

Journal of English Language Teachers' Interaction Forum
Volume XI.1. January-March 2020. ISSN 2230-7710

Contents

From the Editor's Desk

Only One Person to Listen to; Nobody to Speak to! 02

Papers

Elevating the Disadvantaged Learners to an
Advantaged Position through Principled ESL Instruction Hitesh Bhakat 04

The Art of Affective Teaching Binu P.M. 09

The Evolution of Language: Erasing Patriarchal
Perspectives Maria Uzma Ansari 11

Exploring the Interstitial Spaces in a Text :
A Means of Promoting Deep Reading Mohanan. P &
Abdul Mohammed Ali Jinnah 18

Task Based Approach to Develop the Aural Skills
of English : Bringing Life to the UG Classroom Ajitha S Pisharady & 22
J. G Ravi Kumar

In Search of the 'The Best Method' in English Language
Teaching Shiny. K. G & 26
J. Karthikeyan

English for Knowledge, Not for Honing Skills Jyothi 32

Parenting

Only Lock Down, Not Break Down Dhanya Bhaskaran 34

It works in my classroom

Developing Conversation Skills of Teachers and
Students, Simultaneously P.Bhaskaran Nair 35

Reports from TBAK College, Kilakkarai, TN Zulaiha Shakeel 37

Reports of the ELTIF **Annual Conference**: AK Leena, NS Vinija, P.V. Vasudevan 38
Namboodiri, Valsan Panoli, Vijayan Karayi, Pavithran K & P.P. Hareendran

From the Editor's Desk

Only One Person to Listen to; Nobody to Speak to!

You might have guessed from the title that it is about the English class—and, rightly so. Look at the plight of our learners. We call it a language class; and we all (except hard core linguists and communication experts) equate language with communication. But, in our English class, let it be KG, UG or PG, there is neither language nor communication. Only endless monologues!

Even laymen know that the first prerequisite for a child to learn (any) language is exposure. The child must listen to a lot of language around. Grannies, moms and care takers, therefore talk a lot—partly to the child, mostly as part of their day to day functioning. The child listens to all; starts making hypotheses, starts comprehending, and after a certain incubation period, starts testing the earlier formed hypotheses—that means, starts speaking.

In the second/foreign language class, none of these seems to be essential. Let's straight away begin with "A for apple and B for bat" Reading, grammar and writing.

The so called primary skills –listening and speaking—seem not so essential, as far as teachers are concerned. For the poor learners, the only person to listen to is the teacher; and (s)he hardly speaks: simply reads and paraphrases! In the end, all blame the learner for not fluent in English.

It is high time teachers of all levels started 'functioning' in English; not 'teaching' English like physics and math. They must overcome their own fear, shyness and 'withdrawal symptoms' through regular practice. Of course, there may be mistakes in the beginning; but not as many as one proceeds with confidence. Mistakes can be corrected during the course of progress.

A teacher can improve her/his language proficiency in many ways: (i) carefully listening to better performers among colleagues, (ii) working in collaboration with others, (iii) watching TV programmes regularly, (iv) reading books of one's own taste (detective novels, sports, recipes, features on dance, drama etc.), (v) organizing weekly class meetings wherein the students and teachers speak only English, (vi) giving classroom instructions (not to be late, no need to bring the textbook the next day) and announcements (last date for fee payment, extra class, competitions...) in English, (vii) having a role play dialogue with a student (taking turn) every day, wherein the student will be playing a role which is not known to the teacher. (For details, please see the column 'It works in my classroom' in this issue.)

There was a time when even sincere teachers of English felt helpless for lack of resources for professional improvement. How is the word 'zero' pronounced? To me, way back in the 1950s when I was at school, there was only one way: pronounce it as my primary teacher uttered it—seero. Later, may be at college, I heard someone pronouncing the initial consonant asz. Thus I too modified the initial consonant. Then it was something like zeero. I was sure that my pronouncing of the two vowels –after /z/ and after /r/ were correct. It took me years, and when I became the proud owner of a dictionary I noticed that the vowel after /z/ was not a long vowel /I:/ as in see or key; but a diphthong as in hear or fear. Again, I modified; but not the last time. The problem with the final vowel still remained. I once again checked my dictionary. The final vowel was not the one in box, but the diphthong in the final position in arrow. Finally, my zero became /'zɪərəʊ/.

Look! How many times did I modify in the absence of a correct model in the beginning? [No disrespect to my teachers—they had only that much resources, those days.] How many years did it take for me to find the correct model?

Today, what is all that a teacher has to do to get the correct pronunciation (or meaning or usage of an ordinary word)? Just a tap on the smart phone. Still, how many of us—teachers—pronounce those ‘humble’ words of day to day use such as zero, parent, soap, and music correctly? Are we giving the correct models to our students? How many of us—teachers— a distinction between the vowel sounds in the following pairs? Rod-rod / sop-soap/ cot-coat/ morn-moan.

The smart phone is in your pocket. Just tap. Help the learners, please.

Have a glance through the three phases of teaching English. My primary teacher of the 1950s was not introduced to phonemic script during her pre-service training programme, nor did she have a dictionary either. I was taught a little of phonetics in my induction programme in the 1960s, and had to depend on my dictionary for everything. Now, you are neck deep in technology. All the correct forms—spelling, meaning, pronunciation, usage, collocation, illustrative examples, and what else?—is there in your smart phone, in your laptop, in your computer. Still...?

Still, blaming the poor learners!

P. Bhaskaran Nair
(Editor)

Noam Chomsky on Education

“The whole educational and professional training system is a very elaborate filter, which just weeds out people who are too independent, and who think for themselves, and who don’t know how to be submissive, and so on — because they’re dysfunctional to the institutions.”

“Most problems of teaching are not problems of growth but helping cultivate growth. As far as I know, and this is only from personal experience in teaching, I think about ninety percent of the problem in teaching, or maybe ninety-eight percent, is just to help the students get interested. Or what it usually amounts to is to not prevent them from being interested. Typically they come in interested, and the process of education is a way of driving that defect out of their minds. But if children[‘s] ... normal interest is maintained or even aroused, they can do all kinds of things in ways we don’t understand.”

“Either you repeat the same conventional doctrines, everybody is saying, or else you say something true, and it will sound like it’s from Neptune.”

“If anybody thinks they should listen to me because I’m a professor at MIT, that’s nonsense. You should decide whether something makes sense by its content, not by the letters after the name of the person who says it.”

“Science is a bit like the joke about the drunk who is looking under a lamppost for a key that he has lost on the other side of the street, because that’s where the light is. It has no other choice.”

Elevating the Disadvantaged Learners to an Advantaged Position through Principled ESL Instruction

Dr Hitesh C Bhakat
Professor, RIESI, Bangalore

Abstract

This paper attempts to explore concepts of educational instruction in learning English in Indian contexts, equip learner with required strength of ideation and ideology to strengthen and develop learning strategies. The paper highlights the weaknesses and strengths of the established methods while searching for alternative possibilities supporting teacher plausibility and finding a rational ESL instruction. The paper focuses on the needs of “an internal system as something which develops by itself, according to an inherent plan, with pedagogic activity providing only stimulus, and favorable conditions, for that process”, (Prabhu, 1989, p. 1-14); and equipping learner with the knowledge, skill or pattern of behavior envisaged as educational ends, “an equipping procedure and an enabling procedure” and providing learner with opportunity and support in realizing their potential’ (Prabhu, 1987, p. 190)... and allowing learner “good learning” that which is in advance stage of development in context of “zone of proximal development”, (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86, p. 91); in performing “pragmatic and mathetic function” (Halliday, 1975, p.3) through “Reading method”, (West, 1926). The paper concludes highlighting a sense of plausibility of teachers in a language classroom, sustaining their interest in observing classroom transaction by other fellow teachers and engaging a “quality of pedagogic discussion”, (Ramani, 1987, pp.116-29) and enabling them develop their plausibility in making appropriate decisions as an important stakeholder in the hierarchy of the educational administration in playing academic roles and evolving an appropriate “principled”, approach, (Brown, 2002, p. 12) in the post-method era.

Key words: Equipping, enabling, ideation, ideology, pragmatic, mathetic, plausibility.

Introduction

Teaching and learning English as a second language in India has a long history of experiment and research. While objectives of learning the language remain unchanged, the process of diverse educational instruction at various levels has resulted varied and different degrees of dissatisfaction. In each attempt, the focus remained on teaching disregarding any effort in scrutinizing the process of learning. Most methods which originated in the Western countries, were adapted to suit the Indian contexts until the structural syllabus was framed during the MELT campaign in Madras, India in 1952. Nevertheless, emphasis remained on teaching instead of learning. The two methods that find their roots in Indian contexts made tremendous impact on the concept of learning. The focus of ‘Reading method’ by Michael West in early thirties and ‘Task Based Language

Teaching’ (TBLT), N. S. Prabhu in seventies on ‘learning’ have proved their validity until date followed by current theory of TBLT and concept of a ‘task’ improvised by experts like Rod Ellis (2003), Peter Skehan (1996), Kumaravadivelu. B (1993), and Michael Long (1991). This paper explores the possibilities of analyzing some of the important concepts which are crucial in equipping learners with learning and enabling them to enhance their inner potential while understanding the reality they live in. The paper mainly highlights on importance of teacher’s sense of plausibility in letting language learning to happen rather than by attempting to cause it. Teaching and Learning

Concept of teaching carries in itself some sorts of ambiguity. The general concept of teaching refers to causing or bringing about learning in the learner through a set of activities and procedures by the teacher. Studies show that

there is no corresponding effect between teaching and learning. While teaching can be planned, predicted and assumed in advance, learning is not direct result of teaching. Learning is observable only when it happens.

“Teaching is what the teacher does; learning is what happens to the learner... teaching is an intentional activity which can be planned, carried out with deliberate effort, controlled or regulated, and observed as it happens. Learning... is unpredictable and intangible, we have too little knowledge or control of learning”, (Prabhu, 2019, p.243).

In other words, learning refers to something that happens in the learner’s mind when something gets newly internalized, assimilated or organized enabling learner to act in it. Thus, teaching may or may not cause learning; what enables it to happen is internal to the learner’s mind beyond the knowledge of the teacher. The teacher can only provide such a condition with all material support with appropriate tasks to let learning happen.

Equipping and Enabling

Two broad views dominate language education. It is an act of preparing young minds to gain knowledge and skills to adapt to future needs and to explore inner potential of understanding and ability to manage emerging conditions of life. Providing young people with the required knowledge and skills is crucial for learner to function in later years with opportunity and support in realizing inner potential called “equipping and enabling”, (Prabhu, 2019, p.59). While an equipping procedure seeks to provide learners with different parts of the system as language competence, an enabling procedure involves effort to create conditions favorable to such development. Language education is an enabling procedure which demands learner’s effort in coping with the unknown and unpredictable conditions of reality. An enabling perspective is vital in education as language is, in its central role, a facilitator of thought and a facilitator of change, (Prabhu, 2019, p.70). Thus, it is necessary to gain an insight of ideation and ideology in developing learning tasks for classroom practice. Ideation is “the process of developing ideas or concepts with which we

can gain an understanding of the nature of the world we live in—a knowledge construct”... and “an effort to gain understanding in response to an inner need of the mind”, (Prabhu, 2019, p.265-6), “the rage to know” (Judson, 1985); while ideology is driven by a rage to reform or improve—a “‘mathetic’ function ... learning, thinking and making sense about the world; and ‘pragmatic’ function ... doing things that one wants to do, getting thing that one wants to have, or making others do things for one... language as reflection... language as action”, (Halliday, 1975, p.7). The terms refer to linguistic competence (language as reflection) which is a mental phenomenon and (language as action) language as social phenomenon what Cummins (1979) calls CALP (cognitive/ academic language proficiency) and BICS (basic interpersonal communicative skills). The teaching, so to say, should help learner develop a formal grammatical system in the minds and enable them use the language as a carrier of evidence about the sociopolitical workings of the community in which it is spoken and keep on reforming all emerging contexts.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Methods

Language experts view two broad dimensions to educational endeavor. One, “an educational dimension, having to do with schools, education departments, specialist institutions, state policies, etc.; and ... two, an academic or ‘ideational’ dimension, having to do with the development or emergence of ideas, theories or methodologies about what learning is like and what kind of teaching can best bring it about”, (Prabhu, 1995). While institutional effort in improving English language goes back to MELT campaign, establishment of RIESI, CIEFL, ELTIs, summer institutes, etc., the ideational/ academic endeavor goes back to the development of ‘Reading method’ by Michael West and ‘Task Based Language Teaching’ by N.S. Prabhu to validate the underlying thoughts. Effective teaching to let learning happen requires a thorough knowledge of those language teaching methods or approaches developed based on Indian practice and thoughts along with an understanding of other methods used in language teaching.

The two methods arose within India are The Reading Method and Task-based Language Teaching. Michael West developed Reading method in 1920s in the Bengal Province to reduce the high drop-out and to enhance amount of exposure and develop in learners an ability to read English. West viewed 'reading' an ability that can be developed in learners much in advance of the other language skills, that learners can maintain their reading ability in later life more easily than they can maintain the other skills and that reading in English is also the most useful or valuable skill for learners to possess... through a syllabus of common or frequent words leading to the formation of the Reading Method.(West, 1926). In late 1970s, Dr N S Prabhu developed an approach called 'Task-based Language Teaching'—a procedure of teaching consisting essentially of problem-solving activities in the classroom, with an appropriate degree of cognitive challenge to learners (Prabhu, 1995). The main focus of the 'task-based language teaching' project was to "let learning happen than by attempting to cause it... and it can happen by identifying and creating conditions ... favourable to its happening, the condition is where the learner's mind is focused on meaning, content, knowledge, and not language itself. The learner's effort to understand brings about a kind of 'intensive exposure' ...while focusing on the meaning and in the process more sense is made of the language. (Prabhu, 2019, p.315).A "task' requires the participants to function primarily as 'language users' in the sense that they must employ the same kind of communicative processes as those involved in real-world activities. Thus, any learning that takes place is incidental", (Ellis, 2003, p.3). Thus, teaching is to activate "the internal system as something which develops by itself, according to an inherent plan, with pedagogic activity providing only a stimulus, and favourable conditions, for that process", (Prabhu, 1989, p. 1-14). Learning takes place only when investment and input are in appropriate proximity—within what Vygotsky called "the zone of proximal development... the distance between the learner's actual

development stage, at a given time, and the level of development attainable, at that time, through a learning experience", (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86,91). Hence, the classroom practitioners needed to develop an understanding of professional consciousness to have a sense of plausibility in practice.

Evaluation in English Language Teaching

Teaching and evaluation go hand in hand. An understanding of several levels of evaluation is critical in a given language programme. An evaluation is done to check the effectiveness of two methods when applied in a programme. Evaluation is conducted to promote learners from one level on to the next level based on learning experience. Teachers also carry out class test to adjust pace of teaching to gain an idea of learner progression. It is to judge how far learner can do for themselves in a language programme. Teachers evaluation is to assess difficulty of planned tasks and planning for adjustment. Evaluation is done in order to check suitability of teaching tasks and to discuss with fellow teachers for shared professional growth. Consequently, an insight of evaluation of various kinds is crucial.

Plausibility in Language Classroom

A sense of plausibility refers to teachers' subjective understanding of the teaching and learning. It is the resulting concept or theory or pedagogic intuition of how learning takes place and how teaching causes or supports it.The term 'plausibility' refers to a special capacity in gaining insight of the profession, "Our coin of knowledge is not firm generalisations, but is more akin to the good measure of meanings: plausibility. In educational research, as in education as a whole, good judgement should be seen as the prized intellectual capacity," (Ericson, & Ellet, 1983). This sense of plausibility is crucial in teaching profession. When the sense of plausibility is engaged, the activity of teaching is productive; there is then a basis for the teacher to be satisfied or dissatisfied about the activity and each instance of such satisfaction or dissatisfaction is itself a further influence on the sense of plausibility, confirming or disconfirming or revising

it in some small measure, and generally contributing to its growth or change (Prabhu, 2019,p.139). Alternatively, the absence of this is an act of routinization. Mechanical teaching results from an over-routinization of teaching and the teaching is subject to great pressure of routinization. Teachers'sense of plausibility requires a sound knowledge of teaching methods—that should be judged by the amounts of learning they can lead to, in a given period of time, (Brumfit, 1984, pp.18-19). It is essentially concerned with human interaction, can usefully be subjected to the processes of objective testing and prediction...".Teacher's subjective understanding is crucial while operating with some personal conceptualization of how their teaching leads to desired learning—with a notion of causation that has measure of credibility for them.

An understanding of functions of syllabus and usefulness of materials adds to teacher plausibility. A syllabus is an articulation of what is proposed to be done in the classroom—an analysis of the objectives or content of teaching which is product based, which is of interest to educational administrators. The syllabus is also a specification of the means envisaged for achieving those objectives, ... a process based and is a form of guidance to classroom teachers and writers of course materials (Prabhu,2019, p.23). Teachers' own perception is a process of judging an effectiveness of successive input-assimilation and that the sequence in which inputs are assimilated or to consider learning an organic development, furthered by effort by the learner to deploy his/her communicative resources. Correspondingly, materials represent a selection of certain cognitive and cultural content, which demand for linguistic effort at a certain level, as input.Learners bring with them a certain state of cognitive and cultural knowledge and a certain level of language ability, as investment. Insight of such cumulative effect and own reflection helps teacher develop a sense of plausibility.

A method is another aspect—an insight of which enhance a sense of plausibility. It has two dimensions: a method is a set of classroom procedures for the teacher to carry out; and it is

a concept or theory of language learning which informs or justifies those teaching procedures. Further, perceptions of learner effort in classroom procedures also add to the sense of teacher plausibility. There are four types of learner effort—reproduction, simulation, construction and deployment.Reproduction is imitation of language form;simulation refers to imitation of language behavior; construction denotes learner's effort to understand some part of language system to put together linguistic expressions on the strength of that understanding. Deployment involves learner handling information—inferring,reasoning and relating etc., with such linguistic resources. Understanding of learner effort is vital in pedagogic understanding and practice. Learning depends on learner effort which demands teacher to set task—an activity consisting of setting learner a problem to solve—a problem which calls for an understanding of information relevant to it, involves some “working out”, (Prabhu, 1987). It is an activity in the mind to relate the information to the problem and to arrive at a possible solution by judging the effectiveness of such tasks and revising the tasks. Whena sense of plausibility is engaged, the teaching becomes operational.

The sense of plausibility gets strengthened with the knowledge of dynamics of the language lesson. The lesson is not just a pedagogic event, but a social event as well, (Allwright, 1989). Prabhu (1992) derives four different types of event—as a curricular unit, as implementation of a method, as a social event and as an arena of human interaction. The knowledge of presentation of tasks is equally central: situational presentation, translation by learner and problem-solving activities with an insight of assessing classroom activity to check if learner's effort, purposeful comprehension and language employed are structurally composite and supported by sustained contexts.

A teacher's sense of plausibility is a major condition for classroom rapport. It should be active or operational enough to create a sense of involvement for both the teacher and the learner. Teacher should engage himself/herself in observing advance level fellow teachers,

view someone else's teaching, evoke immediate interest, raise the level and quality of pedagogic discussion (Ramani, 1987, pp.116-29). It is necessary to keep on updating subjective perception of what learning is probably like and how teaching brings it about. The same process would enable teachers to reshape and modify overall understanding of learning and may give rise to a new insight to gain innovative possibilities to lead to "principled" approach—a dynamic composite of energies within a teacher that changes ...with continued experience in learning and teaching, (Brown, 2002, p.11) in post-method era of language pedagogy.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is found that a sense of plausibility is essential in equipping learner and enabling them to activate own effort by thoughtful and rational instruction. It is imperative for a teacher to understand the concept of teaching and learning, a couple of

terms related to it in terms of enabling learners develop concepts of learning and performing own assigned functions. An understanding of strengths and weakness of various methods and approaches, tasks and procedures and their success and failures remain crucial along with an insight of syllabus, content, tasks and procedures in order to activate learner's effort. Assessing other aspects by various levels of evaluation and an endeavor in aligning own belief with the theoretical aspects of language teaching and learning is equally important in deriving an ability as an active stakeholder. The process of constant evaluation of practices can help gaining a sense of plausibility in imparting services and in engaging learners through a variegated form of tasks and preparing learners to adapt to future needs to function as useful, productive members of the society in later years.

References

- Allwright, D. (1989). Interaction in the language classroom: Social problems and pedagogic possibilities. Paper presented at Les Etats Generaux des Langues, Paris, April 1989.
- Brown, H. D. (2002). English language teaching in the "post-method" era: Toward better Diagnosis, treatment, and assessment. In Jack C. Richards and W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cummins, Jim. (1979). Cognitive/academic language proficiency, linguistic interdependence, the optimal age question and some other matters. *Working Papers in Bilingualism*, 19, 198-205.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ericson, D. P., & Ellet, F.S. (1983). Interpretation, understanding and educational research. *Teachers college record*.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1975). *Learning how to mean—Explorations in the development of language*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Prabhu, N. S. (2019). Teaching is at the most hoping for the best. In Geetha Durairajan (Ed.), *Perceptions of language pedagogy*. Orient BlackSwan, Hyderabad, India.
- Prabhu, N. S. (1989). Three models in second language pedagogy. *Journal of English and Foreign languages*, 3, 1-14.
- Prabhu, N. S. (1987). Equipping or enabling. In Bikram K. Das (Ed.), *Language development in human resource development, Anthology Series 20* (pp.190-201). Singapore: Singapore University Press.
- Ramani, Esther. (1987). The role of classroom interaction in the integration of theory and practice. In Bikram K. Das (Ed.), *Communication and learning in the classroom community* (pp. 116-29). Singapore: Singapore University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological process*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- West, Michael. (1926). *Bilingualism (with special reference to Bengal)*. Calcutta: Bureau of Education

The Art of Affective Teaching

Dr.Binu P M, Faculty, English Language Centre
Al-Musanna College of Technology, Sultanate of Oman

Every classroom contains students with varied backgrounds, interests, attitudes, and learning styles. Some of these students carry to the classroom not just textbooks and other learning tools but also a lot of personal and learning problems. These basic differences in learners often cause variations in their academic achievements and classroom behavior. Hence, there would always be some students in every class who struggle to keep pace with the rest of the class and be a little disruptive. How can teachers accommodate such students in their classroom and help them thrive and grow, academically and personally? The learning and behavioral problems of these students should be handled at two levels, intellectually and emotionally. In other words, teachers must deal with them using their brains and hearts.

Although the concept of affective teaching is not a new issue in education, it is not widely utilized by teachers in the regular classroom. In modern education, due to corporate interventions, there has been a shift in focus from the inculcation of basic values in life, to the development of knowledge and skills required for the current job market. Some institutions do not give any importance to the human denominator of learning; rather they try to equate men with machines. Educational institutions must be humanizing centres for learning and all learning activities must reflect an intrinsic valuing of the learner as an individual. Hence, the use of affective strategies in teaching is important to rediscover and maintain the dignity of the individual and to restructure the learning process from automation to humanization.

Affective teaching is the democratic process of interacting with students in a caring, conscious, and committed way. In other words, it is a

way of teaching on two levels; intellectually and emotionally, using both brains and hearts. Affective strategy in education is the integration of cognition and emotion in the learning process. It serves to manage emotions, attitudes, and motivation to create a positive attitude towards learning. Teachers should use some relaxation techniques to lower the anxiety level and to create interest in learning. But today, most curricula overemphasize intellectual and cognitive tasks by pouring energies and resources for the sake of cultivating a crop of scientists, doctors and engineers. As a result, affective elements are not given any significance in the classroom.

An important aspect of affective teaching is respecting students. Teachers with traditional concepts might frown at the idea of respecting students. It means to value and accept their different soci-cultural backgrounds and religious beliefs, listen to them, sincerely ask for their opinions and learning preferences, and truly value their prior knowledge. Teachers should allow students to express themselves in class and accept the fact that all are capable of learning. When the uniqueness and dignity of each student is recognized, it frees the growth forces within the individual for self fulfilling pursuits. It also raises the motivation level and creates in them a positive attitude towards learning. Hence, teachers should direct their focus on the individual development of students. When the learning has personal significance, they can see use for it and will try to search for new realms of knowledge.

A stress-free environment is one of the most important factors for effective language acquisition. Stress and anxiety can hinder the learners from opening their minds and engaging in spontaneous and meaningful interaction with

their peers and the teacher. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that teachers build a good rapport with the learners and eliminate all kinds of hatred or negativities that might exist in a class. Communication enhances language development and to initiate an open and free interaction there shouldn't be any mental blocks.

Affective teaching requires an open and free communication with students to facilitate authentic interpersonal relationships. When teachers interact with students in an atmosphere of openness, the emotional base of students is honoured and accepted without any prejudice. A lot of students may have various problems that prevent them from focusing on their studies. So teachers need to have a concern towards such students and provide adequate guidance and support. Teachers must act like their mentors and their guidance should be open minded and friendly enough for students to approach them at any time without any hesitation. The emotional impact of teachers'

behaviour can influence learning because it helps to instill in students a love for the subject they teach. When the teacher provides warmth, acceptance and empathy, the learners feel free to regard their emotions and personal meanings as legitimate content in learning.

Involving students in decision making or sharing power in the classroom is also a way of fostering affective teaching and learning. When the teacher makes decisions with the students about the content, assignments, deadlines, class tests, and future learning, they feel empowered and it makes the whole process more democratic. It helps in making their attitude towards their teacher and learning more positive. It dispels the wrong notion that a teacher is just an authoritarian, whose job is to make students do things, allow or prevent actions, and make judgments in class. On the other hand, they begin to feel that the teacher is a facilitator, who is receptive to their problems and who takes great interest in their learning.

References

- Edwards, A.L., & Porter, B.C. (1972). Attitude measurement in the affective domain. A resource book for media specialists. (pp.107-126) Washington, DC. Gryphon House.
- Krathwohl, D. R. (2002). A revision of Bloom's taxonomy: An overview. *Theory into practice*, 41(4), 212-218.
- Llewellyn, A., & Cahoon, D. (1965). Teaching for affective learning. *Educational Leadership*, 22(7), 469-472.
- Martin, B.L., & Briggs, L.J. (1986). *The cognitive and affective domains: Integration for instruction and research*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology Publications.
- Smith, P., & Ragan, T.J. (1999). *Instructional Design*. New York. John Wiley & Sons.

Lev Vygotsky on Thought and Language

“... People with great passions, people who accomplish great deeds, people who possess strong feelings, even people with great minds and a strong personality, rarely come out of good little boys and girls.”

“A word devoid of thought is a dead thing, and a thought unembodied in words remains a shadow.”

“By giving our students practice in talking with others, we give them frames for thinking on their own.”

The Evolution of Language: Erasing Patriarchal Perspectives

Maria Uzma Ansari

Department of History and Culture, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi — 110025.

A brief review of the corpus of work that is available to us regarding prehistory will lead us to the conclusion that up until the Neolithic Age, when humans travelled in bands and showed allegiance to the tribe, hunter-gatherer societies were relatively egalitarian, but with the onset of farming, which certain historians have come to call the 'Agricultural Revolution', that occurred due to Sedentism, social roles came to be clearly defined and labour was divided. Women looked after children and men, who could go out and find the time to engage in various activities, became economically dominant. The powerful came to oppress the weak, and as agriculture intensified and hierarchies formed, inequalities were introduced, society was stratified and women were reduced to commodities. As Engels liked to say "the overthrow of the mother-right was the great historical defeat of the feminine sex." This process of social differentiation though, might have been slower than we're assuming today.

Engels appears progressive to us here because his statement is able to overcome prejudice and doesn't suffer from anachronism that forces us to say that women, even in hunter-gatherer societies never went out to hunt and only played the role of gatherers because they looked after the children in the tribe. This only began to happen once the Family emerged as a traditional institution, as the structure of a family is based on the "clearly established hierarchies of age and gender, with gender triumphing age and an adult male being more powerful than an older female." It is impossible to emphasise enough on how the overthrow of the mother right has caused the ideas of Gender to crystallise. Family, as a patriarchal institution could only

evolve due to the already established ideas of gender roles.

Betty Friedan talks of "the problem that has no name" which the American Housewives experienced in the 1950s and 1960s while they lived the American Dream alongside their husbands. On the other hand, Plato devises that women and children should be owned collectively by all citizens as According to Plato, 'men' resolve to hoard to meet the requirements of their families. It is intriguing to understand that the staunchest individualists as well as the collectivists choose to view the institution of Family as the cause of all vice.

The Structuralist position propounded by Ferdinand de Saussure talks of binary oppositions like signified/signifier, speech/writing, indigenous/other, man/woman that don't merely coexist but are based on a violent hierarchy, where one towers over the other just like the Aristotelian notion of the superiority of intellectual activity over labour.

Words arranged in a binary opposition come to have a rigid meaning, due to their representation alongside a subordinate element, in a violent hierarchy. Their meanings are highlighted through what they are not, and are understood via contrasts. For e.g. we understand that someone is the anti-thesis of a hero because, they are not the hero, an 'apple' is an apple because it is not an 'orange' or a 'mango', we understand good because there is the existence of evil. Structuralism, at the time of its emergence, looked like a school of thought that would embrace all disciplines but was subsequently criticised for its rigid nature, which ran the risk of collapsing all Différance.

Hegel in his Phenomenology of Spirit describes man as self-conscious, which distinguishes him from an animal. This man looks to

achieve affirmation for its existence and finds it by subjugating another self-consciousness. The man's need to be recognised by another self-consciousness, ensues a life-and-death struggle between the Self and the Other. The Other due to its fear of death is forced to submit to the Self, and the Self assumes the role of the master as the Other assumes the role of the slave. In simple words, the Self asserts itself by dominating the Other.

For Beauvoir, Otherness is inherent to human nature and Simone de Beauvoir, finds it necessary to supplement Engels' historical materialism with the Hegelian view as an explanation of women's oppression, which she claims to be unique in nature as she contends that the social standing of woman was never equal to that of a man, even before the emergence of private property. Beauvoir argues along Hegelian ontology for man's ability to perform physical labour, which was valued in pre-historic times, that allowed for the further exaltation of his position in the gender hierarchy, which ultimately led to the female's subjugation.

This unique nature of woman's oppression stops Beauvoir from applying the master-slave dialectic directly to the relation of a man and a woman as she claims that woman has not engaged in a struggle for recognition with the man, which makes her the "absolute-Other".

However, when binary oppositions are expressed in a dominant discourse, the heterogeneity of the Other gets eliminated. This, in the context of this paper, can be understood through gender binaries, which talks of two discrete gender identities – men and women – that are veritably different from one another, as opposed to a continuous spectrum. The homogenization of the 'Other' and its representation as the Heterosexual female is exclusive of the LGBT+ community and problematic in a world that is constantly moving away from its heteronormative ideals, because as we are visualising women as the "absolute-Other", we are running the risk of collapsing all Différance.

The institution of patriarchy is based on the fundamental man/woman gender binary, where woman is the subordinate element and also on

the assumption that; gender exists just as two extremes, with the absence of any in-between. It also bases itself off of the assumption that biological sex and gender are one and the same. Hence, patriarchy finds itself thriving on this gender binary whose nature is such that it subjugates women.

This paper tries to deconstruct this very gender binary that is the basis for patriarchy, in order to challenge the patriarchal institution, and it shall do so by deconstructing the language used by the institution of patriarchy, which is why this paper meditates on the use of the word 'chastity'— whose concept has evolved within the patriarchal matrix and hence, is only defined in terms of the female.

The female's chastity forms an important part of the patriarchal matrix and is responsible for the subjugation of women in agricultural communities, that follow the fertility cult. This paper, questions the assumptions made while defining chastity; which say that biological sex and gender identity are one and the same, and in doing so also challenge the patriarchal institution.

This paper meditates on the deconstruction of patriarchal vocabulary in order to deconstruct the fundamental gender binary of patriarchy and ultimately challenge it, albeit Jacques Derrida applies the technique of Deconstruction to study a written text, he also recognises that the only way to deconstruct an institution or break away from a totalitarian regime, would be to conduct a successful deconstruction of its language that helps perpetuate its ideology, which is why Derrida keeps constantly coming up with new vocabulary, like Différance that lies outside of binary oppositions and outside the realm of traditional metaphysics, which made him a very subversive writer; As put forth by Ludwig Wittgenstein, the British linguist: "the limits of my language are the limits of my World." The emergence of language and its evolution has occurred within the patriarchal matrix, which limits our vocabulary.

For this purpose, we assume for a split second that, Self and the absolute-Other, symbolised by man/woman, which is the very foundation for the institution of patriarchy, is the only

gender binary that exists; In order to challenge the institution that this gender binary is the foundational basis of, the permanent reversal of this binary, in order to give the previously subordinate element an upper hand is not the end or the goal.

It shall be enough, if we can perform a Deconstruction of this gender binary and subvert it, by showing that the Other is in fact not a monolithic block and houses in itself heterogenous features or Différance ; then according to Jacques Derrida, it shall reveal that this binary opposition which is based on violent hierarchizing is actually arbitrary and constructed, as the very presence of Différance, challenges binary oppositions , which assumes the existence of an absolute truth/meaning and tries to limit gender to just two kinds, blurring the lines between gender identity and biological sex .The subversion of this fundamental gender binary can be achieved by arriving at a more inclusive definition of the word 'Chastity', which shall not be centred around the female sexual organ or be preoccupied with the protection of the 'dignity' of 'the second sex ' as is done in patriarchy, as the very act of redefining chastity is a step towards the integration of heterogenous elements into the society, which will challenge the patriarchal matrix, because patriarchy is based on the assumption that there exist only two discrete gender identities— man and woman.

The purity of the entire household resides on the woman's chastity whereas the very definition of chastity that exists today is patriarchal and non-inclusive. The status of a woman is exalted to that of the mother goddess in agricultural communities that also worship the earth and practice the fertility cult . In cultures that only value the reproductive ability of a woman, she is only defined in relation to the patriarch of a family .

The concept of chastity in a patriarchal institution is defined in terms of the biological sex. Patriarchy bases itself off of the superficial rationalisation of the subjection of women by exploiting the biological inequality between the sexes to justify the unequal treatment meted out to women. However, A person's 'chastity' cannot

be defined in the simplest of terms. It is crucial that we inquire and garner an understanding of their sexual orientation and their gender identity; and not make assumptions based on their biological sex, without asking after them. In this case, the very concept of chastity becomes subjective and since, patriarchy is obsessed with the chastity of females, a more inclusive definition shakes its foundation, by making the 'Other'— not a discrete identity, but part of a running spectrum, and breaks down the gendered binary opposition; as the integration of heterogenous elements into mainstream society, makes it next to impossible to pin down gender to just two discrete identities, which brings us to Judith Butler who contends "There is no reason to assume that gender also ought to remain as two. The presumption of a binary gender system implicitly retains the belief in a mimetic relation of gender to sex whereby gender mirrors sex or is otherwise restricted by it. " Hence, subverting the gendered binary opposition can at least, hypothetically collapse the institution it acts as a foundation for, which is one of the reasons feminism keeps coming under the gun and the LGBT+ is constantly marginalized, as they pose a constant threat to the existing social order and their complete integration into society runs the threat of collapsing it.

Throughout History, the Queer community has been persecuted by fascist regimes, which should mean that presently they should be more inherently inclined to be supporters of the left-wing political ideology but Stalin's Gulag is one of the biggest examples of Human Rights abuses in history and it was because of the severe negligence of Human Rights in the USSR, that many members of the queer community align themselves with Homo-Nationalism and show support for far-right political parties like the Alternative for Germany (AfD). 14% of Americans from the LGBT+ community even voted for Donald Trump in the 2016 US presidential elections.

Chastity needs to be defined in broader terms. The concept of chastity in biology is only defined in terms of the female sex. Thus, it is wrong to assume that medical science does not

suffer from the same prejudices and stereotypes that the common man's intellect does. Medical science holds a disregard for homosexuality calling it unnatural and before the 1950s did not even admit women's mental health into account with all seriousness, diagnosing everything from mental disorders to epilepsy under a catch-all phrase called "hysteria" that could only affect women. All disciplines including Medical Science, Law and Psychology suffer from the limitations of patriarchy. This brings us to our argument that language, or anything we know for that matter has always evolved within the patriarchal matrix, causing certain laws in our country to suffer from serious drawbacks.

All the people within the territory of India have the right to be treated equally before the law and cannot be discriminated against on the basis of birth place, religion, sex, race or caste. Nevertheless, the recently repealed antediluvian Section 497, only applied to women. Even the sections of the Indian Penal Code that deal with rape cases have evolved within a patriarchal matrix; and the investigation and the trial that follows, show an unnatural obsession with 'female dignity' and 'female chastity' and were up until very recently focused on the female sexual organ and were only amended after the 2012 Nirbhaya case. Section 354 of the Indian Penal Code that deals with stalking and sexual harassment as well as Section 375 of the IPC, which deals with rape, even after its 2013 amendment, following the J. S. Verma Committee Report are only applied to women, which alienates the possibility of men or the Queer community seeking any help from the law if they're violated. This indicates as if, it is only women who are 'perpetually violable' and 'eternally rapeable'

The Queer community that was hoping to see changes in terms of the law, that would safeguard them against instances of sexual violence and harassment was thoroughly disappointed from the amendments introduced in the Transgender Persons protection of rights Act, 2019.

The Supreme Court's judgement on IPC Section 377 opens with the lines said by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe – I am what I am, so take me as I am. The Supreme Court had chosen to

repeal parts of Section 377 that criminalised homosexuality on the basis of individual Rights however the Transgender Persons protection of rights Act, 2019 erases the very right to self-identity as it confuses gender identity with biological sex and gender expression. While defining a trans person as "a person whose gender does not match with the gender assigned to that person at birth and includes trans man or trans woman, person with intersex variations, gender queer and person having such socio-cultural identities as kinnar, hijra, aravani and jogta..." It orders that a trans person must obtain from the district magistrate a document "to certify their own gender" and makes it compulsory for a trans person to undergo surgery to "match" their biological sex with their gender identity which strips an individual of the right to call their gender their own declaration and which problematically restricts gender identity to a binary and disallows them to identify across the spectrum, which helps in keeping the patriarchal institution intact. Anti-LGBT adoption legislation is enforced in many countries to protect this very matrix .

"The famous expression that opens the second volume of *The Second Sex*, "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman " means that there is no inherent female nature or essence. Here, Beauvoir adapts Existentialism's notion of "existence precedes essence" to the ways in which gendered identity is experienced."

If human beings have no essence then it is our choices, that make us who we are. Nonetheless, often a times there is no real choice but an illusion of it. Our choices are influenced by phenotypical factors and our opinions are a result of social conditioning. Simone De Beauvoir, calls the diabolic beauty standard a euphemism for constraining the movement of women, and appearance a diversion. Most women would call their fixation on vanity a choice but this does not discount the fact that the feminine ideal of society that these women are chasing, is a social construct created in the context of India, by the media in a process that was jump started by economic-liberalisation, when foreign brands began coming into the country and started using models for

advertisements making the Indian woman the earnest consumer. The lives of women have an element of Sisyphean absurdity attached to them, enough for them to go 'maverick' — they go around in cycles all time, cycles that occur between washing dishes and the monotony of those that come monthly.

However, a running critique of Beauvoir has been that while she sees femininity as constructed, she does not hold masculinity as accountable. Beauvoir argues along Hegelian ontology for man's ability to perform physical labour, which was valued in pre-historic times, that allowed for the exaltation of his position in the gender hierarchy, which ultimately led to the female's subjugation and made her the absolute Other, as men took over as possessors of the material world, but a feminist criticism of *The Second Sex* would be, that it is due to Beauvoir's own internalisation of patriarchy, that she chooses to utilise Muscle strength and hence, the biological sex, as a marker of superiority.

Time and again we've seen women give up what is more feminine in them and suppress their classically feminine traits while fighting their larger struggles — we've seen that in the new woman of the late nineteenth century, we've seen it in the women of the suffragette and we've seen it in women who stepped in during the world wars to constitute the work force. However, when we do so, when we try to actively suppress what is feminine by giving up hemlines and embracing pantsuits, we are somehow saying that we hold the classically masculine traits at a higher credential than we hold what is classically feminine. The suppression of what is seen as more feminine might gradually lead to the disappearance of the supposedly 'unwanted' feminine traits from the public sphere, which is not what we aim to do. While feminine and masculine identities can coexist in all genders, it is important to recognize that they are both equally, socially constructed.

Women however, tend to let their identity as a 'woman' take a backseat but instead associate themselves with other markers of identity: race, religion, and caste. Many women are

against calling out their oppressors because they're afraid about feminism driving a rift in the communities that they are a part of, which they harness their identity from. Even a woman like Katherine Mansfield, whose works show that she recognises her oppressor, asserts her identity as a Writer first and then as a Woman. Women across all borders have been sacrificing themselves all along for the sake of their communities and while intersectional feminism tries to make sure that all the identities in an individual harmoniously coexist, the very requirement of intersectional feminism stems from the need to integrate feminism within the patriarchal matrix, in order to tone the feminist movement down. It helps in integrating a woman's individual interests along with her 'community's interests on the surface.

The very need for intersectional feminism comes from the requirement of accommodating 'community identities'/'social identities' that have been constructed, formed, shaped and are protected by the institution of patriarchy, alongside a woman's interests, which causes feminist movements to lose their nature as destabilizing movements. Hence, Intersectional Feminism is a concept that has evolved within the patriarchal matrix and thus works to preserve it.

Feminism isn't just a support group by women, for uplifting other women or supporting women in whatever choices it is, that other women are trying to make. Choice is not the keyword here. Feminism is also about calling women out on their own misogyny and on their own internalisation of patriarchy. Often, it is also about vocalising realisations like the State promotes patriarchy, because it acts as an extension of the Family; and that Empowerment within a patriarchal matrix does not constitute Liberation. Feminism is about promoting informed choices and not just any choices.

Derrida's writings are anti-establishment, because while on the outside his work is on the science of writing, he teaches us that it is important that we deconstruct the language of an institution, in order to deconstruct that institution in itself — which is why this paper constantly meditates on the word 'chastity',

as the concept of a female's chastity, plays an important role in the patriarchal matrix, as its definition has evolved within it. Thus, it helps keep it intact.

For us to break away from the shackles of an institution which governs our thought, possesses every sphere of our life, it is crucial that we

break with the ghost of language's past by deconstructing the misogyny in our language by unlearning some of patriarchy's jargon and undoing internal chauvinism. Only then, shall we be able to truly transcend the limits of our vocabulary and shatter the glass ceiling.

NOTES AND REFERENCES:

- i Based on a study published in the journal "Science", conducted in University College London led by anthropologist Mark Dyble.
- ii Farooqui, A. (2017). 'Neolithic Age'. Early Social Formations(17th ed.), New Delhi: Manak Publications.
- iii Engels, F. (2010). The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State (Reissue ed.), Penguin Classics.
- iv Menon, N. (2012). Seeing Like a Feminist. New Delhi: Zubaan in collaboration with Penguin Books India., P.6
- v Friedan, B. (2018). The Problem That Has No Name (Penguin Modern:41). Great Britain: Penguin Random House UK
- vi Brown, June Alice M. (2011). Plato and the Abolition of the Family. SJSU Philosophy Club Student Symposium.
- vii Putri, A., & Sarwoto, P. (2016). Saussurian Binary Opposition as the Narrative Structure of Williams' Summer and Smoke. Journal of Language and Literature, 16(1), 82 - 98. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.24071/joll.v16i1.154
- viii Saussure, F. de, & Harris, R. (2016). Course in general linguistics. London: Bloomsbury.
- ix Rorty, R. (1995). Deconstruction. In Raman Selden (Ed.), The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism -- vol.8 From Formalism to Poststructuralism. Cambridge University Press. P.166-197
- x Nozick, R. (1997). Socratic Puzzles. Harvard University Press. P.287
- xi Rorty, R. (1995). Deconstruction. In Raman Selden (Ed.), The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism -- vol.8 From Formalism to Poststructuralism. Cambridge University Press. P.166-197
- xii Derrida, J. (2012). Writing and Difference (Special Indian Ed.) Trans. By Alan Bass, Routledge.
- xiii Ansari, Ayesha S. (2017). Woman as the 'Other': Analysis of Philosophy of Simone De Beauvoir in The Second Sex, Centre for Philosophy, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. P.6
- xiv Ansari, Ayesha S. (2017). Woman as the 'Other': Analysis of Philosophy of Simone De Beauvoir in The Second Sex, Centre for Philosophy, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. P.10
- xv Ibid, P.14
- xvi Ibid, P.16
- xvii Ibid, P.18
- xviii Ibid, P.36
- xix Ibid, p.19
- xx Derrida, J. (2012). Writing and Difference (Special Indian Ed.) Trans. By Alan Bass, Routledge
- xxi Derrida, J. (2012). 'Violence and Metaphysics'. Writing and Difference (Special Indian Ed.) Trans. By Alan Bass, Routledge.
- xxii Rorty, R. (1995). Deconstruction. In Raman Selden (Ed.), The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism -- vol.8 From Formalism to Poststructuralism. Cambridge University Press. P.166-197
- xxiii Derrida, J. (2012). Writing and Difference (Special Indian Ed.) Trans. By Alan Bass, Routledge
- xxiv Derrida was of the opinion that words are made up of traces, which made it impossible to pin words down to one single meaning, which is why he claimed that it was never possible to arrive at a complete meaning of a word. Meaning is always differential and postponed in language. Hence, challenging the idea of logocentrism which hoped to arrive at some 'absolute truth' via the use

- of language. However, the differential and the deferential nature of meaning, makes the activity of reading subjective to the reader. In this essence, Derrida had claimed 'there is no outside-text, which we understand as there is nothing outside of context.
- xxv It is not necessary that everyone shall experience femininity in the same manner. The human experience of gender is unique, which makes the gendered experience subjective and different for everybody, just like due to the existence of Difference, meaning becomes fluid, which makes the activity of reading subjective for everybody.
- xxvi Derrida, J. (2012). 'Violence and Metaphysics'. Writing and Difference (Special Indian Ed.) Trans. By Alan Bass, Routledge.
- xxvii Pattanaik, D. (2014). Shikhandi and other queer tales they dont tell you. New Delhi: Zubaan and Penguin Books India. P.3-4
- xxviii De Beauvoir, Simone (2009). The Second Sex, Trans. By Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevalier, Vintage Books.
- xxix Farooqui, A. (2017). 'Neolithic Age'. Early Social Formations (17th ed.), New Delhi: Manak Publications.
- xxx Menon, N. (2012). Seeing Like a Feminist. New Delhi: Zubaan in collaboration with Penguin Books India
- xxxi Butler, J. (2006). 'Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire'. Gender trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity. New York: Routledge.
- xxxii Louis Althusser's Structural Marxism was criticised because of its disregard for human rights as he considered "structure" and "social relations" of having superiority over individuality because of his belief that in a communist state, the need for human rights or individual rights would cease to exist as every human being would be truly emancipated.
- xxxiii Statistics derived from Election Day Exit Polls conducted by Edison Research.
- xxxiv Government of India. (1950). The Constitution of India, Art. 14
- xxxv Menon, N. (2012). Seeing Like a Feminist. New Delhi: Zubaan in collaboration with Penguin Books India, P.140
- xxxvi Naz Foundation vs. Government of NCT of Delhi (2009).
- xxxvii Menon, N. (2012). Seeing Like a Feminist. New Delhi: Zubaan in collaboration with Penguin Books India
- xxxviii De Beauvoir, Simone (2011). The Second Sex, Trans. By Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevalier. Vintage Books. P.330
- xxxix Ansari, Ayesha S. (2017). Woman as the 'Other': Analysis of Philosophy of Simone De Beauvoir in The Second Sex, Centre for Philosophy, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.
- xl Ansari, Ayesha S. (2017). Woman as the 'Other': Analysis of Philosophy of Simone De Beauvoir in The Second Sex, Centre for Philosophy, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. P.36
- xli Orwell, G. (2015). 1984. New Delhi: Lexicon Books

Jean Piaget on Child's Play and Mental Development

"Children should be able to do their own experimenting and their own research. Teachers, of course, can guide them by providing appropriate materials, but the essential thing is that in order for a child to understand something, he must construct it himself, he must re-invent it. Every time we teach a child something, we keep him from inventing it himself. On the other hand that which we allow him to discover by himself will remain with him visibly for the rest of his life."

Exploring the Interstitial Spaces in a Text : A Means of Promoting Deep Reading

Mohanan. P, Research Scholar,
Jamal Muhammed College, Trichy, Bharathidasan University

Dr. Abdul Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Associate Professor,
Jamal Muhammed College, Trichy, Bharathidasan University

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to discuss how various types of reading can be promoted through the deliberate efforts of finding the interstitial spaces located 'in-between' the formal elements of a text. A text can be viewed from multiple lenses, sometimes to 'read with the grain' and sometimes to 'read against the grain'. In order to know what a text 'is', what a text 'has' and what a text 'does', the reader has to interpret the invisible spaces located between the words and images, which can be metaphorically termed as 'interstitial spaces.' This kind of exploration can definitely help the process of 'close reading' and 'deep reading.' This is particularly relevant in the ESL classes, as the usual method of facilitating reading comprehension adopted in such classes do not favour linguistic accomplishment to the desired extent. Reading is not passively consuming the meaning, but creating meaning through the right interpretations of the spaces that a text hides. The peripheral meaning a text provides cannot make the readers critical thinkers and cannot foster the ability to discover the indeterminate meanings. In the ESL classroom context, this kind of reading will promote the non-conscious acquisition of both micro- and micro-skills.

Key Words :Deep Reading, Interstitial Spaces

Introduction

Language learning involves linguistic, cognitive, social, cultural and affective processes. Although no skill can be learned as a discrete element, it is generally agreed that reading occupies a significant role as it can integrate the other skills if appropriately facilitated. Reading involves learning the language, learning through the language, learning about the language and also learning about the content.

This paper considers reading as an active, generative process of meaning- making that provides the learners with ample opportunities to face situations that pose complexities and confusion which ultimately enables them to develop an open-minded disposition required to understand, construct and promote diverse perspectives. Reading comprehension can be broadly defined as "understanding, using,

reflecting on and engaging with written texts, in order to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential, and to participate in society" (OECD, 1999, p. 22). Developing reading skill is very important in the 21st century which demands the learners to connect their learning with real life. As Grabe points out, "A person's future opportunities for success and prosperity will be even more entwined with skilled reading abilities. It is therefore an important societal responsibility to offer every person the opportunity to become a skilled reader, and in many cases, this means becoming a skilled L2 reader." (2009)

The present century poses immense complexities and challenges to the learners who are to equip themselves with the ability to use their cognitive and affective skills and competencies to solve their problems and collaborate effectively for their survival, and

hence the need for discarding the traditional classroom processes and strategies and adopting innovative approaches and implementing the latest educational philosophies. This paper highlights the relevance of deep reading in contrast to the traditional reading strategies and also the significance of interstitial spaces in promoting deep reading.

Deep Reading

Alderson argues that reading “is a skill which allows students to become familiar with other people’s ideas; compare and contrast different ideas; examine and evaluate arguments, interpretations, beliefs, or theories; make inferences, predictions, or interpretations; and explore implications and consequences. In essence, reading is a skill that compels students to think critically.”(2013) Reading promotes creative thought, strengthens the capacities like critical thinking, and emotional, empathetic responses, encourages practical ability like morality, aesthetics, culture, personality,etc. and promotes the skills to innovate and to survive.

Second Language (L2) reading is highly complicated and involves multiple cognitive processes. There are mainly two types of cognitive processes that affect L2 readers’ ability to comprehend texts. One is lower-level processes which include word recognition, syntactic parsing, and propositional encoding, and the second one is higher-level processes which includes understanding main ideas, interpreting a text, activating background knowledge, and making inferences (Alderson, 2000;. Grabe (2009). Some theorists speak about top-down (from text to reader) and bottom-up (from reader to text) processes of reading. Bottom-up’ processes is also known as micro-level processes which include decoding words and structures. Top-down’ process is known as macro-level processes and it involves understanding and relating it to the reader’s prior knowledge. Bottom-up process is the basis for top-down process. Both the processes are equally important for comprehension. A learner in the ESL classes should get sufficient time and opportunity to engage in both.

The most unfortunate thing about L2 reading is that the reading comprehension skills are eroding and declining in the ESL classes. Kelly Gallagher calls it ‘readicide’ - “the systematic killing of the love of reading, often exacerbated by the inane, mind numbing practices found in schools.” The analysis of the text now tends to be reduced to the understanding of the formal properties of the text. The problem-exploring dispositions are ignored. What we need today, at least in ESL classes, is an active, thoughtful and deliberate reading that can help the learner discover how he is connected to the world outside and hence the relevance of ‘deep reading.’

The practice of deep reading is not a new idea. It is similar to the ‘lictiodivina’ which means spiritual reading’, a term associated with St. Benedict of the Sixth Century. ‘Deep reading’ is a term coined by Sven Birkerts in *The Gutenberg Elegies* (1994). It implies a process of reading that can propel comprehension, develop inferential and critical analysis, make reflective analogies, form intellectual insights, promote intuitive thinking, contemplative persistence and deductive reasoning. In the modern classrooms, learners are not passive recipients of knowledge, but active constructors of new texts through a metacognitive understanding of the text read. The reader is supposed to use higher order skills and engage in activities like analysing, synthesising, meta-cognition, etc. 21st century is an age of distractions and hence new approaches are needed to improve teaching and learning. Deep reading can “nurture skilled, passionate, habitual, critical, joyful, lifelong readers.” (Courtmanche, the director of the Connecticut Writing Project). As Alison Staudinger comments, deep reading “requires linking texts to broader contexts and prior learning, applying or analyzing them, and reflecting metacognitively on this process. It connects metacognitive skills with reflections on meaning, purpose, and identity.”

Deep reading requires the learners to engage in intellectual work, explore problems, use his background knowledge, critically analyse the text, make inferences, form perspectives, identify the structure of the discourse, consider

the author's intentions, evaluate the ideas within and across the text, generate new insights and create new meanings. Maureen P. Hall et al. writes, "Deep reading requires human beings to call upon and develop attentional skills, to be thoughtful, and fully aware; it helps them to create and understand their own identity. Deep readers navigate from the words on the page to the self. Deep reading is interactive: it awakens and evokes the reader's voice, and it insists on the involvement of the whole body and mind...Deep reading, as other contemplative practices, requires persons to go inside, to find meaning, to know themselves, and to connect to others."

Exploring the Interstitial Spaces

The dictionary defines the word 'interstitial' as small, narrow, intervening space. It denotes 'in-betweenness'. Merriam Webster Dictionary defines it as occurring in or being an interval or intervening space or segment :of, relating to, or forming an interstice. Metaphorically it can be used to mean spaces in between words and images where understandings and meanings are available. It allows an exploration of inter-relationship between realities and representations, helping to generate new perceptions that transcend the boundaries of structures. Metaphorically the interstices stand for creative spaces.

Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei defines 'interstitial spaces' as "broadly indicating not merely the intervening spaces between fixed empirical or geometrical points, but space constituted by striking negotiations of the relation between different positions with experiences or between different forms of experience." Only aesthetic efforts can measure these spaces. As Mohanan.P observes, "It might denote the space between the self and the world, between words and thoughts, between the past and present, between the real and the imagined, between the native culture and the alien culture, and between the inter-phenominal "regions" of different senses, generally created by a keen response to the crises of spaces of physical and psychological manifestations. It is, in fact, these spaces, not the written words, that communicate more

eloquently, as it provides the reader with the privilege of exploring these spaces to construct meanings." (Exploring the Interstitial Spaces in JhumpaLahiri's Hell-Heaven, 2019)The meaning of a text lies not in the words , but in the in the interstitial spaces that words, ideas, places, people and actions create. "It happens not so much in the work as in a space that the work sets up; not in the words or images or objects evoked, but between them." (Paolo Bartoloni)

A text is usually evaluated by interpreting the evidences provided by the formal elements of the text such as the images, symbols, metaphors, points of view, setting, characters, plot etc. Deep reading goes beyond this level and is supported by the worlds residing between these. The text can be the text on the page. It can also be the text in the mind of the reader or the author. It is also essentially the text lying in the interstitial spaces of the structure of the text. It is not the language but the invisible spaces that eloquently communicates with the reader's mind. It is the presence of this potential silence that opens new spaces for novel and pure experiences . It is not what is said, but what remains in -between that creates meaning. Exploring these spaces can foster better understanding of the self and its relationship with the others and also with the world. Understanding how to explore the interstitial spaces can enhance deep reading.

Conclusion

The term 'interstitial space' is not used here in the literal sense, but in a metaphoric or paradigmatic sense, which implies a new invisible meaning located in between words and thoughts, between images and representations, between silence and sound and between senses and scenes. They are 'trans-boundary, transitional border expansion areas'. These spaces existing unnoticed in the text can evoke potential possibilities for change and transitions. Being free from the existing structures , they facilitate the construction of multiple perspectives and meanings.

As Paolo Bartoloni says, " Literature fills a gap, perhaps not in order to effect reality. But rather to construct another reality parallel to the actual one."(ibid) The duty of a teacher

in ESL classes is not to help the learner find the information in the text, but to encourage the learner to discover this parallel reality and make reflective judgement. The traditional classroom strategies can not help much in this context. We need to resort to the deep reading strategies to awaken the desires in the minds of the learners to explore the interstices in the text and contemplate. The author can give us only assumptions, not conclusions. As Marcel Proust observes, "The end of the book's wisdom appears to us merely the start of our own, so

that at the moment when the book has told us everything it can, it gives rise to the feeling that it has told us nothing." (On Reading, 1905) Here starts the role of the reader, who has to approach the text with curiosity and openness. Deep reading helps the reader to maintain consistency, receptivity and persistence, although it may be slow and time consuming. It helps the reader to become the book. It is this kind of a reading that can bring out the best in the learner, especially in L2 reader.

References

- Alderson, J. C. (2000). *Assessing reading*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
doi:10.1017/CBO9780511732935
- Alderson, J. C. (2013) *The Effect of Task Characteristics on IELTS Reading Performance*. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics*, Vol.3.No.1, March 29,2013
- Alison Staudinger, *Reading Deeply for Disciplinary Awareness and Political Judgment*, Vol 5 No 1 (2017): *Teaching & Learning Inquiry*
- Ed Wall, *Infrastructural Form, Interstitial Spaces and Informal Acts, Infrastructural urbanism: addressing the in-between*. Berlin, Germany : DOM publishers. pp. 145-158. ISBN 9783869221311
- Ellen C. Carillo, *Making Reading Visible in the Classroom*. *Currents in Teaching and Learning*, Vol.1, No.3, Spring 2009.
- Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading a Second Language: Moving from Theory to Practice*. New York: Cambridge University Press
- Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ference, *Interstitial Spaces in Rilke's Short Prose Works*. *German Quarterly*, 19 May, 2008.
- Kelly Gallagher ,*Readicide: How Schools Are Killing Reading and What You Can Do About It*, StenhousePublishers , February 2nd 2009.
- Maryanne Wolf and MiritBarzillai, *The Importance of Deep Reading*, *Educational Leadership*, vol.66, Number 6, PP – 32-37, 2009
- Maureen P. Hall, Aminda O'Hare, Nicholas Santavicca, and Libby Falk Jones. *The power of deep reading and mindfulliteracy:An innovative approach in contemporary education*, *InnovaciónEducativa*, ISSN: 1665-2673 vol. 15, número 67 | enero-abril, 2015
- Paolo Bartoloni, *The Interstitial Self: On Literature and Agamben's Potentiality*. *Contretemps on Giorgio Agamben* (2003).
- Paolo Bartoloni, *Interstitial Writing*, Calvino, Caproni, Sereni and Svevo.Troubador Publishing Ltd, 2003
- Patrick Sullivan, Howard Tinberg, and SheridenBlau, *Deep Reading : Teaching Reading in the Writing Classrooms*. National Council of Teachers of English, 2017.

B.F Skinner on Learning

"Education is what survives when what has been learnt has been forgotten."
"We shouldn't teach great books; we should teach a love of reading.
Knowing the contents of a few works of literature is a trivial achievement.
Being inclined to go on reading is a great achievement."

Task Based Approach to Develop the Aural Skills of English: Bringing Life to the Undergraduate Classroom

Ajitha S Pisharady, Research Scholar & **Dr. J. G Ravi Kumar**, Associate Professor & HoD, Presidency University, Bangalore

Introduction

English language teaching focuses on the development of the four skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. With the ever-increasing demand in the career and the opportunities, English Language Teaching has taken new dimensions. The traditional ways of language teaching and learning has given way for the new approaches and methods in the classroom. The present era focuses on learner engaged classroom. The teacher takes the role of the facilitator. Skill development has become the priority of the English classes. The focus is back on the neglected skills of listening and speaking. Learning to communicate in the target language requires sincere efforts from the learners. The teacher becomes the motivator and facilitator. The Task Based Approach concentrates on the learners and the learning to bring in teaching efficiency.

State of Art Review

Izadpanah, (2010) says that TBLT is a new approach requiring a change in methodical focus. TBLT works on the principle that motivation, attitude, beliefs and style are more effective for learning than materials or methods. According to the paper, stimulation of need and desire to learn based on unconditional respect and mutual trust will lead to real learning in an enjoyable way. As TBLT provides a natural context for learning, a new text based structural or functional syllabus with task based frame work must be constructed to make the learning effective.

K & Karuankaran (2017) describes the Task Based Concept as a methodology to train the students by catering to the needs, focusing on the language and helping the students face the competitive world. Here, the teacher's role is described as of a facilitator. The TBLT teaching modes may be assignments, field trips, case studies, e-learning and digital assignments

using the online resources available.

Kazeroni, 1995) says that task can mean anything that can designate language -learning material developed to be used in the classroom just as it can label whatever a living human being does. Tasks are learner centred or language learning - centred. The paper analyses some problems related to TBLT. According to the researcher, the teacher and student roles are not seen as that of organizers of the tasks. The prior needs analysis may also not be possible in a few cases as the purpose may not be clear with the learner at the time of learning. The paper concludes by giving the suggestion that multidimensional curriculum focusing on different parameters might resolve some of the problems posed by TBLT.

East (2017) discusses the phenomenon of task-based language teaching in the additional language settings. The article considers what research into TBLT has success in the classrooms, what has not and what is over used. The researcher found that though many teachers reported increased confidence, enjoyment in learners, many teachers tend to "detaskify" the task as they get confused with what is a task. The conclusion states that to make TBLT more effective, teacher perspectives on the approach in practice should be considered, task efficacy has to be monitored seriously and make the stakeholders understand the conceptual broadness on TBLT. It is also found that the present concepts of TBLT is not absolute for the time-limited instructional contexts. So, improvisations without losing out on the concept of TBLT is the need of the hour.

Córdoba Zúñiga (2016) reports the findings of a qualitative research that implemented TBLT to improve the communication skills in English. The researcher found that TBLT helped in the integration of four skills and improved English communication proficiency

and so, terms TBLT as a good approach for the purpose. The researcher recommends creating clear purposes for the tasks and discussing that with the learners. The involvement of the students in decision making bring in a feeling of importance. Positive feedback provides motivation which is important to reach the goals of the task. The researcher however suggests more reviews and research to broaden the theoretical framework of TBLT.

Albino (2017) assesses and discusses the effect of TBLT in improving the speaking fluency of learners of English as a foreign language. The case study design for the research used picture description tasks and the learners' speeches were recorded. Recasts and prompts were used as feedback tools. The findings showed that learners improved in their speed of speech, accuracy, elaboration and interactive talk. The learner's opinion indicates that TBLT encouraged them to speak, believe in their potentials and add to the vocabulary.

(Tuncel, 2016) points to the importance of teaching pragmatic competence by means of TBLT to foreign language learners. Pragmatics is the study of language from the point of view of the users. It is the choice they make as per their need for social interaction. The learners should be equipped with pragmatic competence and then, the TBLT will be successful in enhancing communicative skills.

The theoretical study on the Task Based Approach proves that TBLT is with no doubt an encouraging approach. But it requires improvisations. The teachers will have a very active and dynamic role as facilitator and creator of tasks. The tasks should cater to the daily language use of the learners and each task should be based on the curriculum and the academic time frame.

Objectives of the paper

- ▶ To examine the effect of Task Based Approach in developing language skills
- ▶ To explain the process of implementation of task-based approach to develop aural skill in English
- ▶ To design tasks for English language classes to develop the aural skill

What is listening?

The aural skill is ignored and called as the "Cinderella Skill". Acquiring listening skill helps in improving the other skills. It is very important to listen to a language and understand its nuances to know its tone, rhythm and pitch and practice it orally. It is the listening skill that helps in enjoying the beauty of the language. So, learners of English have to be taught to listen.

'Listening' is a term which is often confused with 'hearing'. According to the poet (Miller), "Listening is to take a vigorous human interest in what is being told. One can listen like a blank wall or like a splendid auditorium where every sound comes back fuller and richer."

(Barthes) distinguishes hearing and listening and states that hearing is physiological and listening is psychological. Listening, according to him could be defined as an intentional act of audition.

Listening is the first component of the four macro skills. The process of listening involves a sender, a receiver, and a message. It is a two-way dynamic process for effective communication.

Types of listening

In our daily life we listen to many people and situations. We try to understand, appreciate, evaluate, judge etc. Listening helps us improve our relationship in the society. Proper Listening shows the person's etiquettes. Listening Skill improves the interpersonal relations, communication and also self-analysis. Though we are continuously listening to people around us, we never try to differentiate the kind of listening we follow. Understanding the types of listening helps in better communication. There are many types of listening as per the function it does.

Approaches to Teaching Listening Skill

Usually, English language Listening is taught in two different ways

1. Comprehension Approach
2. Diagnostic Approach

More listening does not mean better listening skill. So, it is a task for the teachers to break listening into sub skills and plan series of listening exercises to ensure better listening skills in the learners. To be skilled in listening, the students should be given intensive and

appropriate practice with exposure to real life experience. Two other approaches to effective listening are the always discussed Bottom-up approach and the Top- down approach. The Bottom- up approach can be described as a process of decoding the sounds in a linear manner. The smallest units are learnt first and the complete text is learnt last. Here, the meaning is derived only at the last. The Top-down approach involves prior knowledge and the listener is encouraged to construct or reconstruct the original meaning while hearing the sounds produced.

Listening tasks cannot be a passive one. It is supposed to make the hearer active. Task Based Language Teaching emerged as an alternative for the Communicative Approach to integrate the four skills. TBLT is one of the modern learner centred approaches used in the classrooms. This approach focuses on authentic language use through meaningful tasks.

Task Based Approach

Tasks can be described in many ways. Any work that is done with an intention can be called as a task.

(Nunan, 1989) says that task is a work given in the classroom where the learners comprehend, produce or interact in the target language. Tasks focus on meaning and not the form. Task should have completeness.

(Prabhu, 1987) states that task is an activity that motivates the learners to arrive at an outcome with the information provided. The teacher controls and regulates the process.

(Ellis, 2003) defines task as an activity with a focus on meaning whereas an activity focuses on the language form.

Advantages of Task-Based Language Teaching

- ▶ Task-based learning shifts the focus from the teacher to the student.
- ▶ Students gain a diversified way of acquiring the language
- ▶ Teaching moves from abstract knowledge to real world application.
- ▶ Meets the immediate purpose of the learners.

As per the proponents of TBLT, there can be various types of tasks. A few of them are:

- ▶ Information gap tasks

- ▶ Reasoning gap tasks
- ▶ Opinion gap tasks
- ▶ Jigsaw
- ▶ Listing
- ▶ Ordering and Sorting
- ▶ Comparing
- ▶ Problem Solving
- ▶ Creative

In today's world, where we see knowledge outburst, it is a challenge for the teachers to engage the learners in active listening while teaching. If the learners do not listen, then there are chances that they miss out on crucial information. So, teachers will have to make active listening tasks as per the need of the content and the participants. According to (Khan), the time used for the classroom activity is not enough to develop effective listening skills in the learners and that a remarkable change in the listening skill of the learners could be accomplished if innovative strategies were applied in the classroom by the teachers. Based on this finding, a few tasks are framed. Task Based Language Teaching has three phases: Pre task, during task and post task.

During the Pre-task, the learner's curiosity is developed by brainstorming, picture description etc. Teacher's role here is to provide the hints for discussion and promote it actively. The remarks have to be positive to keep the learners' mind open. Knowing the learners, the teacher could even introduce a few keywords explain to them about the task.

During the task, the teacher's role is to monitor and moderate the task. Teacher's role is that of an active observer or guide. Tactfully, the strategies have to be changed from top –down to bottom up.

After the task, the teacher can appreciate and repeat the special language uses. The keywords to be noticed can be highlighted. She could ask for a presentation from the learners, a group reading, a debate or discussion as appropriate for the situation.

The researcher designed the following tasks based on the prescribed text book for the class First Year B. Com students:

1. Mind mapping
The theme is given to the learners and they

write all the words connected to that on the board. Teacher helps them connect those words to their textual content.

2. Listening to an audio and filling the gaps in the worksheet

Teacher provides a work sheet with a passage with gaps. Learners should listen to the audio carefully and fill the gaps.

3. Listening to a lecture (could be textual)
This is more or less a non-reciprocal listening activity. But, the class could be made active by asking students to identify a few words.
4. Role play
Learners could be made to enact a scene from a play or a movie which they were shown by the teacher. They are expected to use a few word mandatorily and that will be decided by the teacher.
5. Listening to a song, writing its lyrics and singing together
A song could be played in the class and learners could be asked to sing it together. Alternatively, they could be seated in pairs, groups and each group could be assigned to sing different lines. They could write the lyrics themselves while listening to the song.
6. Jigsaw Reading

The students are divided into equal groups. They discuss the matter given to them for a short while and the groups are mixed up and they share the knowledge they gained.

Findings and Interpretation

It was found that the learners enjoyed the class and participated actively. It was also understood that when the grammatical forms are not stressed, the learners were more confident in their language use. The end of the classes proved that the learners' aural and oral skills improved as a result of the task-based classes. There are chances of better motivation if blended learning and flipped classroom can be introduced in the system.

Conclusion

Task Based Language Teaching is a revolution in teaching aural and oral skills in English. During the tasks, the students communicate a lot and teachers get a lot of opportunity to motivate them. The real-life situations make it easier and essential for the learners to listen and speak thoughtfully. It boosts up their confidence. TBLT is an effective method to teach communicative skills. This pedagogical tool is sure to bring life to the Under Graduate classroom and develop the learners academically and professionally.

References

- ◉ Albino, G. (2017). Improving Speaking Fluency in a Task-Based Language Teaching Approach: The Case of EFL Learners at PUNIV-Cazenga. *SAGE Open*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244017691077>
- ◉ Córdoba Zúñiga, E. (2016). Implementing Task-Based Language Teaching to Integrate Language Skills in an EFL Program at a Colombian University. *PROFILE Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 18(2), 13. <https://doi.org/10.15446/profile.v18n2.49754>
- ◉ East, M. (2017). Research into practice: The task-based approach to instructed second language acquisition. *Language Teaching*, 50(3), 412–424. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S026144481700009X>
- ◉ Ellis, R. (2003). *Introducing Task-based Language Teaching*.
- ◉ Izadpanah, S. (2010). A study on Task-based Language Teaching: From theory to practice. *US-China Foreign Language*, 8(3), 47–56. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511667282.007>
- ◉ K, D. D., & Karuankaran, D. T. (2017). Implementing Task-Based Learning Methods in Indian Classroom. *Journal of Education and Human Development*, 6(1), 175–181. <https://doi.org/10.15640/jehd.v6n2a19>
- ◉ Kazeroni, A. (1995). Task-based language teaching. *ASp*, (7–10), 113–132. <https://doi.org/10.4000/asp.3750>
- ◉ Nunan, D. (1989). [David Nunan] *Designing Tasks for the Communicativ.pdf*.
- ◉ Prabhu, N. S. (1987). *Second Language Pedagogy*.
- ◉ Tuncel, R. (2016). the Significance of Task-Based Language Teaching Towards the Improvement of Communicative Language Teaching. (7), 281–285.

A Journey in Search of 'The Best Method' in English Language Teaching

Shiny K. G., Research Scholar & **J. Karthikeyan**, Associate Professor
Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore-632014

Abstract

Learning an alien tongue needs the best way of teaching. Therefore, teaching is also as important as learning. This paper is an attempt to analyse the methods followed in different periods for teaching English language under various approaches. It starts from the grammar translation method of 1700 to post method in 21st century beginning. The major approaches discussed here are Grammar Translation Approach, Direct Approach, Reading Approach, Cognitive Approach, Affective Humanistic Approach, Comprehension Approach, and Communicative language teaching. Each of these approaches described with a historical background and methods and techniques employed in it. An English teacher has to seek the best method possible while they are imparting an alien tongue which creates affective blocks in learning process. A thorough analysis of the same helps a reader to understand that every new method derived from the limitation of the former one. As N.S. prabhu said, "There is no best method" and choosing a method depends on the needs and interests of the learners. The awareness about the past methods and its effect will help second language teachers to impart a fruitful teaching-learning process. It helps a teacher to understand the classroom process thus to modify. The improvisation of classroom techniques is a major step for improving the quality of teaching learning process.

Key words: English language teaching methods, ELT, post method, TBLT, Approaches.

Introduction

The purpose of education in any society is to make the learners benefit to the existing systems of that society. Today, the world affairs are revolving around technology. The mobile electronic gadgets rewrite the notion and purpose of education. One of the greatest changes in 21st C is that the nook and corner of the world started to speak and teach English as a part of their survival in world scenario. The teaching methods in English have ever been a matter of research and experiment ever since it has started. 1950 to 1980 is termed as methods era by Rodgers (2001). Grammar translation method is the initiator in teaching methods to teach English. It is surprising that some of the techniques of this approach are still alive in modern classrooms. The journey from grammar translation approach is now reached at the concept Post-method era put forward by Kumaravadivelu (2006). The method of teaching got more prominence in the present day classroom due to the boom of technology. The knowledge imparting from teacher to

student is out of context in today's world. The internet and search engine enhance knowledge explosion and made it available irrespective of barrier. Thus, the classrooms need to be re-arranged. The purpose of language teaching methods needs a paradigm shift. As per the words of Prabhu, there is no best method. The designing of a method is determined by learners need. The knowledge about the past approaches and methods in second language teaching will be a remarkable advantage for a teacher to frame a best suited method in their classroom according to the needs of learners. This paper aims to provide a better understanding about the evolution of language teaching methods from 1700 onwards. The review on these past methods helps the readers to understand the advantages and limitations of various methods in different approaches and identify the feasible methods for their classrooms. It helps the teacher to identify the teaching process and the way of teaching thus to enliven the teaching process.

It is important to understand the

term approach, method and technique and its difference in the process of reviewing teaching methods. An approach is the sum total of the beliefs, assumptions and theoretical basis of a particular language. The methods are the plan made by the teacher to teach this language according to their belief and techniques are the way they are implementing these in a classroom. It is rightly explained by Antony in 1963 as a method is “an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach. An approach is axiomatic, a method is procedural” (p. 65). All these approaches are aligned to the major learning theories popularised in the respective period. The major theories that exercised a great influence on second language learning and teaching are structuralism, functionalism, behaviourism, cognitivism and constructivism. The significance of an approach in a classroom rests in the way it helps a teacher to achieve the learning outcome. It is important to understand that one cannot dissect a teaching approach from the learning or teaching content, goals and technique. The success of an approach lies in the successful blending of these three in a classroom hour. This paper goes through a brief analysis of various methods and approaches practiced in different periods in English language teaching in different parts of the world. The analysis of methods has done here according to the classification of Richards and Rodgers in 2001.

Grammar Translation Approach

The grammar translation approach came into the scene in order to teach Latin among European schools in 1700s when Latin was replaced by the European vernacular languages. Initially this method is introduced in Germany. As J.C. Richards pointed out, “Text books consisted of statements of abstract grammar rules, list of vocabulary and sentences for translation. Speaking the foreign language was not the goal, oral practice was limited to students reading aloud the sentences they had translated” (Richards et al, 2014.pp.5). Grammar translation Approach focussed on the rules and structures to master a language

and the main focus falls in reading and writing skill.

The major techniques employed in this method are

- 1) Use of cognates, antonyms, and synonyms
- 2) Back translation - translate the texts from target language to mother tongue and vice versa
- 3) Reading and writing comprehension

Direct Approach

Direct approach took birth from the limitations of GTM. The reform movement questions the unscientific way of learning especially rote memorisation. Direct approach hails the natural way of learning language when GTM advocate deductive way of grammar teaching. The works of savoir stands as the backbone of direct approach and method. They preferred the use of target language alone in the classroom because it was thought that the learner's first language was a distracting mediator that impeded direct associations. The teacher introduces different original objects, pictures and situations to teach new vocabulary and linguistic structures. The major techniques of this approach are

1. Conversation practice, map drawing and information gaps.
2. Question and answer sessions.
3. Reading aloud
4. Inductive grammar instruction
5. Encourage self correction
6. Creating real life situations.

The situational language teaching and bilingual method are the two major methods that carried out the direct approach ideals.

Situational Language Teaching

As of the name, it advocates the teaching of speech, structure and vocabulary through situations. Learning of structures is the way to learn a language. The Structurally sequenced and graded vocabulary is taught through situations. It followed the sequence of Presentation Practice and Production. The learning outcome is the use of learned structure and vocabulary in daily life conversation. According to Pittman “our principal class room activity in the teaching of English structure will be the oral practice of structures. The oral practice of controlled sentence pattern should

be given in situations designed to give the greatest amount of practice in English speech to the pupil" (Pittman 1963:179). The main advantage of this method is the practicality in a classroom though unscientific.

Bilingual method

Bilingual method advocates the use of target language and mother tongue in a classroom. Sentence is the basic unit of teaching. The rigorous practise and explanation of phrases and sentences in the mother tongue are the primary techniques employed here. The low cost and easiness to teach are the main attraction of this method, on the other hand difficulty to find out the exact equivalent words in L1 for target language and negative transfer are the major disadvantages.

Direct method is not fit for the classrooms. The practical difficulties to transact the content according to the curriculum compels to seek another method that should be more controlled than direct method but should not stoop into rote learning.

Reading Approach

The direct approach failed to gain popularity in US. It gradually paved the way for reading Approach. As per their ideal the purpose of learning a foreign tongue is limited in reading and understanding the target language. As per this, learning is limited to vocabulary learning and its meaning. The purpose of grammar teaching is to understand the sentences which are essential for reading. The de emphasis on speaking skills and assessing through test system were the major reasons for theextinguishing of this method. Dr West methodis the popular method in this approach. The important techniques employed in this method are

1. Reading the texts
2. Skimming and scanning
3. Extensive reading
4. Guided reading
5. Reading with scaffold
6. Explicit teaching of grammar

Dr. West method

Dr West developed this method to teach English in India. He found reading as the shortest way to speak and write English in Indian context.

The promotion of silent reading under the guidance of the teacher increases the power of comprehension. He introduced text books and supplementary books for reading along with 2280 graded vocabulary. The greatest disadvantage of this method is the negligence of listening and speaking skills.

Audio Lingual Method

The audio lingual method is started from the front of world war. It is also known as army method (Brown, 2000) which draws its theoretical support from behaviorist psychology. Initially it is introduced by the allies to learn foreign language for war based communication. Later it introduced in the classrooms. Listening and speaking got prominence in this method and practiced through mimicry and oral practice. Audio tapes are the common teaching aid in this method. The major techniques (Larsen-Freeman, et al., 2013) are

- a. Repetition - repeat after the teacher
- b. Language games
- c. Single slot substitution drill
- d. Transformation drills
- e. Over learning

Cognitive Approach

Cognitive approached developed in 1960's. This period is a milestone in the history of teaching methods. The development of cognitive psychology gave a new dimension to the language learning approaches and it questions the behaviourist concepts. The work of Noam Chomsky and his theories of universal grammar and LAD rewrites the notion of behaviourist concepts. The main focus of this approach lies on the way mind works in the process of language learning or how brain learns language. The major contribution of cognitive approach is that it released the language teaching and learning from the practise of rote memorisation to creative learning. The silent way method is the only prominent method in this approach. The major techniques employed are

- a. Corrective feedback
- b. Use of learner strategies
- c. Teach rules explicitly
- d. Pre-reading and pre-listening activities
- e. Recall of prior learning
- f. Practice of rehearsal

Silent way method

Galeb Gattenho is the initiator of this method which gave prominence to the affective realm of human brain. Here, the teacher presents the teaching methods through charts and objects. The role of the teacher is that of a facilitator and they remain silent for much of the time. Learning proceeds under the initiative of learners from the ambiance created by the teacher. It is against the teacher-centered classroom methods. The teacher continues to give directions until the learner comes up with right response. Here the teacher models once and the students will work together to bring out the learning outcome.

Affective Humanistic Approach

As the name suggests, the emotional side of the human behaviour got prominence in this approach and centered on sub-conscious mind. It is developed in US during 1960's and 70's. The leading argument in this approach is the emotional comfort of the learner. If the learner is free from emotional threat, they will be able to unlock the potential realms in cognitive plane. Therefore, it advocates for the creation of emotionally comfortable ambiance for learning. It tries to remove the emotional barriers for the best learning experience. The colourful and comfortable classrooms create interest and motivated the learners to learn. The Suggestopedia and community language learning are the prominent methods in this approach. The major techniques of this approach are

1. Positive reinforcement
2. Playing music while learning
3. Learning through games
4. Multiple concepts
5. Dramatization

The major limitation of this method is the demand for skilful teachers to handle the classes in this manner.

Suggestopedia

This method is developed by a Bulgarian psychiatrist Georgi Lozanov. The stressful atmosphere of a classroom is avoided through the comfortable seat arrangements, relaxation activities, playing of music and the use native language etc. The major drawback is the

impracticality in regular classrooms.

Community language learning

This humanistic approach is using the empathetic skill of a teacher to teach language. Fr. Charles Curran, the developer of this method defines it as "The basic aim of the research was to determine if methods used in counselling skills and relationships could be adopted to facilitate the learning of foreign languages" (Curran, 1961, p.78). Here the teacher is a counsellor and learner is a client. Its classroom application lies in five stages, they are

1. Embryonic stage
2. Self assertion stage
3. Separate existence stage
4. Reversal stage
5. Independent stage

Comprehension Approach

The proponents of this affective approach are Stephen Krashen and James Asher. The primary focus is on comprehension than learning. The prominent features of this approach are the suggestion of silent period for comprehending a language, learning proceeds from known facts to known, use of target language, develop the confidence of the learner to use target language and the use of physical objects. Krashen's comprehensible input that is $I + 1$ is the leading theory of this approach. The biggest disadvantage of this method is the difficulty to bring everything real for teaching and maintaining the silent period. Total physical response and natural methods are the well known methods in this approach. The major techniques employed in this approach are

1. Use of target language
2. Use of visual aids and Realia
3. Role of reversal
4. Use of simple questions and answers.

Total physical response

The leading notion of TPR method, developed by James Asher in 1977, is that children learn better if they use real objects and engaged in physical activities. The adopted the idea of pairing the vocabulary and grammar items with motor activities in classrooms to teach language (Clancy, 2004). The active involvement of the students is the main merit of this method. The major limitation is that it is suitable for

the beginners but for advanced learners, the teacher has to find other methods for successful teaching.

Natural Method

TerrecyTerrel is the initiator of this method in 1977. The monitor model hypothesis of Stephan Krashen strengthens this approach in the later years. This approach advocates the acquisition of language instead of learning. It follows the natural order of a native speaker's acquisition of language, starts from listening and ends in writing. Here, the learning content is arranged and structured accordingly. The teacher is providing comprehensible input by using realia, pictures etc. and discourage grammar teaching and error correction. It rejects the classroom analytical process. Lambert sauveur initiated this method by devising a syllabus by himself.

Communicative language teaching Approach

Communicative language teaching approach gave prominence to the speaking skills. The development of world economy, advancement of science and technology, migration, and establishment of international companies are some of the reasons that demand the speaking proficiency in English language. Dell Hymes planted the idea of communicative competence as a reaction to Chomsky's idea of linguistic competence. British applied linguists such as Christopher Candlin and Henry Widdowson began to see that a focus on structure alone is not helping language students. They saw a need for students to develop communicative skill and functional competence in addition to mastering language structures. This social-humanistic approach gain popularity in the second language teaching classrooms due to its activity oriented and learner centered nature. The teacher can use any authentic material that enhances speaking skills. The major techniques in this approach are

1. Use of authentic materials
2. Sequencing activities
3. Language games
4. Information gaps
5. Role plays and pair activities
6. Language exchanges
7. Activities that creates opportunities to

communicate in target language.

The greatest contribution of this approach to the second language classrooms are the TBLT and content based instruction methods. Some of the disadvantages of this method are less attention on structure, tiring teaching process for grammar instruction, and demand of excellent teachers for teaching. The less attention on structure and grammar often ends up in the great criticism over fluency versus accuracy.

Task Based Language Teaching

TBLT is a method of teaching language through tasks. Task is an activity that wraps different language contents. TBLT methodology aims to transact target language through various tasks employed in a classroom. According to N.S Prabhu (1987) task is "an activity which needs learners to come to a conclusion from given information through some process of thought, and which allows teachers to handle and control that process, was regarded as a task" (p. 24). According to Ellis (2003), the task has three phases. Pre-task phase, task phase and post-task phase. The pre-task phase is an opportunity for hooking the knowledge and preparing the learners for the task phase. Task phase is the implementation stage, where the learners are engaged with task. The final stage is the post-task phase, a forum for correction and learning. TBI offers great flexibility to design tasks according to the needs and interest of the students. The sequencing of tasks in that manner is another difficulty with TBI.

Content Based Instruction

The major idea of this method is to instruct the subjects through the target language rather than learning a language through target language items alone. Here the content is a means for the target language learning. According to Richards and Schimidt CBI is "a method that integrates language instruction with subject matter instruction in the target language, for example, studying science, social studies or mathematics through the medium of English in a content-based ESL program." (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 125). One of the adverse effects of this method is the inefficiency of language teachers to impart subject other

than language and subject teachers to impart language.

Post-method Approach

The post method era is proposed by Kumaravadivelu. It advocates being free from the theoretical absoluteness and considering the best possible techniques to impart language learning. He defines that each and every method is bounded to a theory and advocated to be free from the holds of this theory. He classified all these methods into three heads that is

1. Language centered methods
2. Learner centered methods
3. Learning centered methods.

He suggests the learning centred methods that are not concentrating on the explicit teaching of language structures and grammar but students acquire language unconsciously by using the language. It gave rise to the concept of eclectic method.

Eclectic method

The central idea of eclectic method is the use of any method that catersto the needs of the learner. It advocates the sake of learning instead of method. The idea of eclectic method stems from the thought that there isn't any

method that accepted everywhere alike or best suited for every learner. As per the needs and level of the students the teacher can decide the method and implement. Here, the learners go through different kinds of techniques, different kinds of teaching aids, and materials. As per the definition of Kumar (2013:1), "eclectic method is a combination of different method of teaching and learning approaches".

Conclusion

The above mentioned approaches and methods shaped the language classrooms in its present forms. The close analysis revealed that certain methods and theory was very popular in Indian classrooms due to the convenience of teaching and easiness to manage the classroom. If we go through the history of these methods we can understand that each and every method born from the need of overcoming the limitation of early method and take energy to drive on from the preceding method. A teacher who knows the different techniques which is practiced earlier and the reasons for its success and failure can implement better techniques to impart better learning.

References

- Antony, M, E. (1963). Approach, Method, Technique. *English Language Teaching*, 17, 63-67.
- Brown, D. H. (2000). *Principles of language learning & teaching*. (4th ed.). New York: Longman.
- Clancy, T. (2004). An historical examination of the methodological developments in language teaching (doctoral Dissertation). University of Nevada, Reno.
- Curran, C. A. (1961). Counseling skills adapted to the learning of foreign languages. *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic*, 25, 78-93.
- Ellis, R. (2003) *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kumar, C.P. (2013). *The Eclectic Method: Theory and Its Application to the Learning of English*. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 3(6), 1-4.
- Kumaravadivelu, B. (2006). *Understanding language teaching: From method to postmethod*. London, Routledge.
- Larsen-Freeman, D., & Anderson, M. (2013). *Techniques and principles in language teaching 3rd edition*-Oxford handbooks for language teachers. Oxford university press.
- Pitman, G. (1963). *Teaching Structural English*. Brisbane: Jacaranda.
- Prabhu, N. S. (1987). *Second language pedagogy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Richards, J. C., and Schmidt, R. (2010). *Longman Dictionary of Language teaching and Applied linguistics*. Fourth edition, Pearson Education Limited, Edinburgh Gate.
- Richards, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2014). *Approaches and methods in language teaching*. Cambridge university press.
- Richards, Jack C., and Theodore S. Rodgers. (2001). *Approach and methods in language teaching: A description and analysis*. Cambridge, London: Cambridge University.
- Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Language Teaching Methodology*. ERIC Issue Paper. Washington Dc. Office of educational research and improvement.

English for Knowledge, Not for Honing Skills

Dr. Jyothi, Assistant Professor (English)

University College of Science, Tumkur University, Karnataka - 572103

What is the role of English as a discipline in 21st century? It is important for the discipline to re-examine its position in knowledge domain, especially when English has attained the status of world's most studied language, with 20% of earth's population speaking it. We have to utilize this situation to discipline's advantage and strengthen it, in the present context of the global market forces reducing it to a sheer medium to enhance all kinds of communication skills and especially, when the syllabus framing is given to big business houses to suit their professional demands.

In spite of vast human population using this language one way or the other, it is less used discipline still, as we have failed to make a true sense of its potential. I would argue that we have to learn English for scholarship, not just for learning sentence structures or to improve communication skills. In other words, objective of using literature is not to teach language use, but to develop language use. Moreover, literature enhances language sensitivity and improves one's thinking.

In 21st century, English has grown to be a platform, where amalgamation and synthesis of knowledge from all cultures and languages take place unceasingly. With its available and ever pouring in profuse knowledge from other languages through translation, English discipline has a greater role to play than as a mere link language among diverse floating world population. Hence, there is a need for the regional language users to know English to enter this world of knowledge. But, are we aware of this new potential of English discipline? Heidegger (1971) says, we struggle for language or words to match our thinking. In this context, English serves that purpose of finding the right word to show our thought, thanks to its rich vocabulary due to accumulated knowledge translated from other languages. In other words, English is the language of knowledge domain. What to do with its exhaustive knowledge?

Under these observations, we have to be clear that the purpose of learning English is to gain knowledge, not for language skills. Affirmatively, Michael Haliday (1980) comments that a text

is not just a set of sentences, but a chunk of information and knowledge, which we destroy in a structured language. We read a text in a language, for knowledge and for understanding its fine texture, so that we reproduce it in the form of writing.

Moreover, today, English is not an exclusive discipline to study literature alone, but to study culture and life in general. Thus, it includes all human sciences. In other words, it is a humanistic discipline. Sheldon Pollack (2016) says, like mathematics is to natural sciences, philology is to human sciences. Philology makes sense of texts. What English discipline does to its users is, making sense of literary texts.

However, studies show that, speaking a language is natural phenomenon, but writing down a language is higher level of human invention. So, it has to be taught and learnt. In that sense, English has to be taught as it is needed for gaining knowledge. Teaching is understood to be addressing errors in thinking. This thinking happens as a result of deliberate slow reading, in spite of, everything else moving fast track in this world. But our policy makers are themselves confused on, what to teach-language or literature? What gives learners true knowledge?

In this context, it is imperative to reconceptualize English discipline, by tracing its history to map its progress. This disciplinary self understanding is essential to make a sense of the discipline we are a part of, as students and teachers of English. If we historicise the study of a discipline, we discover the hierarchical hegemony of one discipline or the other at a specified period in history. In Indian context, we can trace the hegemony of Sanskrit in Pre-Islamic period, then Persian and Arabic in Islamic period and English in British era. So, dominance of a language is decided by the political hegemony of the times. Accordingly, disciplines have replaced each other. Chomsky (1972) observes that hegemony of a language is problematic in a multilingual set up. This applies to English discipline in 21st century too. But this problem can be managed positively, by learning

English for gaining knowledge, not just for mastering language skills. Nevertheless, English has another problem to address to, lack of disciplinary self understanding. Due to this, in spite of its power of knowledge of the world, globalization has reduced English discipline to cater to its international communication purpose alone. In this context, it is important to take stock of the trajectory of the discipline to position it as a discipline of knowledge amalgamation.

To begin with, English literature was introduced in Britain, the country of its origin, to create national identity in 19th century. As Terry Eagleton (1983) says that the study of literature began as an ideological enterprise that would rehearse the masses in the habits of pluralistic thought and feeling. As English was introduced to replace classics, Brian Doyle (1989) argues that the most remarkable features of the discipline's history is, its rise from a position of inferiority to one of cultural and educational prominence. While tracing the trajectory of English discipline, Robert Eagleton (2000) remarks, English is a system which is open, always in the making, never closed and never finally made. It has transformed from; single standard language to recognition of varieties, grammatical rules to flexibility of usage, canon to no canon, national curriculum to local syllabus and single dominant cultural 'identity to multicultural differences.

In this setting, it is important to recognize, how studying culture became a part of English discipline. F R Leavis' PhD dissertation on the relationship of Journalism and literature submitted in 1924 became the foundation for cultural studies. His 'sketch for an English school' written in 1940 reflects his proposal that English students should study a foreign language, comparative literature, and political, economic, social and intellectual history alongside the established literary canon. He argues that English should be repositioned as pivotal subject forming a centre of attraction and point of liaison for all other disciplines within the university. His comments should be contextualized at times when there was a need of establishing English as a discipline in relation to well established classics and philosophy. He argues, what the students of English are essentially learning, what reading

is and what thinking is. Newbolt report of 1921 too sets up English literature as the prime purveyor of national culture. Remarkably, the transformation of literary studies as cultural studies dissolved the disciplinary boundary of many human sciences. So, English discipline has transformed itself as knowledge hub for human sciences in Britain. But then, what is its status in the once colonies where British persuasively introduced this discipline? Contrastingly, situation is different here, as English discipline has to position itself, counter to the regional languages which have thousands of years history.

Tracking the trajectory of English discipline in British colonies is another interesting study. To take the example of India, the discipline was introduced with British literature. But the debates of 1990s on the importance of nationalization of English discipline, brought in Indian writing in English. Since then the scope has been widening to include; American Literature, Commonwealth Literature, Comparative Literature, Russian Literature, Australian Literature, Canadian Literature, English Language Studies, South Asian Studies, Translation Studies, Dalit Studies, Subaltern Studies, Film Studies, Cultural Studies, et al. So, horizon of English discipline has been widening and it has become multidisciplinary human science. Simultaneously, however, the commercial demands for English language due to globalization has reduced the purpose of learning English to improve communication skills. So, English discipline is in crossroads, in spite of its potential to be the knowledge hub for human sciences as well as a link for all regional languages, it is limited as English language learning tool.

What English discipline has to do in these changing circumstances? Stanley Fish (1976) calls English scholars as interpretation community. English receives knowledge from other languages. So, it has the responsibility of interpreting knowledge to the regional languages as well as introducing knowledge from the regional languages to the rest of the world through translation. Therefore, translation of non-English classics should be considered for research worthy of the doctorate degrees by the universities. Thus, these is an urgent need to save this discipline from big business houses.

Parenting

Only Lock Down; Not Break Down

Dhanya Bhaskaran

Education Product Manager, Macmillan Education India, Kochi

This issue of the Journal, I mean the print version, may reach you only by the end of the 'Special Covid Holidays' of your children. How fruitfully you have been using this break depends on your personality traits. If you get up each day cursing the lock down and your inability to go to work, you belong to one group. On the other hand, even if you lose your income, if you think of the glory of spending one more day with your children or grandchildren, then you belong to another group. Whether you cursed or not, the lock down was not to be lifted. But, if you gave another new and wonderful full-day experience to your kids, that would lift the lock down of your mind. In the former case, both our body and mind were confined to 'house arrest'; whereas in the latter case, your body was not allowed to move, but your mind was free to fly all over. And, if only you took your children on your wings...!

Online tuition and coaching classes mushroomed. Some of you got your kids enrolled for some courses, thinking that it would be a novel experience to children (if they were first time online learners.) In the beginning they enjoyed it—not the contents, but the technology part of it. Soon they got bored. It turned out to be more boring than the school classes, where at least they were able to share their boredom with their neighbours by winking their eyes to one another when the teacher turned to write on the board. Here, no technological device to express their boredom! Technology did not provide a button or some other device other than 'switch off' to express an online learner's disgust and distress.

I am not against those emergency substitutes such as online classes. What I just want to know is whether children are exclusively 'made for' studies. Aren't they capable of doing anything else—cooking, gardening, farming, washing, cleaning, taking care of pets and domestic animals and so on? Imagine the ten or twelve

year-old is in charge of cooking something on one's own.

Children do not possess just abilities, but potentials, too. Abilities are of present; potentials of future. Abilities are limited; potentials infinite. Potentials begin where abilities end. In other words, abilities serve as the springboard for potentials.

Schools and teachers usually (and unfortunately) aim at finding your child's abilities. They are more concerned with tangible progress in terms of marks and ranks. Secondly they are more loyal to their class and school than to individual child. They are bound to project their class or school as the best. If you don't find time to help your child's potentials to bloom, who else is there to guide?

Courses, classes, exams and marks—all together should occupy less than fifty per cent of your child's 24 hours. Personality is what matters more important. School education little cares for personality; except very few teachers and still fewer schools, as such.

More than fifty per cent of the real education should be taken care of at home—whether you child is at school or college. Study habits alone cannot be improved in a child—many parents mistakenly believe so. What is the overall trait of the child, that is likely to get reflected in all aspects of life, including studies. A person who is hard working by nature cannot be a poor performer at studies. Why she or he is poor at studies is the fault of the system. That person was not given exposure to studies the proper way, or was given the wrong type of education which does not match her or his traits. A child who has been taught in maintaining the toys, the tricycle, and later the bicycle well cannot be careless or disorderly at studies. Therefore, let not children be confined to studies; let them be exposed to all types of work at home—indoors as well as outdoors.

Some of you may ask why children must be exposed to household chores. We, parents and grandparents, are there to take care of household work, farming and so on. Or we have servants at home. True. The wider perspective of education as preparing a person for leading a successful life seems to have been reduced to 'preparing for a job'. The present generation of parents seem to be quite convinced that a good job means a happy life. The equation seems to be 'a costly education leading to a well-paid

job, leading to a happy life'. Unfortunately for such parents, life for their children need not be as happy as anticipated. What lacks in such rich life is caring and sharing. That's why we advocate children's participation in household chores from the beginning. This habit of collaboration gets transferred to school life as well. Thus, the individual person gets transformed into a social person. Life thus becomes happy for them in future.

Developing Conversation Skills of Teachers and Students, Simultaneously

P. Bhaskaran Nair

The so-called 'Spoken English' courses haven't done much good—those who attended such classes may testify. Reasons vary. Some such courses begin with 'parts' of speech; they never end with 'whole' speech. Some others engage learners in role plays with readymade dialogues. But, real communication takes place not with readymade dialogues. Unexpectedness is the core of communication. You have no idea what I am going to tell you when we meet. You are at the moment 'unprepared' to respond to me. Some mechanism within you works, the moment I finish my first chunk: instantly, you answer my question/you agree with me/you express shock or surprise/you lend me something, your pen for instance, at the bank counter.

Communication turns the 'unexpected' into 'well-received'; it suddenly changes the 'unprepared' listener into 'an all-knowing' person. Now it is your turn to take me by surprise. I have no idea what you have in your mind, which you are going to ask or tell me. Even before you complete your turn, I am ready with my utterance. Conversation is in progress.

Now, let's us have a conversation session in the class—neither a pre-planned dialogue nor a well-rehearsed role play. Each day, taking turn, one student comes to you with a self-assigned role—you have no idea who is standing before you (not a student), nor what the situation is.

It may be a traffic policeman demanding your two-wheeler licence/a dentist who asks you to open your mouth/a beggar at your doorstep for alms/a street vendor selling fresh vegetables... You have to deduce these things from the opening part of his/her speech. Then you have to 'rise to the occasion' and respond as natural as possible. Together you two converse for a short while—three to five minutes, till the conversation comes to a meaningful end. One example:

A girl student: "Excuse me, Driver Uncle. Will this bus go to the old bus stand?"
 Teacher: "Yes, of course. First to the old bus stand; and then to the new bus stand"
 Student: "Thank you, Uncle. What time does it leave?"
 Teacher: "In another five minutes".
 Student: "Uncle, do you know where MG Hospital is?"
 Teacher: "It's just before we reach the old bus stand."
 Student: "Does this bus stop there?"
 Teacher: "There is no bus stop. But, I'll stop for you. OK?"
 Student: "Thank you very much, Uncle."
 Teacher: "Who is there in hospital?"
 Student: "Grandma."
 Teacher: "Why? What happened?"
 Student: "Grandma fell in the bathroom, and broke her arm."

Teacher: "And you are going to see her?"
Student: "Yes. I am carrying lunch for her."
Teacher: "Smart girl. Yes, now it's time. We are going"

If you are a bus driver today, you have no idea who you are going to be in your next class. The next day, another student comes to the front of the class.

Student: "Excuse me sir. Hope, you are Mr. Sekhar."
Teacher: "Yes, of course."
Student: "Here is a Speed Post letter for you (Hands over an envelope.)"
Teacher: "Thank you. Where should I sign?"
Student: "In the last column—against your name."
Teacher: "Fine. Thank you. By the way, you are the new postman, I hope."
Student: "Yes, sir. I work as a substitute."
Teacher: "What happened to the other man—Mr. Joseph?"
Student: "He's on leave. Not well. For three months, I'll be coming."
Teacher: "Nice meeting you. Thanks."
Student: "Bye. See you, sir".

Each student chooses a role (caretaker/postman); places him or her in a situation(to go

to the hospital/to meet an addressee); decides on the location(at a bus terminal/in front of a house or shop); comes prepared with a central message (inquire whether the bus goes by MG Hospital/deliver a letter) and be prepared for more extended conversation.

Here, both the teacher and the student function naturally; both make use of the existing 'active stock' of language to respond to the other; fetches more from the 'passive stock' when the situation demands; and finally, the conversation ends in such a way, that neither of them has planned or anticipated.

How does this activity differ from the conventional dialogue or role play? In them, there is no 'information gap'. Neither receives anything new. Both are fully prepared to take turn. There is no 'unpreparedness' nor 'anxiety' to know what comes next. Therefore, students find no motivation or interest in them. No urgency to trace from the 'old stock' the right utterance to suit the situation. "How should I respond to this person's utterance, 'Can I help you?' Should I respond, 'No thank you', or 'Thank you, please carry this bag for me to that third gate'?" In a split second, you have to choose from the two options from the old stock. In the conventional spoken English class, there is no such challenge. No challenge means no motivation; no motivation means no interest; no interest means no learning input.

Workshop for Materials Development For Rural Learners

(The exact dates and venue will be notified in the forthcoming issues of the Journal.)

Eligibility: Teachers and researchers of English

Mode: Residential

Scope: Materials produced at the workshop will be edited and published for marketing.

Learner level: Pre-primary, Primary, Secondary, senior (higher) Secondary

Genres: Literature; Prose pieces, poems, fiction, folk tales & songs of all regions etc.

Non-literary pieces: Newspaper clippings, Brochures, Publicity materials, Advertisements, Tickets, Coupons, and all materials of day to day use on which something is printed in English

For more details, please contact 9443282592 / nairpbhaskaran@gmail.com / www.eltif.in

Reports from the field

TBAK College For Women, Kilakarai, Ramnathapuram (TN) Signs an MoU with ELTIF

Dr.Zulaiha Shakeel

Vice Principal & HoD, English TBAK College for Women, Kilakarai, Ramnathapuram (TN)

It was a milestone in the history of TBAK College for Women, Kilakarai when it signed an MoU with ELTIF. Though the college has been undertaking various programmes by way of extension services, this seems to be of special significance to us for two reasons: First, being one of the colleges exclusively for women in the southern most part of Tamil Nadu, we have been looking for more guidance and academic support for improving the communication skills of our students. ELTIF came forward with guidance and support.

Secondly, since the college is situated in a backward area, the local public expects more from us for improving the educational standards of their children. With the help of ELTIF, we are planning to organize Communicative English courses in the nearby Tamil medium schools, with tutors among our students. Quite a few girls came forward to work as volunteers during weekends and holidays as tutors.

This two-tier programme is expected to enhance the communicative competence of the school children, and develop self confidence among our student-tutors, as well. An additional advantage to the society is that the teachers of the schools where we are going to serve will be observing new learner-centred classroom strategies at work, and they will have access to new teaching-learning materials through ELTIF.

The MoU was signed at an august function at the college on 21.02.2020. Dr. S. Sumayaa, Principal of TBAK College and Dr.Bhaskaran Nair, President of ELTIF

signed the MoU in the presence of the whole staff of the college. The principal emphasized the need of women empowerment through higher education, and especially through the mastery of English language.

Dr.ZulaihaShakeel (Vice Principal, Admin.&

Head, Department of English) welcomed the gathering and introduced the chief guest. Dr. A. Jasmine (Dean, Arts), Dr. N. Gowri (Controller of Examinations), and Ms. B. SeeniRahfuNisha (IQAC Coordinator) offered felicitations. Ms S. PanbarasiFathima, Dean of Science proposed vote of thanks.

Following the function, a two-day Faculty Development Programme on Outcome-Based Education (OBE) was organized for the whole faculty of the college, with Dr.Bhaskaran Nair as the resource person. The recent trends in pedagogy, educational psychology and the sociology of education were the main topics centred around the focal theme of OBE. The participation of the teachers was really commendable.

On the second day (22 Feb.) a special orientation session was arranged exclusively for the English faculty with 'Learner-Centred Approach' as the theme. Teaching of a poem was discussed following the model of Close Reading as proposed by the New Critics.

An Induction Programme was arranged for the student-tutors who are going to teach on the Communicative English courses in the village schools. The student-volunteers seemed to be highly enthusiastic about the prospect of becoming teachers. Their queries and doubts were clarified at the session.

A brief interactive session with the support staff of the college discussing the importance of Business Communication and Official Correspondence provided them with a few useful tips on how written communication can be made simple and straightforward

The two-day programme provided a rich exposure and experience to the participants of all the sections of the college. The college looks forward to follow up activities in collaboration with ELTIF.

Eltif Two-Day International Conference

1. An Overview

Dr. Leena AK HST English, St. Joseph's High School Chathiath, Kochi-12

The much awaited ELTIF Annual Conference was held during 24 & 25 January 2020 in association with the Department of English, at Christ College Irinjalakuda (Thrissur Dt. Kerala). The main theme was Language, Literature and Culture: Directions in Classrooms and Outside. It was a grand academic feast for the participants.

The Two-Day Conference was well planned and organised. The Conference started with the inaugural session on 24 January 2020. Dr. Rahayu Puji Haryanti, Faculty of Languages and Arts, The State University of Semarang, Indonesia delivered the inaugural address. The chief guest at this function was Dr. Tara Ratnam, ELT Consultant, Mysore.

The inaugural session was followed by the keynote address by Dr. Tara Ratnam. The topic was identical to the major concern of ELTIF "Helping Teachers and Their Disadvantaged Learners Find Personal Relevance in the Teaching and Learning of English". The Conference Proceedings was launched during inaugural session.

There were 8 Plenary presentations during the two-day deliberations. The details of those sessions are discussed elsewhere.

Workshops

There were six workshops for teachers and researchers, conducted by the invitees on different aspects of ELT during this conference. The topic for the workshops had a larger focus on developing language skills of the teachers and learners. There were a few workshops which emphasized the need for continuous professional development, developing reading and writing skills and making use of limited resources.

Paper Presentation

About 90 papers were presented in 6 parallel sessions. On the second day, the presentations started at 8.30 in the morning.

Field Visit

On 24th January a team of 10 ELTIF members and teachers visited the National Public School Irinjalakuda and conducted communicative classes for the students.

Valedictory session

The chief guest at the valedictory function was Dr. N. Prasanth Kumar, Former Head and Professor SSUS Kalady. The focus of his talk was "Literary Studies in the Age of Post Truth". Dr. Varghese K J, the conference coordinator proposed vote of thanks.

2. Keynote Address by Dr. Tara Ratnam

Pavithran K, Resource Person, ELTIF, Kuthuparamba, Kannur Dt

It was a phrase in the concept Note of the Conference with which Dr Tara Ratnam, Mysore-based ELT consultant began her keynote address. The phrase was 'the anguish felt by teachers and learners of English as Second Language'. The speaker pointed out the fact that irrespective of the policy recommendations and their partial implementations, "providing culturally inclusive experience to make learning personally relevant to the vast sections of diverse and disadvantaged learners has remained an unmet challenge." She focused on the need of enhancing student's sense of the self, their identity of participation in the classroom and the social world outside. The role of personal experience in learning anything, especially a foreign language was highlighted. Teachers'

apprehensions on trying something new imposed on them was quite justifiable. At the same time there exists a gap between the teacher beliefs and the learner expectations.

Dr. Tara Ratnam asserted that "personal experience provides the basis for understanding what teaching that focuses on learners rather than on covering content involves and how it enables them to achieve the accountability goals of promoting students while also achieving the broader goals of promoting transformative learning which helps students carve out a better future for themselves."

The keynote address which lasted for an hour was followed by a discussion in which many participated.

3. Plenary Presentations

P.V. Vasudevan Namboodiri Academic Coordinator, ELTIF, Kuthuparamba, Kannur Dt

The first plenary talk had its focus on creative writing. Optimizing Humanistic English Class through the Use of Culture and Literature. Smt. Rahayu Puji Haryanti from the State University of Semarang, made her presentation.

Dr. T. Muraleedharan, a senior faculty in Film Studies at Chetana College of Media and Performing Arts, Thrissur gave his talk on Cultural Studies and English Education in India. He traced the history, culture and education of Indian sub continent from pre-Independent era.

Dr. S. Gururaj, faculty at the Regional Institute of English Bangalore delivered the plenary talk on Picto-verbal Text Approach in Teaching English as a Second Language. He advocated the process of learning by providing language experience through simple, comprehensible

input- experiencing sounds, words, phrases, sentences, and text in context. Ms. Nisa Rolyasa S, a Lecturer of English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Jenderal Soedirman University, Regency of Banyumas, Central Java, delivered the fifth plenary on the theme "English Language Acquisition through Local Wisdom and Culture"

Dr. Dr. Abdul Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Associate Professor in the Department of English, Jamal Mohamed College, Trichy, gave his talk on Digital Humanities and Creative Writing in Contemporary Times. Dr. Hitesh Bhakat, Professor, Regional Institute of English South India, Bangalore focused on Plausibility in Equipping and Enabling Disadvantaged Learners through Principled ESL Instruction.

4. ELT Workshop for Teachers & Researchers

Vijayan Karayi Treasurer-cum-Resource person, ELTIF, Kadirur, Thalassery, Kannur Dt

One unique feature of the ELT annual conferences is the workshop sessions which run parallel to the presentations. On both days, there were fruitful discussions on the problems and remedies in English classrooms. The purpose of the workshops led by experts in the field was to integrate theory and research with classroom practices.

The resource persons on the workshops were Dr. Tara Ratnam (ELT consultant, Mysore), Dr.

C. Praveen (Principal, Institute of Advanced Study in Education, Thrissur), Dr. Hitesh Bhakat (Professor at RIESI Bangalore) and Dr. S. Gururaj (Faculty at RIESI Bangalore).

How close can we move towards learner-centredness was an inquiry at the workshops. Experienced teachers shared their views with young researchers and the researchers, in turn pointed out the recent developments in the field.

5. Communicative English Course at National High School, Irinjalakuda

Vinija NS Chief Tutor, District Centre for English, Thrissur Kerala

As part of the Two-day International Conference at Christ College Irinjalakuda, ELTIF conducted a One-day Communicative English course for the students of National High School Irinjalakuda, Thrissur on 25th February 2010. Dr. Gururaj, Faculty, RIESI Bangaluru, Mr. Mohana Sundaram, Rtd. Headmaster, Karur, Tamilnadu and Ms. Vinija N.S, Chief Tutor, District Centre for English, Thrissur handled the sessions. The programme offered a platform for the students to boost up their confidence to use English language so that they could interact with the facilitators without inhibition. (two of the three tutors were non-Malyalis). 40 selected students from classes 8 and 9 attended the programme. The Headmistress of National High School extended a very warm welcome to

the ELTIF Resource persons.

Dr. Gururaj (faculty, RIESI Bangalore) initiated a friendly interaction with the students on the dreams and goals of life. Students came out with a number of dreams. The facilitator drew the attention of students to the necessary preparation and determination to achieve their dreams. There was a detailed discussion on how a student shall be preparing for a successful and happy life, the need for keeping the strong familial relationship and the ways of keeping them alive. Reading of textbooks and additional books was highlighted with suitable illustrations. Then the session was on planning the future. Dr. Gururaj guided the students by giving a few captions and asked them to visualize their roadmap. Students made absolutely wonderful attempt and they

planned their life for next two, five and ten years. They also made a list of what they should do to achieve their goals. The interaction session also focus on advantages of reading books other than textbooks. Students could understand how reading brings multiple benefits. The facilitator discussed on how reading brings emotional balance, maturity, ideas and understanding of human nature and behaviour. He also gave a list of books that change the ways of thinking and better perspective to life. The session was highly motivational to the students.

The second session was for improving the conversation skill of the students. Mr. Mohana Sundaram introduced different contexts to the children and guided them to enact and speak. The students practised the yes/ no questions and its responses without any inhibition in the given contexts. Maximum students took part in the role play. The learners learned the usage without explaining any grammar rules. The facilitator also introduced

a technique to teach one of the quotations by Mahatma Gandhi. He wrote the quote on the blackboard and rubbed off the words one by one. The students could memorise the words and they could reproduce it without difficulty. Mr. Mohana Sundaram also reminded the students about the importance of reading newspaper and books.

Ms. Vinija concluded the programme by introducing some 'energizing games' to the students. She started with a vocabulary game 'Four Letter Word' in which the students were asked to build up new words from a four letter word by changing any of the letter in each steps. The word 'TIME' was given and the students interestingly started to construct words from it. Time - Lime - Like- Lake- Make- Take- Fake - Fade... it went on like this. The students congratulated the winners with a rhythmic clap. Ms. Vinija introduced them with different claps and the session ended up with an energy packed 'Michael Jackson Clap'.

6. Post-Dinner Workshop on Classroom Activities for Rural Learners

P.P. Hareendran Resource Person, ELTIF, Cheruvanchery Kuthuparamba, Kannur Dt.

Why English language teaching does not attain the desired effect/ ELTIF believes that one main reason is the formal, rigid and distanced approach of the teachers to the learners, study materials and the classroom techniques. If teachers were able to be less formal, more informal in their dealings in the classroom, the better would be the learning outcome. If this is the case with teaching-learning, the same is applicable to teacher training as well—ELTIF believes so. That's why, there used to be informal get together for discussing issues, at every conference.

Last year, at the ELTIF conference at RIESI

Bangalore, the post-dinner workshop session lasted till midnight. It was something really surprising and exciting to those who participated for the first time. This year also, we had such an informal discussion. We met in front of at the PWD guest house where most of the invitees and participants were staying. The session began by 9 and went on till 11.30 p.m. We were about 15—teachers, trainers and researchers. Practical problems and their solutions were projected in the form of "it works in my classroom".

Black coffee and snacks kept the discussion lively. Again, for the first timers, it was something of a great surprise.

7. Conference as a Student-Event

Valsan Panoli Secretary, ELTIF, Thalassery, Kannur Dt.

The conference-cum-workshops proved the merits of the joint efforts by Christ College and ELTIF. The whole of the Department of English put in a lot of efforts to make it a grand success. All faculty members were engaged in one thing or the other.

What ELTIF has to comment on the meticulous and dedicated work-sharing of the students is that it was really commendable. The student volunteers worked smoothly like a well-oiled engine, without any friction or jerk. They were

in their uniform everywhere—from the reception counter to the certificate distribution counter. They hardly took rest. On the second day, they reached the venue early in the morning, so that it was possible that the parallel presentation sessions were arranged in four rooms.

ELTIF expresses its sincere thanks to the Management, Principal, faculty of the Department of English and its students for the cooperation and support.