self-proclaimed representatives of the God on earth. The non-European cultures were thus demonized, inscribed into colonial history and dehumanized.

The Nationalist Curriculum in its cultural war with colonialism imagined and imposed a common past by muting sub-cultural conflicts. The same texts of colonial origin were prescribed by the Nation State and these texts were taught in the new critical mode, as expositions doing away with all historical or political aspects which may bring in some subversion. When writers of Indian origin were included, they were mostly upper caste Hindu men. Almost no visibility for women, lowered castes, minorities demonized, problematic representations, focus on unity and freedom, and other questions were subjugated. No Indian English writings were included as a full-fledged course until 1983. No works translated from local languages included in the syllabus. Only new critical reading strategies were employed. There occurred a crisis in English education in the 1960s and demand in European and American Universities arose for other literatures – Asian, African, Caribbean and inclusion of texts from marginalized communities.

Political decolonization and democratization resulted in the introduction of new curricula in Indian universities. Decolonization of the mind happened due to the emergence of new reading strategies and new literatures. The flow of global capital, the presence of multinational corporations in the 1990s resulted in the weakening of national governments and assertions of local identities promoted cross cultural and hybrid writings, redefining the

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ELTIF Fortnightly Online Lecture Series

Lecture 24. 18 September 2021 **Prof. Revathi Krishnaswamy**

(Professor of English & Comparative Literature San Jose State University, California)

Topic: Truth & Reconciliation as Method: Toward a Transformative Pedagogy

Report by Dr. Sajida Sultana

(Assistant Professor, Centre for English Language and Development, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad)

In the 24th lecture of the ELTIF Online Lecture Series, Prof. Revathi Krishnaswamy proposes a methodological answer in the form of Truth and Reconciliation as a transformative pedagogy for the 21st century. She bases this talk on Prof. N. Krishnaswamy's Indic-centered approach to decolonizing the teaching of English language and literature in India.

Prof. Revathi dedicates this talk to Prof. N. Krishnaswamy, Prof. Revathi's father. The terms "Truth" comes from Prof. Krishnaswamy's work, and the term "Reconciliation" speaks of her mother's nature. The lecture specifically addresses the Indic-centered approach to decolonizing and democratizing the teaching of language and literature in India. The talk seeks to gain insights on the questions - what is Indica, whose Indica, and how do we get to Indica. Prof. Revathi argues that Truth and Reconciliation (TR) as a methodological solution, that captures Prof. Krishnaswamy's vision, advances a transformative pedagogy for the 21st century.

Prof. Revathi begins the talk by highlighting that the concept of Truth begins with self, where she shared her experience of the global space in the East and the West. Two events - Partition Remembrance Day in the East, and the Conference on Dismantling Global Hindutva in the West – reveal the varied perceptions of truth. The truths in the history are complicated. There is a lack of acknowledgement of the past histories leading to a distorted, communalized, and politicized nature of revenge culture. This revenge culture needs to be reviewed; people need to retrospect the truth to reduce the polarization created in

the East and the West global spaces.

TR is a hard painful process aimed at restorative justice, similar to Satyagraha (Gandhian philosophy), which bridges the differences between the opposing groups. TR offers solace and reassurance to the victims, and a chance to repent and reform to the perpetrators. TR has also received criticism, however, the TR process leads to a more democratic and inclusive society e.g., in South Africa. Prof. Revathi suggests that TR is a process to move us in the right direction.

To come back to the question of what is Indica, and whose Indica, Prof. Revathi brings the ideas of freedom and liberty; inclusive egalitarian idea for both the East and the West. She prefers to use the term Indica, Greek word closest in its meaning to represent a civilizational node with dynamic cultural ecosystem rather than the Brahmanical term – Bharathvarsha, or the Islamic concept – Hindustan, or the British created term associated with the partition – India. Prof. Revathi sees Indica as an inclusive, free society. She further connects these ideas of Truth and Reconciliation to a transformative classroom method where ethnography, oral histories, and arts, are some of the ways to go beyond the textbooks, as proposed by Prof. Krishnaswamy. The concept of TR being implemented in San Jose State University as Ohlone "Teach In" is an example to see how transformative pedagogy can be accomplished with TR. The TR methodology aims to encourage creative and critical thinking, giving a space for different perspectives, move to restoration and reconciliation, and a space of mutual recognition.

ELTIF Fortnightly Online Lecture Series

Lecture 25. 2 October 2021 **Mrs. A. Khyrunnisa**

(Trivandrum-based author of children's literature in English)

Topic: : Building Language and Character: The Importance of Children's Literature

Report by Dr. B. Nagalakshmi, (Asst Professor, SDNB Vaishnav College for Women, Chennai)

Mrs. A. Khyrunnisa is an award-winning writer of children's fiction. She became famous by creating the comic character Butterfingers in the name Amar for Tinkle and won the first prize at the Annual All India Tinkle Short story competition for adult writers for seven consecutive years from 1997–2003. The hilarious Butterfingers series of books for older children is published by Penguin Random House (Puffin). In this series, Howzzat Butterfingers! is her first novel published in (2010) and the recent one Smash It, Butterfingers! is the seventh in the series published in July 2021. The Lizard of Oz and Other Stories (2019), The Crocodile Who Ate Butter Chicken for Breakfast and Other Stories (2020) and Baby and Dubdub (2021) are some of her recent books. She has won the prestigious Unisun Children's Fiction Award. She has written books not only for children but also for adults. Her first book for adults is Tongue in Cheek: The Funny Side of Life (2019), a humorous take on the misadventures of an urban woman. Khyrunnisa had served as Associate Professor of English at All Saints' College, Thiruvananthapuram, and has now devoted herself as a full time writer.

Mrs. A. Khyrunnisa made a presentation on 'Building Language and Character: The Importance of Children's Literature' for ELTIF online lecture series on Language, Literature and Culture studies on 02-10-2021.

She began the session by stating the current state of gross negligence and undervaluation of Children's literature by academicians, critics and scholars and emphasised upon the need for giving due importance. She pointed out the naked truth behind the celebration of children's day and women's day by making a big buzz with few accordance to children's writing and recognizing a few women only on those days and not being realized in the true sense.

She illustrated from the life of the Australian award winning writer Jackie French, who started writing to register her car and pay bills. Jackie French stated the difficulties in writing for children and the craftsmanship needed for children's writing. Citing some difficulties, Jackie French advised aspiring children's writers to resort to writing guide books for football players and joke books and for making them as best selling is easier rather than writing for children.

Then the speaker genre-wise traced the theme and the significance of children's literature starting from lullaby with a lot of illustrations. Calvin Trevertine, British Psychologist's extensive research on mother-baby relationship reveals that babies show innate rhythm and music to mothers' singing of lullaby and speaking. Song in the form of lullaby are around all centuries across all cultures which can be traced back in history to the 2000 years old etched cuneiform script in Babylonian culture. She illustrated from the popular lullabies to show that how they were in the form of threat, warning and advice sung sweetly by mothers. The pervading theme behind singing lullaby is to dispel the fear associated with darkness in night and to tender the babies with care and love. The speaker expressed her fear that this lullaby grown from civilizations may be at the verge of extinction due to the introduction of array of gadgets.

She gave a lot of examples to show how reading comics not only helps the child develop language skills but also develops life skills. She stated how nursery rhymes with its beautiful rhythmic words take the children into the world of magic, fantasy, and at times horror too as in the case of some lullaby that has dark themes.

She gave exotic illustrations from fairy tales to show how children devour themselves in the

fantastic stories of talking animals, kind God mothers with magical powers, shape changing cruel witches, houses made up of cakes and bread. She darted across the endless list of characters and traced the theme of timelessness that pervade through the fairy tales. Fairy tales teaches the pitfalls and life lessons to all irrespective of age. We are reluctant to let go off these nightly tales that add spice to our life. Readers are enthralled with the endless romantic comedies, make them drool over fairytale royal wedding ceremonies and even tempt the readers to kiss the frog to see whether it turns into a prince. She referred to Sally Godot's explanation of why the fairy tales stay with us even after we grow up. The fairy tales give form to the deep fears and dreams about life through fantasies. Fairy tales set the children a way apart from the real world and they believe that what happens in tales are not real but they undergo some emotions, pain at some problems which teach them life is not easy and prepare them for uncertainties. The black and white nature of fairytale as it is without grey always make the children feel comfortable. As the children are straddled between this dichotomy of good vs evil and black and white nature of fairytales, they learn basic behaviour, morality and life lessons. Children are exposed to bad characters like wicked step mothers, the witches, trolls, nymphs. According to Sally Godot, children's learning from these is that there are bad people in the world is not necessarily a bad thing for children. Children know that life is not the way it seems to be. But the good characters are rewarded at the end always signals them positively with the reinforcement of being good, kind and true. The speaker gave some illustrations for the specific lessons children learn from some specific fairy tales like Ugly Duckling and children relate it to their life and learn to be kind and they learn that people should not be judged by the outward appearance. Another story of The Emperor's new cloth teaches the lesson of speaking out with courage when everyone is afraid to speak the truth before a man of power. Children learn about the ugly consequences of lying as the nose

grows from the story Pinocchio, and they learn the dangers of talking to strangers from The Little Red riding hood. Children can translate these truths they learnt from these fairytales in their daily life. Fairy tales make the readers reminisce the childhood where there are no responsibilities and no uncertainties and reassure them the happy ending after all hardships. Folktales which are traditional beliefs, practices of people, legends and cultures teach us of culture of particular races and gives lessons of moral and behaviour. These anonymous folktales are unique in a way that they are passed down orally without any critical baggage as they haven't heard of Aristotle, Harold Bloom or anyone in between them. She moved to books which always have the take on life with the bottom line of 'good to be good and bad to be bad' with a lot examples that include authors such as Roald Dahl, Ruskin bond, Jean Webster, Andy Mulligan, Mark Hayden, Harshikaa Udasi and Paro Anand . Children learn a lot of life lessons of distant past, or contemporary present or a dystopian world from these authors. She concluded how her Butterfinger series coated with humour and fun teaches the children the lessons of coping with school life, importance of sports, value of family, worth of friendship, camaraderie, loyalty, team work, respect for teachers, courage, innovation, unselfishness and so on. Her animal stories again with humour emphasize the importance of environment, the connect with nature, man and every tiny creature of living beings and the need for re-establishing the co-existence for it had been natural calamities and disasters as we disconnected from nature. She referred to Philip Pullman's getting of Costa award, the highest one and analogized the difficulty of getting such an award for children's writing as akin to reversing handicap. She cited Catherine and Tolkien's words which credited children's writing a superior form to adult writing with its lightness, readability, re-readability, clarity and logical consistency, joy and no way it can be undervalued. She concluded with vibrant and optimistic note for millennial generations to get weaned away

ELTIF Fortnightly Online Lecture Series

Lecture 26. 16 October **Dr. Lal. C.A**

(Professor of English, University of Kerala)

Topic : This Queer Language called English

Report by Vinija NS

(Chief Tutor, District Centre for English, Thrissur Kerala)

Any new language we come across sounds strange in the beginning, but gradually we manage to master that language with all its peculiarities. The queerness of a language slowly fades and it becomes familiar as we know the language more. In his lecture - This Queer Language Called English, Dr. Lal points out the peculiarities of English at various levels such as syntactic, lexical, phonological, morphological and semantic – mainly from a pedagogic perspective. Sharing some of his personal experiences, Dr. Lal elucidates how people, mostly teachers, come up with the feeling that English has a lot of strangeness. He added that our inadequacy of a language does not become a hindrance for communication. A large measure of queerness of a language comes due to our improper exposure and not because of any factors inherent to that language. While considering the varieties of language, Dr. Lal states that we often consider English as a very monolithic and homogeneous language. But English has thousands of varieties all over the world as it has a large number of speakers globally. There are hundreds of varieties of English even in India and each of these varieties is acceptable. It is a dynamic language and it keeps changing even in every hour. Hence, we should have flexible approaches towards this language.

Then the speaker moves on to the trajectory of English as a global language. He briefly explains how the English language disseminated and flowered as a full-fledged language from the position of a language spoken in a relatively small isle in the North- Atlantic region. In the 9th Century, English was the most established vernacular language in Europe. When the Normans took over England, English was pushed back and French dominated over it. But it bounced back and moved out into other continents, absorbed life in those continents,

adapted and changed to such an extent. In the course of this development, English is hardly identifiable as an Anglo-Saxon language. Eighty percent of the vocabulary of English today is not Anglo-Saxon. Much of the Anglo-Saxon words vanished during the Norman period due to the French influence.

Dr. Lal points out that queerness of English is particularly related to pronunciation and spelling. English has gone through influences of much varied nature. Scandinavian and French influence changed the structure and spelling conventions of the language. Whenever English moved to other geographical terrains, it borrowed words and idiomatic expressions from other languages, intermingled and grew in all directions. The speaker elucidates this point with a few examples. English borrowed and adapted Native American words like wigwam, canoe, barbecue, squash, skunk, tomahawk etc. The words such as boom erang, wallaby, koala, kangaroo, kookaburra and dingo are Native Australian. From Indian languages avatar, thug, calico. Cashmere, catamaran, charpoy, teapoy, mulligatawny etc. came to English.

Next the speaker indicates the vocabulary with a pedagogic perspective. According to him, exposure to the language through culture and literature is very important. He argues that it is not necessary to search for an English equivalent for every Indian word related to Indian culture. There is nothing wrong with using our own Indian words for Indian things. According to Dr. Lal, a repertoire of weird words is not a must. Similarly, a limited vocabulary of simple words is enough for effective communication. It is not the complex words, but appropriate, contextual, emotive use of vocabulary is important. Therefore, the teachers should encourage the students to use simple words and the limited

vocabulary repeatedly and comfortably. At the same time, teachers should boost the learners' extensive reading and thus give them practice to enrich their vocabulary, use the words appropriately and contextually as well.

Further, Dr. Lal moves to pronunciation and spelling of English. He cites George Bernard Shaw's best known example, GHOTI, which he argued to be pronounced as 'FISH' (Gh as in ROUGH, O as in WOMEN, and TI as in MOTION). English pronunciation and spelling become a challenge. One of the reasons for this illogical spelling system of English is that of the French influence and the speaker cites the following words as examples- Refugee, engineer, employee, boudoir, memoir, reservoir, garage, barrage. mirage. He opines that if a learner needs to communicate with an international community, particularly if he needs to impress through his language his scholarship it might be very convenient to have a neutral pronunciation.

English is a stress timed language whereas our languages are syllable timed. In the English language, the supra-segmental features make a lot of difference in the quality of speech. The students should be familiar with the English sounds with near accuracy. That can be attained only by exposing children to the sounds from a very young age itself. Teachers need to have reasonably good confidence on English sounds. The practicing teachers who are still not sure about the English sounds need to constantly brush up and become familiar with the pronunciation aspects with a kind of international intelligibility.

Dr. Lal then comes to the grammar of English. Grammar is not something which can be learned through rules, but needs to be learned unconsciously. Learning English grammar becomes a little difficult for us perhaps because English doesn't have a lot of inflections. The

grammatical words of English are also limited in number. Moreover, the word order is very rigid in English. Dr. Lal reaffirms the point that there are teachers' grammar and students' grammar. Theoretical knowledge about subject, predicate and other such technical terms are meant for teachers. The use of meta-language in the classroom inhibits the learning process. Grammar needs to be handled carefully in the classroom. The students should not even know that teachers are teaching grammar to them. The speaker believes that grammar should be taught not through exercises. A conscious knowledge of grammar may be a good exercise to our brain, but that knowledge would not help anyone to become a good communicator. The students should get good exposure to language through listening and reading. The speaker reminds us that the grammar is not static, but constantly changes. As English is the language of a global community, it is constantly changing; not only the grammar but even the meaning of words.

Finally, Dr. Lal emphasizes the multiple needs of the learners. He states that many of the learners need only a working knowledge of English. But there may be a few learners who want to use English for academic purposes as well. So teachers should consider both these groups. As a concluding statement, Dr. Lal reminds the teachers of the need to brush up the spelling, meaning and pronunciation carefully and repeatedly.

Dr. Lal C.A. is Professor of English in the University of Kerala. He coordinates the MA programme in the School of Distance Education, and is a member of the Faculty of Arts and the Board of Studies of BA English, of the University. He is an alumnus of the International Visitor Leadership Programme of the US State Department. He is also an English language trainer and teacher educator.

*Continued from p.27. A. Khyrunnisa: **Building Language and Character: The Importance of Children's Literature***

from gadgets to become warm, responsible, kind, intelligent, liberal and socially aware individuals and would be joining hands with ELTIF. The speaker adeptly lead the audience with a clear roadmap land marked with exotic illustrations of various genres and themes of children's literature in the same style as she could make the children disappear into the world of fantasy with her stories.

English Language Teacher Empowerment Programme (ELTEP) Workshop 1

Reading Aloud in the ESL Classroom

Dr.C.Praveen

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At the outset, let me thank ELTIF and the members of the Online Programme Committee for giving me an opportunity to do a workshop on behalf of ELTIF. Whether leading a workshop or attending one, it has always been an opportunity for professional development. In fact, there are several avenues for professional growth. Teachers can attend conferences, seminars and in-service courses. Perhaps it is worth recalling a remark made in the inaugural address by Prof. Jacob Tharu: "Adult learners with self-concept make decisions/choices consciously".

Why reading?

Reading still remains the mainstay of second language instruction all over the world—its priority varies. Beginning with the primary skills of listening and speaking, and then moving to the literacy skills of reading and writing may be the right sequence. But, unfortunately, many Indian ESL courses begin with reading, then moving to writing, and thereby neglecting the aural-oral skills. However, this workshop focuses on the significance of one sub-skill, namely reading aloud.

Why do learners find it difficult to read?

Difficulties that a learner faces in the struggle to read can be attributed to several causes. It could be related to a failure to have studied aspects of a word—its spelling, its pronunciation and its meaning in different contexts. From a cognitive perspective, it could be attributed to a difficulty resulting from memory, in paying attention or even in organizing information.

What does reading involve?

- * Reading is a cognitive process of decoding symbols to derive meaning from the text.
- * While reading aloud, the reader incorporates variations in pitch, tone, pace, volume, pauses, eye contact, questions and comments

to produce a fluent and enjoyable delivery. (Google)

- * In reading aloud, it is also worth noting that English has stress-timed rhythm. That is, stressed syllables approximate at regular intervals and unstressed syllables, shorted to fit this rhythm. And some sounds in Indian language are not available in English and vice versa.

In brief, reading aloud implies :

- * Ability to read in sense groups.
- * Ability to read with proper pronunciation.
- * Ability to articulate words properly.
- * Ability to read with proper stress, pitch and intonation.
- * Ability to capture the spirit of the text, and convey emotion verbally and non verbally too.

How can we help learners to read?

- * It is possible to provide models to enable the learner to read, following the principles of Behaviourism which includes imitation and repetition.
- * Weaver(1988) interpreted Vygotsky's take on reading as follows: "...learning to read would be better approached as a whole-to-part or whole-language process which encourages understanding and pleasure in the written word".
- * Teachers can help learners improve the ability to read aloud through modeling and assisted reading and drilling and practice are vital!

Comments by Prof. Paul Gunashekaran Reading Aloud

During the interactive session in the end, quite a few participants interacted with the RP. Additional points were contributed by Prof. Paul Gunasekar, an authority on ESL reading instruction.

There are a whole lot of other aspects from the student's perspective which are linked

to the methodology we adopt in the classroom while reading aloud:

- * The average teacher, even the trained teacher will insist on reading aloud a story as part of the 'reading of a lesson'. And what the teacher normally does we all know is to read the first sentence...explain it... then move to the next sentence...explain it... Obviously there is something awfully wrong with that methodology. So we need to think when students need to be taught to read aloud while calling students at random to read aloud.
- * When learners have no idea of the meaning of the text they are reading, how are they going to give a meaningful rendering in terms of reading aloud. It is linked clearly to the methodology.
- * Talking about 'Bottom up' scales of reading in English Vs the 'Top down' process of reading texts...In other words 'Bottom up...is moving from shape to sound to sense.'
In Top-down, a student might confront a sentence like 'Bhaskaran is my friend'... but it will remain a sentence carrying no meaning unless Top down processing happens.
- * Reading aloud can be used to check formal aspects of spoken English: Pronunciation, Word stress, Sentence Stress and Intonation. But it is best done after the reading of the lesson is over.
- * Students would have understood the content

of the reading text and therefore will be able to meaningfully operate the suprasegmental features of spoken English.

- * A story may lend itself to dramatization and it is best done as a way of rounding off the reading lesson. Can be done with planning... bringing all the students into the play... the teacher as facilitator...reading in sense groups not just in reading aloud but in silent reading too.
- * Mark a small portion of the reading text into sense groups before asking students to read it aloud. Our job is to mark it for them.. A course called 'Ordinary English'... doesn't exist anymore...in the 1980's... only course where each of the reading texts were presented in sense groups. But the idea didn't take off. A follow up of that unique way of presenting through a workshop...It didn't reach as many teachers..
- * Marking it up is crucial and we need to demonstrate this live...
Good old Michael West said in 'English in Difficult Circumstances' deals with reading aloud...a famous phrase is "read and look up"
- * Read a few sense groups and establish eye contact and carry on...
- * A Hindi teacher of mine used to hide his face behind the text not allowing his learners to see it...so the teaching fell apart.
- * a demonstration too is required in an elaborate fashion ...an extremely practical session like this one.

Tips to Teachers

Hints on How to Read Aloud to a Group

Listening to literature being read aloud is one of the most valuable and pleasurable experiences beginning readers and writers can have. Read alouds should be part of every child's day. The following are some helpful hints that will help you make the most of your read aloud time.

- * Plan enough time for each session (15-20 minutes)
- * Choose stories or texts that respond to children's interests and experiences
- * Preview the book before you read it with the group so you can anticipate questions or reactions
 - * Introduce the book to the group
- * Read with expression
 - * Build in time for listeners to respond along the way
- * Encourage predictions
 - * Watch your audience
- * Save time at the end of the story to get reactions
- * Point out parts of the story you noticed or especially liked
- * Remember that for some children, listening to stories is a new experience
- * Encourage discussion about the story
 - * Most importantly: Have a good time!

The Importance of Perceptions of Interpersonal Communication Competence

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Abstract

Interpersonal skills are the sine quo non of our lives playing a critical role at every juncture. We do not complex debates to arrive at a consensus regarding the importance of interpersonal communication competence. Quality interpersonal communication determines our personal and professional happiness. Hence, it all the more relevant to understand and inculcate in ourselves the importance of communication competence so that our communication interactions co-workers, subordinates, superiors, and family are characterized by effectiveness, appropriateness and ethics. Quality interpersonal skills are the bedrock of our social and psychological health. Adults too need to be taught these skills, given training, and encouraged to communicate interpersonally well with respect, politeness, and ethics. Healthy interpersonal relationships are the pivot on which our survival, health and sanity depends on. This is based on the simple heuristic that our interpersonal behaviours have effects on ourselves and others too. This paper essentially deals with perceptions of our own interpersonal communication competence and areas we need to improve to be optimal in our personal and professional domains. (171 words)

Keywords: Appropriateness, effectiveness, communication competence, interpersonal communication skills.

Introduction

Interpersonal communication plays a vital role in all our lives. Talking effectively, appropriately, and ethically determine our relationships with others. Being interpersonally competent has important ramifications. When we are interpersonally good, we are conscious of who we are, we are aware of interactions with others, we must know the impact of our words and language on others. It is not easy. Being interpersonally competent is not a privilege chosen to exercise at our will. We need to be ethically and interpersonally competent at all times. We are obligated to be interpersonally responsible in our interactions with others (Shimanoff, 1980). Interpersonal skills are the levers on which lives revolve giving us happiness and satisfaction in life (Spitzberg, 2011). The raison d'être of our lives is to achieve our goals and live cooperative lives marked by respect and tolerance. We also live to help others' lives become meaningful and not more rotten. We cannot exist for ourselves or meet our own goals, our own needs, our own

objective all the time. This, then, would be narcissism. Narcissistic individuals have egoistic goals. They achieve their objectives at others' cost. They are great narrators. They tell their own stories. Stories of their own achievements and glories! Others' stories and lives do not matter. On the other hand, in respectful interactions, interactants have good conversations characterized by decency and respect, and a mutual give and take. The story of interpersonal communication competence is the story of interactants being helpful to others, empowering others, and growing in all aspects in life. According to interpersonal communication researchers Mark L. Knapp and Anita Vangelisti, competent communicators do not abuse others. They do not yell or resort to emotional melt downs. They pay sincere compliments and praise others. (Knapp and Vangelisti, 2009). In all their relationships, we can see a great degree of selflessness. This helps them to have meaningful relationships. The end result of such lives is happiness and satisfaction. That is the reason why

eaningful, satisfactory, and ethical relationships are critical to human beings. The story of interpersonal communication is not just about self, but about self and others.

Theoretical background

Brian H Spitzberg and William R Cupach (1984) posited the theory of communication competence. According to their theory of communication competence, interactants need the following to be interpersonally competent:

1. Motivation: A motivation to talk, to be interpersonally relevant, and a desire to have positive interpersonal relationships determine our success in interpersonal relationships. Negatively motivated people have low self-esteem, think negatively of themselves and others. This affects their relationships. People who are positively motivated to interact will interact meaningfully, confidently, politely, respectfully, and non-manipulatively.
2. Knowledge: Cognitive knowledge of the communication process, of the interactants, topics, vocabulary constitute interpersonal knowledge. To be interpersonally competent, one should have the cognitive knowledge. To be interpersonally competent, one should have content knowledge and procedural knowledge. Content knowledge refers to facts, vocabulary, etc. Procedural knowledge refers to how to go about in achieving one's goals. It includes plans, strategies, and steps to achieve one's goals. (Morreale, Spitzberg, and Barge, 2006)
3. Skills: According to Spitzberg and Cupach (2011), skills are repeatable goal-directed behaviours. These behaviours are executed to derive outcomes. The test of a person's communication competence is the execution of skills and behaviours.

In addition to the above, the theory of communication competence (Spitzberg and Cupach, 1984) states that competence is both molecular and molar. Molecular behaviours are specific. They include behaviours like eye contact, asking of questions; head nods etc. Molar behaviours include empathy, honesty, supportive, et al. Further, Spitzberg and Cupach state that communication competence is

functional in nature. The purpose of communication is to have effective, appropriate, and ethical interactions with other human beings.

The most important assumption of the theory of interpersonal communication competence posited by Brian Spitzberg is that competence is an impression. It is an evaluative impression of our own and the other person's behaviours. (Spitzberg, 2013)

A template to identify perceptions of one's own interpersonal communication competence: The author of this article has long been interested in the role of interpersonal communication in the lives of people. Our behaviour with others is contingent to a large extent on what we think internally about ourselves. Hence, a Likert's scale consisting of 12 items on interpersonal communication competence based on the seminal work of Prof. Brian H. Spitzberg in the last 40 years has been identified. The questionnaire has 12 items dealing with the critical components of Spitzberg's interpersonal communication competence. Spitzberg essentially argues that to be interpersonally competent, we must be effective, appropriate, and ethical in our interpersonal relationships.

The 13 statements below pertain to interpersonal communication competence. All these 13 statements relate to dimensions of interpersonal communication competence, namely, effectiveness, appropriateness, ethics, satisfaction, empathy, et al. The statements are as follows:

1. My interpersonal skills need a lot of improvement
2. I want to be effective in all my interpersonal interactions with others
3. I follow the elemental rules of politeness and courtesy while talking to others.
4. I come across a lot of people violating the elemental rules of politeness and courtesy in their interpersonal interactions.
5. Ethical communication is missing in our society today
6. Due to my shyness, I notice my interpersonal relationships are not strong
7. People have complimented me for speaking appropriately and ethically
8. At this stage of my life, my interpersonal

skills are poor

9. People's ability to empathize with others is decreasing day by day
10. Feelings of superiority and selfishness are increasing day by day
11. I would like to improve my empathetic and non-judgmental skills
12. I am cooperative in my interpersonal interactions with others
13. I am respectful in my interactions at all times with others

Faculty can give their responses on a Likert scale which includes strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. Strongly disagree is assigned 1. Disagree is assigned 2. Neutral is assigned 3. Agree is assigned 4. Strongly agree is assigned 5.

This Likert scale based on Spitzberg's research would be highly relevant if given to faculty in higher educational institutes. In fact, it would be relevant if teachers who have done research in interpersonal communication teach their colleagues the principles of interpersonal communication and also the 6 criteria of interpersonal communication. The criteria are based on the research done by Brian H. Spitzberg and William Cupach. The criteria included satisfaction, effectiveness, appropriateness, fidelity or clarity, efficiency, and ethics. Faculty could be asked how good they feel they are in their interpersonal communication relations. They can be further asked to give their opinions on the extent to which they feel ethical communication is present in today's society. Another question is how many of them think that feelings of superiority and feelings of selfishness exist in people around them. It

should be noted that this research study focuses on their perceptions of interpersonal communication competence—their own and others around them.

Research questions

1. To what extent do you think you are interpersonally competent?
2. To what extent do you think people around you are interpersonally competent?
3. To what extent is ethical interpersonal communication really missing in society?
4. To what extent is empathy lacking in people?

The questionnaire could be given to the faculty to understand the extent to which they think they are meeting the criteria of interpersonal communication competence.

Conclusion

This questionnaire will certainly reveal the self-perceptions of faculty with reference to their own communication competence and also their perceptions of others' interpersonal communication competence. It will also be known if they feel ethical interpersonal communication and empathy are grossly lacking in society today. People think they are ethical, polite, and appropriate. However, it may not be so. The Wobegon effect could substantially exist. The study will reinforce the reality that interpersonal skills continue to play an indispensable role in human relationships. The desperate need to teach empathy, politeness, and non-judgmental attitude towards others will continue to hold indispensable relevance all the more in today's society.

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Portrayal of the Dalit in the Select Writings of Dalit and Non-Dalit Writers

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Abstract

Subalterns are a group of people belonging to the lower stratum of society. In the Indian subcontinent, these people are referred to as Dalit. They have been subjugated by the so-called upper-classmen for ages and till date. Many writers and activists voiced these people through their writings. Later, in spite of all the hurdles they themselves began portraying their struggles and sufferings in their own words, which at first did not receive much of applaud but later was greatly welcomed. This paper answers the question of whether the non-Dalit writers were able to portray the actual condition of the victims or not. It also brings out the dissimilarity between the portrayal of Dalit characters in the writings of Dalit and non-Dalit writers.

Keywords: Caste, Class, Discrimination, Gender, Marginalization, Patriarchy, Subjugation.

Introduction

‘Untouchability, even in quarantine’
‘We have never taken food cooked by a Scheduled Caste person,’ the two middle-aged men said’ (Srivastava). The COVID-19 pandemic has disastrously affected the whole world causing lakhs of the death toll. The doctors, policemen and the corporation have done their best to save the lives. However, the government has taken enough measures to protect the nation from the virus; lakhs of people have been quarantined in order to break the chain of spreading the disease. Meanwhile, India is witnessing ‘untouchability even in quarantine’ (Srivastava). According to The Telegraph – Online edition e-paper published on 12th April 2020 stated that, in the district of Uttar Pradesh, five people have been quarantined at a primary village school where two men go to their homes in the morning and in the evening to have their meal. The school cook who fixes the midday meal for the school children refused to cook for the quarantined fearing infection. So, Leelawati, who happens to be the village chief, volunteered to cook for them.

‘Leelawati shrugged off the caste slight. “Every person is living in fear of the pandemic. I decided to cook the meal for the five quarantined

people of the area on the request of senior officers. I wear a mask and gloves and leave the plates at their door every morning and evening,” she said’ (Srivastava).

But two of the men had told her that ‘...they wouldn’t eat something touched by a Dalit’ (Srivastava). The Block Development officer Rama Kant said that ‘Some people have a problem with the food cooked by the Dalit village panchayat chief and the food cooked is going waste’ (Srivastava). According to the BDO, this is not the only place where people refused to eat food cooked by a Dalit. In four other villages in Uttar Pradesh, the quarantined people had refused to eat food made by Dalit cooks. In one of the villages the police have filed a written complaint and the villagers are now taking the food cooked at the quarantine. This very incident prompted me to put pen to this paper. Owing to this pandemic, thousands of people are dying every day and the literate fools in India are still holding on to their casteism which is more dangerous than the COVID-19.

History of Caste System in India

Until the Vedic period the caste system did not exist in the Indian social system. It became predominant only during the latter part of the Vedic period. The three separate philosophies

of Varna, Ashrama and Dharma were called in a single unit as 'Varnashrama dharma'. Varna refers to the colour and caste; whereas Ashrama refers to the four stages of life prescribed for all Hindus, they are 'Brahmacharia' ('student life'), Grahastha ('household life'), Vanaprastha ('anchorite life'), and Samnyasa ('renunciation life') (Velassery and Patra). This system was indicated as "dharma" in the Hindu tradition. Varna dharma being the integral part in the Indian social system, decides every human life even today. Caste decides the fate of each and every Indian citizen. If an individual is born in a lower caste, it is not their fault but the system has made it difficult for them and they are destined to go through all the sufferings.

During the RigVeda period based on the occupation people were divided into four groups. The actual caste system did not develop during this time, because people were only divided into different class which was not hereditary. It was during the latter part of the Vedic period the caste system became unbending and was inherited. People were divided into four major castes, Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaisya and the Sudras. The division takes its base from 'Book No. 10 sloka, 90 of RigVeda' (Arya and Rathore). It is said that; 'The first distinctive mention of the four Varnas is found in the Purusa-sukta of the Rig-Veda where it is said: "Brahmano'syamukhamasid, bahu rajanyahdrtahUru tad yad vasyah, padhya88m sudroajayata". When the Primeval Person was sacrificed (by God). "His face became the Brahmin; his arms were made into the Kshatriya, the warrior; his thighs became the vaishya, the merchant; from his feet the Shudra, the servant was made' (RgVeda, 10.90.12) (Arya and Rathore).

Caste system initiated the disunity among people and separated them to poles apart. Untouchability became the integral part of the caste system. It was forbidden to meet people of other caste and to mingle or communicate with them which lead to national disunity. For example, the Kshatriyas' duty is to protect the county. The other caste people will not interfere in their duty. This became a loophole for the enemies to attack and defeat our county.

Emergence of Dalits

The people of the oppressed community were labeled as Dalit or Harijan. Especially among the Hindu community, these people were categorized based on their caste. The ancient sacred texts have made mention of the caste categorization. Shashi Tharoor in his book 'Why I am a Hindu' has made a clear description of caste and Hinduism. He says that, 'It is difficult to pretend that Hinduism can be exempted from the problems of casteism since the religion has been cited as legitimizing this form of discrimination in some of its sacred texts. The Rig Veda does not mention caste in its original books and it first appears in the Purusha Sukta verse, a later interpolation that describes the sacrifice by the gods of Purusha, the cosmic man, to create all human life: according to this verse, from his mouth emerged the Brahmin, the priests and scholars; his arms were made into the Kshatriyas, the warriors and rulers; his two thighs were the general populace, the farmers, merchants and traders who made up the Vaishyas; and from his feet the Sudras, the workers, artisans and servants, were born' (Tharoor).

It was Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar, one of India's great Dalit leaders and a phenomenal constitutionalist who attempted to consider this categorization as a legitimate issue. Since casteism appeared in the ancient sacred texts people believed it to be true and without any doubt, they started practicing it. As it appeared in the sacred texts, they believed this caste categorization as something religious. This existing caste system served as a greatest advantage for the British to rule India in terms of controlling the population and to extract work from them.

TejaswiniTabhane, an 18-year-old student from the Delhi University writes that caste, 'is both the base and superstructure of Indian society and both the relations of power as well as the forces of production are mediated through it...For the people belonging to the marginalized lower strata of this system, caste is about humiliation, deprivation, oppression and imposed identity' (Tharoor).

Being born in such a caste has made them Dalit

and it is not their fault. They are not responsible for that but the system is. The system that formulated the caste system and the reservations made for them are to be blamed and not the people. Many writers initiated to address the issues of these oppressed classes in their writings. Being non-Dalit, out of sympathy and empathy they voiced these people. This paper will focus on Dalit work written by both Dalit and non-Dalit writers by comparing the portrayal of characters and depiction of Dalit issues. Bama's *Sangati* and Shanta Rameshwar Rao's *Children of God* are the two works taken up for discussion and analysis.

Dalit Woman

Among all the victim women were the worst sufferers. In the name of gender they were already segregated and adding on to that caste system pushed them even more to the periphery. Thus they became an isolated group among the isolated group. The Indian society is disintegrated not only in the name of caste but in the name of gender as well, i.e. within the family and society which was not practiced in the west. That is why the western feminism was not able to meet the needs of Indian women. And so the Indian women started to claim their needs and came up with their own feministic approaches. 'Manusmriti', an ancient Hindu text (an authoritative hindu law book) which was formulated thousands of years ago describes the Indian social structure. Even though it was created thousands of years ago for historical and cultural reasons the influence it has created still governs the Indian social system with little or no change at all. Even today this serves as an iron frame under which the Indian social system runs. According to Smriti, all the women were denied of education and were given a lower status in the family and in the society as well. But the women of the Sudra were doubly oppressed on the basis of caste and gender. They cannot recite or listen to Vedas. They were denied of direct access to God. There was a middle man who served as an intermediate between God and people but not for the sudras and women. The only duty of women is to serve their husbands and the men of sudra caste is to serve

their master which was the only way to salvation.

Dalit Literature

Dalit literature is a 'literary expression of the Dalit movements in India' (Misrahi-Barak, Satyanarayana, and Thiara). It represented 'the anger, rage and protest against the caste society' and so it was called 'literature of Dalit protest against injustice' (Misrahi-Barak, Satyanarayana, and Thiara). Since the portrayal of 'Dalit life in literature is seen as an explicit political art' it can also be regarded as 'political literature' (Misrahi-Barak, Satyanarayana, and Thiara). In 2004, the Marathi Dalit critic Sharan Kumar Limbale in his classic work *Towards an Aesthetics of Dalit Literature* 'defines 'Dalit literature' as 'writing about Dalits by Dalits with a Dalit consciousness' (Abraham and Barak). Even though it appears to be a solid definition for Dalit literature, in the latter part he stresses upon another perception that 'a non-Dalit writer can also write Dalit literature with the use of imagination' (Abraham and Barak). Arundhati Roy and Mulk Raj Anand are two of the non-Dalit writers who have captured the problems faced by the Dalit in their writings. Limbale also highlighted the features of Dalit literature as it 'upholds equality, freedom and justice; it emphasizes the centrality of the human being and society and therefore it is revolutionary' (Misrahi-Barak, Satyanarayana, and Thiara).

The non-Dalit writer's portrayal of Dalit did not create much of an impact on the readers. Because they thought that the non-Dalit's portrayal of Dalit is prejudiced and is only out of sympathy. So Dalit themselves began writing their stories in words which were earlier in the form of oral narratives. Now that became a pure Dalit work. Their primary focus was on the bitter realities that the oppressed men of scheduled caste and tribes faced in the name of marginalization. By portraying the lived experience of the Dalit, the literature voiced all the Dalit men of their community. This paper will foreground the dissimilarity and the relationship that prevail in the portrayal of characters between the Dalit and non-Dalit writers. The problems faced by the Dalit were

written in the form of autobiographies, novels, testimonials, essays, and poetry. Since Dalit literature originated in Marathi, most of the ancient works are in that native language. However, today there is plenty of access to the translated work. Writers such as Omprakash Valmiki, Urmila Pawar, Sharan Kumar Limbale, Daya Pawar are some of the renowned Dalit writers of North India. In the south, Perumal Murugan, P.Sivakami, Bama, Gunasekaran, Imaiyam are some of the significant writers. The Dalit female writers foregrounded the double marginalization of the female in their community. Just like the Afro-American female in America, the women in India also face the same condition. Bama emerged as a famous Dalit female writer and is well known for Dalit feminism. Her first work *Karukku* (1992) is an outstanding autobiographical novel which highlighted the harsh realities that the Dalit female face in their day-to-day life. Being a Dalit Christian she foregrounded the torments and sufferings of Dalit women in Tamil Nadu. Her other distinguished works are *Sangati* (1994) and *Vanmam* (2002).

Dalit Feminism

Originally feminism belonged to the west world. Over the centuries there have been serious discussion on feminism but it lacks proper definition. Feminism is rather descriptive. It is known as 'a movement of women, for women, by women' (Kunjakkan). It is also regarded as 'women liberation movement' (Kunjakkan). K. A. Kunjakkam in his book *Feminism and Indian Realities* states that the aim of feminism is 'to end the domination of men, in all spheres of life, in family and in society and in public and private activities.' (Kunjakkan). He says that the feminists are against the sexual discrimination of women and sexual segregation of women in work place and in domestic life. They also question the male domination and how women are being treated as a subordinate using their sexual power. However the goal was to put an end to this violence and enslavement against women. The western feminism did not help the Indian women much because of the cultural

differences and the existing social system in the country. For example, while the focus of western feminism was much on gender and equality, the women in India were struggling with the caste, class and race issues which the western feminism failed to address. Two of the concepts or Dalit women issues which were excluded in the main stream feminism are Intersectionality and Dalit Patriarchy.

While focusing on the dalit women, 'they were even neglected in the Indian Feminist discourse as they occupy a subordinate position' (Arya and Rathore). As the mainstream feminism failed to address the core issues of the dalit women, dalit feminism came into existence. These feminists addressed the caste, class and gender issues. This representation of 'multiple axes of oppression, double and treble burdens' is termed as Intersectionality. 'Seeing the issues of feminism from the intersections of caste, class and gender is referred to as Intersectionality (Arya and Rathore). However the intersectional analysis reveals the fact that the mainstream feminism did not give adequate attention to the dalit women.

'Dalit Patriarchy' is another major issue of the dalit women which was also neglected by the western feminism. As one of the feminist sociologist V. Geetha suggested, this concept refers to the male members of the Dalit community who practice patriarchy. She states that 'Dalit men, as part of their exploitation by 'upper-class' men, also face taunts regarding their masculinity in terms of not being able to protect their women. This in turn results in their aggressive behavior within their own families' (Arya and Rathore). According to the feminist historian Uma Chakravati, 'Dalit women experience patriarchy in a unique way', this is 'caste arrogance and patriarchy' (Chakravati). To support her claim she cites a Dalit poem by Swaroopa Rani:

When has my life been truly mine?

In my home male arrogance

Sets my cheek stinging.

While in the street caste arrogance

Splits the other cheek open. (Chakravati)

Chakravati argues that 'it is not as if patriarchies do not exist along the dalit caste, or that dalit

women do not have to struggle against the patriarchies within their own communities' (Chakraborty). The fact is that dalit women face patriarchy not only by the upper-class men but by the men of their community as well. The concept of intersectionality is reflected in Rao's *Children of God* and Dalit patriarchy is foregrounded in Bama's *Sangati*.

Bama's Sangati

Bama is considered as the first female writer in South India to combine feminism and Dalit studies. Her remarkable work *Sangati* was published in the year 1994. It expressed the unheard cries of Dalit women in Tamil Nadu and their identity was celebrated as they were not prone to subjugation. However, they proclaimed their individualism through education. The work was originally written in Tamil in 1994 and later Laxmi Holmstorm translated it to English. The Tamil word *sangati* means 'events', as the novel depicted the events from the lives of Dalit women. The novel broke the traditional norms of a novel and enclosed interconnected events that are split into twelve chapters. There is no regular plot but a series of everyday happenings that are narrated in the form of anecdotes.

Bama herself is the protagonist and the narrator in the novel. She says that right from her childhood she had been facing this gender bias. During the playtime in their childhood days, the girl child has to serve the 'mud rice' to the boys. He'd pull her hair and would scold her for the tasteless dish. Back then it was so much fun. But after marriage, many girls happened to face the same situation in reality. The male child in the family is given much importance because he's supposed to be the one looking after the parents in their old age. But that is not the case with the girl child. She will be married into another family and henceforth she has no role to play in her own family. This gender prejudice prevailed even in the minds of the parents which eventually passed on to their children. The stories of Mariamma and Thayi reminded Bama of the conflicts that the Dalit woman faced. They were beaten up and ill-treated by their husbands every day. They had to do the domestic work at home and then she

goes through a tough day in the field. In the evening she has to fix dinner for the husband who whiles away his time in the market roads. Even after going through such a long tiring day, she cannot go to sleep without giving pleasure to her husband. Such is the life of these two women. They are the representatives of all women of Dalit community. The narrator's grandmother was a courageous woman that she pawned her 'thaali' to feed her family. This incident proves the fact that these women took care of their families more than any upper-class women would do. Thus Bama depicted the various stages of Dalit women as a girl, young lady and old age woman.

Rao's Children of God

The author began writing the novel in 1954 but it was published in 1976. It took more than twenty years for her to portray the actual sufferings of Dalit. The work is based on the observations that the author had made right from her childhood. Through her imagination, she made her own characters and through them, she narrated the stories she had observed. The author has conveyed in the introductory chapter that it was her story of growing up without being able to express the sufferings she had witnessed. The novel is more of the author's way of understanding, analyzing and depiction of Dalit life. Rao says that even though time has changed the problem of untouchability and casteism still existed in the minds of people 'that inspite of all the changes the central issue remained unchanged' (Jajoria).

Lakshmi is the silent protagonist and the narrator of the novel. The setting of the novel is in the post-independent era but nothing has changed and the situation remains the same even today. Dalit women were subjected to physical and mental violence by the men of their own community. These women worked hard and earn equal to the men in their family yet they have to go through the physical and verbal abuse imposed by them. Such is the condition of the Dalit woman. Lakshmi's father physically abused her and her mother every day. Even though they had to go through the sufferings every day, not even once they had the courage to speak up or defend themselves

from their drunkard father. Instead, they remained silent and accepted reality and moved on. There is yet another significant instance from the novel that gained more attention. The untouchable Lakshmi was walking on the road and a boy walking with his mother wanted to touch this untouchable female for the fun part of it. Even after the series of scolding from his mother he never changed his mind. But Lakshmi never wanted that to happen. Because she thought he would be polluted by touching her. She begged him not to touch her and said 'stay back Swami, we are cleaners of human filth; we are untouchables, our touch is unclean; our shadow will bring pollution' (Jajoria). This incident proves the silent acceptance of untouchability as their fate. The novel begins and ends in the temple. In the beginning, Lakshmi is mourning over the death of her son Kittu. He was burnt alive for trying to enter the Hindu temple. In the end, God himself came down and said that the untouchables are his real children and he is their God. Even after that their minds were rigid and the appearance of God did not bring any change or equality. That is why Lakshmi is mourning over the death of her son who was burnt alive for entering the temple. Even God couldn't change the minds of these hypocrites. Here in this novel, the untouchable Lakshmi is portrayed as a submissive character.

Analysis and Discussion

The incidents in the novel foregrounds Dalit patriarchy that prevailed and continues till date in the remote villages in India. As feminist sociologist V. Geetha suggested, Dalit men lack the ability to stand against their masters because of which they express the rage on their wives. Almost every woman in Dalit family faces patriarchy from the men of their community.

In both novels, the portrayal of the characters is in two different tracks. Being a non-Dalit Rao lacked to bring the Dalit out of their sufferings. Even in the finishing chapter Lakshmi seems to be mourning over the death of her son and was questioning God for the disaster that had happened to her. But Bama's depiction of Dalit experience is totally different. She has

portrayed the harsh realities of Dalit women as a girl, young lady and old age woman. The novel uncovers the potency, valor and the spirit of Dalit women even during the middle of the entire crisis. Rao concludes the novel by portraying the Dalit woman as a submissive who accepted her condition as fate. But the narrator in Bama's *Sangati* was able to free herself from the clutches of her restrictions. She worked hard and made a living of her own. Bama made a realization that it is up to the Dalit women to take lives in their own hands for their benefit and their transformation. Bama suggested that it is the tongue of the women that will protect her from the oppression, be it discrimination based on gender and sex, treatment in the workplace, etc. The reason for Rao's struggle in providing suggestions for the progress of Dalit women is that her writing is out of empathy. She can only imagine herself in the shoes of a Dalit woman. It is proved that a non-Dalit can only imagine him or herself to be a Dalit and address their issues, but they can never become one in writing.

Conclusion

In comparing the writings of both Dalit and non-Dalit writers, it is evidently proved that the non-Dalit writers could not meet with the Dalit's depiction of reality. The major difference in both novels is that, in *Children of God*, Rao concluded with the negative note that nothing has changed since independence. There's still mourning and suffering in Rao's novel. Even after God himself appeared and called the untouchables as his children the double standards of the caste system did not change. But in *Sangati*, women characters freed themselves from all the limitations and succeeded in their lives. Bama set herself as a living example. She made education her companion to prosper in life. Therefore a non-Dalit writer can only look at the Dalit experience out of empathy. By comparing these two novels it is evident that in order to write on Dalit one needs to have Dalit experience and Dalit sensibility. As Limbale suggested a Dalit work should be written with Dalit consciousness to maintain the authenticity of the work.

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Rethinking Curriculum *Continued from Page 24*

literary and inclusion of all contesting categories. Curriculum is now understood as one of the ways in which unequal power is produced, maintained and justified. So, classroom is a crucial politically sensitive space where language and literature has to be used to reveal its social dynamics. The teachers have to equip themselves for the same.

Deconstruction of Israeli Perception of Palestine in *Exodus* and *The Haj* by Leon Uris

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Abstract

The paper analyses the Jewish-Palestinian conflict discussed in the two novels chosen for the present study, *The Haj* and *Exodus* by the American author of historical fiction, Leon Uris. The Palestinian perception of the Holocaust and the Jewish perception of the Intifada presented in the novels are studied using the theory of Deconstruction. Leon Uris has, through his art of convincing writing, intricate plot development, excellent delineation of character and appropriate choice of names of character has portrayed the struggle between these two races in a conglomerate manner. Through deconstruction the meticulous manipulation of the Palestinian struggle by the Jews is deciphered. The trace left behind reflects the truth of the Palestinian struggle.

Keywords: History, War, Colonial Power, Holocaust, Intifada, Culture.

For a long time now the Jewish- Palestinian conflict has been on, and there seems to be no end to it as this fire is kept burning, at times simmering, by several fuelling agents. This conflict forms the major crux of two novels of Leon Uris, *Exodus* and *The Haj*, the latter considered the sequel to the former. The present study attempts to deconstruct the existing perception that the Israelites have not manipulated the history.

Derrida's theory of Deconstruction, as an offshoot of post-structuralism, has redefined the system of structure. Post-structuralism decentred the system using Derridian concept of Deconstruction, which states "the centre lies at the centre of totality. Yet, since, the centre is beyond the totality. Therefore, centre is elsewhere, centre of centre is nowhere and there is no centre." (Barry 58) Deconstruction neither means destruction nor reconstruction but a set of complex ideas, practices applied in critical reading and methodological critical inquiry.

Derrida's description of deconstructive reading states: "A deconstructive reading must always aim at certain relationship, unperceived by the writer, between what he commands and what he does not command of the patterns of language that he uses...it attempts to make the non-seen accessible to sight. (Barry 56) Therefore the deconstructionist reads with the aim of revealing internal contradictions or inconsistencies in the text, aiming to project

the disunity that lie under apparent unity.

The present study is an attempt to find answers to two research questions - 'How did the Palestinians perceive the Jewish struggle?' and 'How did the Jews perceive the Palestinian Struggle?' The paper attempts to answer these questions through oppositional reading. The answer for the first research question is that Palestinians accepted the entry of Holocaust refugees in their land and wished to maintain a cordial relationship with them. Palestinians were ignorant as they were so innocent not realizing what is happening around them. Thus they failed to sense the Jewish plan of converting Palestine into Jewish homeland named 'Israel'. In the novel, *The Haj*, Ishmael, a ten year old boy excitedly comments on the Jewish kibbutz as "We had no toys except what we made of sticks and yarn, and until I saw the Jewish kibbutz I did not know that things like playgrounds or toy rooms or libraries even existed." (Haj 9) It reflects upon their innocence.

Palestinians never knew the cause and effect of Holocaust. But when the survivors of Holocaust wanted refuge, Palestine as a nation welcomed them. It accepted everyone, who was rejected in other countries. It also never had any limit for the entry. Though Palestine was a British mandate then, the people accepted those Jewish refugees as part of their society. They never rebelled against their entry. Palestinians shared their resources with them in a friendly manner considering them

as their distant cousins; as they fall under one category – people to whom word of God was revealed. Palestinians tried to develop a brotherhood with them but their attempts were in vain as they were more particular about race. Jews proclaimed that they are a race and not just religious followers. Therefore, a Jew is born not converted. Even after facing the ugliness of anti-Semitism Jews are obsessed with their racism.

Palestinians were ignorant and innocent, as they considered Jews settling in Palestine by building Kibbutzim as their friendly, good neighbors. They were unaware of their nefarious plan of abducting the land by expelling and evacuating the Palestinians. Their open-minded and philanthropist attitude had ironically reduced them to the status of being refugees in their own land.

The answer for the second research question, about the way the Jews looked at the Palestinian struggle is predominantly tainted by betrayal; the Jews perceived that elite Palestinians would betray the laymen, even if they were given a meager amount or if their small wishes were fulfilled. It happened so, as if asserting their calculation was right. So they considered the situation as an opportunity. Jews turned into opportunists and abducted the land from Palestinians. Jews perceived that Palestinians are easy prey as they lack unity among themselves. Not only Palestinians but Arabs and Muslims at large lack unity. So Jews conceived that Islamic nations would betray each other for safety, oil and wealth. In the novel, Exodus, two British officers residing in Palestine discuss the reaction of the British government for the entry of Holocaust refugees into Palestine. General Sir Clarence Tevor-Browne utters the following statement to Bruce Sutherland. “The only kingdom that runs on righteousness is the Kingdom of heaven. The kingdoms of the earth run oil. The Arabs have oil.” (Exodus 31) It projects the keyhole into global politics. For Jews, Palestinian struggle is an opportunity to establish them in the face of earth by asserting they are no more going to spend a nomadic life or a life of gentile. Jews, in order to ascertain their authority turned the

native Palestinians into the “other” and converted them into refugees in their own land. Jews did to the Palestinians, what was done to them in European Countries, under the tag of anti-Semitism.

As most of the Palestinians were Bedouins it was easy for the Jews to confiscate the land from the wealthy Effendi who owned a land in Palestine and resided elsewhere. Though there were many villages under the governance of Muktar who collects and pays the taxes to the Effendi, they were all toppled by some means or other. In the novel The Haj, Ibrahim is the Muktar of the Village Tabah owned by Effendi Fawzi Kabir. Ibrahim gets to know Kabir and other Effendis are selling their lands to the Jews for money, and that makes Ibrahim fear what they will do if Tabah is sold out. “A few influential Palestinian Arab families did the dirty business for the Ottomans. One of these was the Effendi Kabir family, which was rewarded for its collaboration by large land grants in the Palestine district. One of its holdings covered a good part of Valley of Ayalon.” (Haj 16) “What Ibrahim brooded about most was the frightening pattern of land sales.” (Haj 37) Therefore, Jews have confiscated the Palestinian Land in a crooked manner. Leon Uris has projected only one way of how Jews abducted Palestinian land, which is on their favor as it presents Palestinian elite as fools. Uris has failed to portray the terror attacks by the Haganah and Irgun, Israeli defense troops, upon many Palestinian villages to confiscate the land. This viewpoint is established by de-centering the notion that Israelites never attacked the Palestinians to capture the land.

Jews planned and trained themselves to abduct Palestinian land even before they built kibbutzim, while they lived in refugee camps in Palestine of British Mandate “At night the playground was transformed into military training camp for refugees. The classrooms were turned from standard schools into indoctrination centers in Arab psychology, Palestine geography, tactics, weapons identification, and a hundred other phases of warfare instruction.” (Exodus 38) Thus Irgun,
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Parenting

Helping Pre-schoolers with What they Need

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Who is more worried –the three-year old who is going to be sent to pre-school the next day, or her/his parents ? There is no end to the list of worries and anxieties of both. No comparison possible. Both are in their superlative degrees of possible adjectives and adverbs: upset, anxious, worried, perturbed, disturbed, fearful, doubtful...

But, at the same time, both possess certain amount of hope and optimism. The 'heard melodies' of school life—heard from the elder ones at home—those much awaited moments are there with the kid. New objects, places, persons, experiences, new ways of playing, new way of eating from lunchbox the self-help way, all will be fun. But, who will help me to washroom?

For the parents, hope and optimism: "Let her/him get socialized. Getting too self-centred. Not obeying. The teacher may have ways and means." But, suppose the child insists on going back home?" Fear overshadows hope.

But, haven't we ever thought that the same drama is being enacted in the case of every child and every parents, ever since this business called 'schooling' began? How old are parental worries? How old are children's worries? No idea. For both, it seems to be something new and special for them.

Preschool offers many advantages. It can be a wonderful place for kids to interact with peers and learn valuable life lessons such as how to share, take turns, and follow rules. It also can prepare them academically for kindergarten and beyond.

The question must be that of readiness, not of fear or anxiety. Have we prepared our child to enter 'the brave new world'? In fact, the preparedness has two aspects: material and mental. Usually parents focus on the former: getting all those things ready—from colour pencils to cucumber for salad! But, more important is the mental part of it; and that needs a longer prior preparation. The child must be made familiar with the atmosphere in the strange land. How can be achieved? Roleplay,

of course. A lot of rehearsals, with parents and elders enacting the roles of the much celebrated Mis Aunty, Principal, peers, watchman uncle, the bus driver and so on. Their greetings, inquiries, conversations, advice, appreciation—all must be 'pre-recorded', played and replayed many times, so that the child gets easily 'acculturated' to the new environment.

It is quite desirable for you to visit the preschool classroom with your child a few times before school starts. This can ease concerns about this unfamiliar territory. It also helps to interact with the teachers freely. Individual attention matters at this stage. Inquiring about the routines, common activities and timings may help the parents introduce some of those routines and activities at home so that they become part of their life. For example, how to use a spoon.

The more calm and assured you are about your choice to send your child to preschool, the more confident your child will be.

Whether your child is eager or reluctant to go to preschool, make sure that a school staff member is ready to help with the transition when you arrive. Some kids may jump right in with their classmates, while others might want a private cuddle from a caregiver before joining the group.

Conformity and diversity—both must be fused in such a way that there will be something new for every day, and at the same time the basics remain more or less the same. Parents must encourage their children to befriend with as many as possible at school, every day. They must inquire the details of the new friend of the day, along with the one of the previous day as well. Why someone is no more her/his friend, why someone was 'deleted' from the list of friends, must be seriously considered by parents since this is the earliest stage of socialization. Certain misconceptions about selection of friends, such as differences in gender and religion, may get deep-rooted or fossilized in the young mind unless those misconceptions are addressed at the early age itself.

Report from the field

Engaging Children Creatively and Productively during the Pandemic: An Academic Experiment

(Report of the English Proficiency Improvement Programme held in Kanhileri UP School, Kannur Dt.)

P.V. Vasudevan Namboothiri (Academic coordinator, ELTIF)

When the pandemic locked down social interaction, shut up human voice, and put out the fire of human enthusiasm, the worst sufferers were children. The Headmistress Smt.Sujadevi, the school manager Sri. PV Vasudevan Nampoothiri, the staff, and the PTA of Kanhileri Upper Primary School near Mattannur in Kannur District of Kerala took initiative to launch an English Proficiency Improvement Programme for the children of the school during the days of isolation and frustration. The felt need was the urgency to improve the children's English language proficiency. ELTIF was consulted and academic support was promised. Thus, a series of online classes was planned.

Originally 10 sessions were planned, each of 40 minute's duration. But due to the overwhelming responses from the pupils, the classes had to be extended. The new programme aimed at enlarging the areas of English learning opportunities, building self confidence among the pupils and casting off inhibition.

Inauguration (15 Aug.2021) Though enthusiastic, we were apprehensive as well, of the outcomes of the online classes in English since it was a unique venture. Learning the contents of subjects like maths and science was

familiar to children. Subject teachers also were gaining experience in 'pouring down' information online. But, how can a language be taught and learnt online? language or communication, basically is a face to face business. However, we were determined to proceed with our mission.

The programme was inaugurated by Dr. P. Bhaskaran Nair, President of the ELTIF on the 15 August 2021 at a meeting presided over by Mr. P. Ganghadharan Nambiar, the PTA President. The students of Kanhileri UP School celebrated the National Independence Day in a fitting way by reversing the role of the colonizer's use of that language as a weapon for oppression into a tool (something like a step ladder) to reach the heights of opportunities.

It was a wonderful day for the pupils and the teachers of Kanhileri UP School since they hoped to expose themselves to many classroom tips.

Mr. V. V Babu the AEO of Mattannur offered the keynote address and Mr. P. V. Vasudevan Namboothiri the Manager of the school briefed the programme to be carried out at the school. Mr. E. V. Santhosh Kumar a faculty of the DIET Kannur, Mrs. O. K. Pathmaja, the

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Continued from p.43 Deconstruction...

Haganah, Plamach and Mossad Aliyah Bet were formed by the Jews to execute their heinous plan.

The paper has attempted to present the perception of Jews and Palestinians on struggles which were neither the consequences of their vicious acts nor their follies and frivolities; but an act of hatred. Jewish struggle was the result of Europeans hatred towards Jews or Anti-Semitic attitude, and Palestinian struggle was the result of Jewish hatred towards Muslims. To put an end to the burning issue in global politics – Arab Israel conflict, the Palestinian

refugees must be resettled in the Palestine as how Holocaust refugees were resettled. With the passage of time, anti-Semitic attitude has been put to an end in the early 20th century. Through the study perception of both the parties in conflict is juxtaposed in order to explicate the bitter truth and to revive Palestine so that it can regain its past glory and harmony.

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member of Maloor Grama Panchayat and Master. Adidev a student representative felicitated the programme. Mrs. P. Rajeena the SRG Convenor proposed vote of thanks.

As we planned, the first class was held on 25.08.2021 Wednesday at 7.30 pm online.

Session 1: 25/0/2021 On the first day Dr. Beena Philip One of the joint secretaries of ELTIF and presently officiating as the Hon. Mayor of Calicut was the chief guest. She felicitated the programme, by recalling her long association with ELTIF, and reminding its mission: "Empowering rural India through English language education". Mr. P. Mohanan another active member of ELTIF and a former Higher Secondary school teacher of Kuthuparamba Higher secondary school was the resource Person

Session 2: 01.09.2021. The class two was guided by Mr. Sahadevan a former Headmaster of Government HSS Kathirur He interacted with the learners in English and they responded well.

Session 3: 08/09/2021

Mr. Mathew Thellyil the Vice president of ELTIF, a former Headmaster of Nirmala HSS Chemperian and a veteran in the field of teacher education led the language learning activities and they began increasing their involvement in the class.

Session 4: 15/09/2021 The class was guided by Mr George Joseph the former Principal of the DIET Calicut and a former English text book writer. The class proved excellent.

Session 5: 22/09/2021 Dr.A. Devika teacher of Moothedath Higher Secondary school Thalipparamba was the resource Person. The pupils looked more confident in themselves in expression.

Session 6: 29/09/2021 Mr Hiran. C. A teacher of Vengad South U P School took the class. He guided the pupils in a playful way. The learners were enthused

Session 7: 06/10/2021 Mr. Sreejithkumar a teacher of Government U P School Mattannur was the guest teacher. He provided support to the learners to

express their ideas in English. On the whole the classes began changing inspirational.

Session 8: 12/10/2021 The resource Person was a well-known ELT Trainer and an English course book writer Mr. Baburaj T. C. led the class on 12.10.2021. He was the principle of Vijaya HSS Pulppalli. The learners' response became more and more conspicuous.

Session 9 : 20/10/2021 Mrs. C. Shilpa a teacher of Communicative English at Marygiri English medium School, Sreekandapuram was our new teacher. Her class was really wonderful.

Session 10: 26/10/2021 Mr.K.M.Joseph a retired English teacher from GHSS Panamaram, an educationist and a former teacher - trainer in Libiya Africa was our resource Person. He inspired the children to speak English.

Session 11: 27/10/2021 The finale of our programme was an excellent class by Dr. A. K. Leena A teacher of St. Joseph's HSS chathiath, Ernakulam Dt. and an active member of the ELTIF. The learners became more and more responsive.

Conclusion

This programme gained great popularity. All the time and all the days the attendance of listeners on the screen stood in the sixties. The specialty of the programme was the fear-free atmosphere in which the tutors and the learners interacted. It's a matter of great joy to disclose that the learners became disciplined by the end of the session.

The co-operation of all the teachers and the parents was evident in the success of the programme. As the Manager of the school, I was instrumental to be the co-ordinator and thus introduced all the resources person and the chief guest to the children. Let this be a pioneering venture to all of us. One parent opined that the English Empowerment programme should go on. He told me that his ward enquired: "will there be English class on the next Wednesday? We hopefully long for it". That was the kind of ovation for the English Proficiency Improvement programme held in Kanhileri UPS with the support of ELTIF.

It works in my classroom

“How did I manage to do it?” Metacognitive Inquiry into the Processes of Learning

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Have you ever thought of how you think? Rarely do we think of our own thinking process. And, it is difficult and complex, too. Still more complex is to teach someone to examine how he thinks. This may be the one of the pinnacles or the highest point in teaching profession—teaching learners to find the routes of their thinking processes. In psychology, this state of mind is known as metacognition. How can a teacher of English develop metacognitive awareness in her learners?

The teaching and testing of the following story may stop at any of the following stages, depending on the teacher's awareness of pedagogy, psychology, knowledge base, desire for professional development and so on.

- Stage 1. Enabling the learner to grasp the content of the reading passage in general.
- Stage 2. Enabling the learner to grasp the content with minute details through critical thinking.
- Stage 3. Help the learner to acquire language in context.
- Stage 4. Guide the learner to find the roots and routes of his thinking and make him aware of his potentials and limitations in thinking so that he can re-employ the strong points in future and overcome his limitations by using better alternatives in thinking, as suggested by the teacher.

Before we start working on the story, let's think of a real life situation, so that you may get a better picture of metacognition.

A family—mother, father, a boy of twelve years and a girl of ten—has moved from midtown to the outskirts. Till evening, all were busy in arranging furniture and all other things. Being tired, the children went to bed early. But,

the parents said that they would be working till early next morning and may get up late. The children were asked to arrange their room when they got up—of course, after helping themselves with a cup of tea or milk. But, there was no milk, because the fridge was empty. The boy was asked to get a litre of milk and the money was kept there on the dining table.

While in bed, the boy asks himself: “Where can I get milk in the morning? This place is totally strange to me, though I had been here just once with parents. There are about a dozen small shops in the lane; but which shop may sell milk? The two or three grocery shops may not keep milk; the tea shops may not sell milk; no chance at the fancy-cum-stationery shop; the vegetable shop may or may not. The barber shop, the medical store, the ration shop—they are all out. OK, let me see in the morning.

The boy got up before seven next morning and set out in search of milk. He looked towards either side of the lane, a few people were going up and down. Suddenly he thought of the possibility of a milkman on his bicycle at that time. Once again, he looked towards either side of the lane; but this time carefully. He noticed a woman at the end of the lane with a steel jug in her hand. He rushed back home, fetched a small vessel; and was happy to see the milkman's cycle appearing a little away. While walking back home with milk, the boy may not have realized that metacognition helped solving his problem easily. The following may be the map of his metacognition.

- (i) How did I arrive at the possibility of a milkman coming this way? (From my past experience.)
- (ii) How did I zero in on the milkman? (I saw a woman with a steel jug at her gate.)
- (iii) What made me stop at the gate, instead of

going straight to the shops? (Shops, except the tea shop, won't open at seven.)

- (iv) If I got up after eight, would I wait for a milkman? (No, it's not milkman's time.)
- (v) Before that, how did I rule out the barber shop, stationery cum-fancy shop, ration shop etc.?(From my past experience.)
- (vi) But, why didn't I rule out the vegetable vendor? (He may have a fridge.)

Now, let's examine how the learner's metacognition may work in reading a passage or story.

A Crow in the House Ruskin Bond (Retold) (Adapted from Buzzword 5. Orient Black Swan)

A young crow had fallen from its nest and was fluttering about on the road. It was in danger there. So I brought it home.

It was in a sorry condition. We did not expect it to live. But my grandfather and I tried our best to save his life.

We fed it by opening its beak gently with a pencil. We pushed a little bread and milk, then removed the pencil to allow it to swallow. As a result, the young crow was soon on its way to recovery.

We were then prepared to let him go. We thought he would want to be free and go with the other crows. Instead, he made himself at home in our house.

My grandmother, Aunt Mabel and even some of my grandfather's pets did not like this. But, there was no way of getting rid of the bird.

We were not sure if he was a male bird, but we called him Caesar.

Before long, Caesar was joining us at mealtimes. He gave us no peace till he had been given his small bowl of meat, soup and vegetables.

Stage 1. Comprehending the content in general Answer the following in a word or phrase each.

1. Where did the boy find the young crow?
2. Who were not in favour of keeping a crow as a pet?
3. Who offered support?
4. How did they feed the baby bird?
5. What did the crow eat later?
6. Why should they bother whether the bird was male or female?

Stage 2. Comprehending the content with minute details through critical thinking.

Three features of Caesar are listed below. Copy the suitable word or phrase in the blanks.

- (a) impatient (b) hungry
- b. felt at home in their house.
1. The young bird swallowed bread and milk. It was
 2. When grew up, the bird wouldn't go since it...
 3. They fed the bird first and then had their meals because it was ...

Stage 3. Acquiring language in context

Notice the two ways of stating habitual actions in the past time.

- (a) They used to feed the baby bird by opening its beak with a pencil.
- (b) The bird would not go out; it would fly around indoors.

Write two sentences using used to and two sentences using would. You can think of the bird, other pets in that house, those who liked the bird, and those who didn't.

Example: Grandpa's dog would chase the crow.

Stage 4. Learning to think about thinking

1. Read the following sentence with special attention to the words in italics.

- (a) We were not sure if he was a male bird. Is there any mismatch in the sentence? (You are free to answer in your mother tongue.)
- (b) The same problem is there in four more sentences—One in the second paragraph and three in the fourth paragraph. Find those sentences.
- (c) How can we solve the problem in all the five sentences? How can we rewrite them? (There are nine clues in the first three paragraphs.)

The purpose of the task outlined above is to tell teachers not to stop with the first stage of enabling the learner to comprehend the content of the passage. It urges them to move farther beyond content to language; then to cognition; and finally, to metacognition.

Those who would like to know a little more about metacognition, please read the 'Editorial' on p.2.