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(A Peer-Reviewed Journal)

The role of phonetics in teaching ESL learners – Developing reading skills in English – Promoting EFL writing through ICT integration – History and current status of CALL – Need for a standardized test that reflects LSRW skills – Pair work and group work for enhancing English vocabulary

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# *The Journal of English Language Teaching (India)*

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The English Language Teachers' Association of India was founded on August 7, 1974 by the late Padmashri S. Natarajan, a noted educationist of our country.

## **Periodicity**

The Journal of English Language Teaching (The JELT) is published six times a year: in February, April, June, August, October and December.

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Articles on ELT are welcome. Share your ideas, innovations, experiences, teaching tips, material reviews and resources on the net with your fellow professionals.

Length : About 1500 words for theoretical articles and for others about 450 words.

There should be an abstract in about 100 words at the beginning and all the necessary information about all the references quoted.

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- To help teachers interact with educational administrators on matters relating to the teaching of English.
- To disseminate information in the ELT field among teachers of English.
- To undertake innovative projects aimed at the improvement of learners' proficiency in English.
- To promote professional solidarity among teachers of English at primary, secondary and university levels and
- To promote professional excellence among its members in all possible ways.

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Our consultancy services offer Teacher training packages and organize bi-monthly meetings on current ELT themes relevant to the Indian context.

We host annual conferences and regional conferences on specific areas relevant to the ELT scenario today. Delegates from all over the country as well as the world outside participate in them, present papers and conduct workshops.

***The Journal of English Language Teaching (India)***

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- |           |  |   |
|-----------|--|---|
| <b>2</b>  | Editorial  |   |
| <b>3</b>  | The Role of Phonetics in Teaching ESL Learners   | <i>Komali Prakash</i>                   |
| <b>7</b>  | Developing Reading Skills in English: The Role of Motivation and Attitude                      | <i>Binu Zachariah</i>                   |
| <b>13</b> | Promoting EFL Writing Through ICT Integration with Special Focus on Electronic Writing in Oman | <i>Jayaron Jose<br/>Mohammed Abidin</i> |
| <b>25</b> | The History and the Current Status of Computer Assisted Language Learning                      | <i>M.S. Xavier Pradheep Singh</i>       |
| <b>36</b> | ELT in India: Need for a Standardized Test that Reflects LSRW Skills                           | <i>Melissa Helen</i>                    |
| <b>41</b> | Pair Work and Group Work: A Way to Enhance English Vocabulary                                  | <i>V. Srilatha</i>                      |
| <b>48</b> | Speaking Activity Playback Performance   | <i>K. Elango</i>                        |

# Editorial

Welcome to this issue of our journal – we are sure you have been looking forward to getting your copy and reading the articles. You will find four short articles and two longer ones, both of which deal with technology-based teaching and learning. Of course, you have the regular feature ‘Speaking Activity’ (see page 48). We would also like you to look at the first announcement about our next annual conference to be held in June-July 2016 in Hyderabad. The theme and sub-themes (provisional) have been listed with a view to enabling you to prepare yourself with a well planned paper and presentation. We hope to see you and your friends at the conference. We would appeal to you to renew your membership if it has already expired or is due to expire soon. We would also appeal to you to enroll your friends and institutions as long-term members of ELTAI to make us serve you better.

The first article by Komali Prakash discusses the essential role of English phonetics, both segmental and suprasegmental features, in teaching English to ESL learners. An awareness of these features, it is argued, is necessary for making the learners get and appreciate the rhythm of the English language. She asserts “with confidence that RP is more a means to an end than an end in itself.” In the next article, Binu Zachariah discusses some of the essential, theoretical aspects of reading as a skill and relates these to learners’ motivation to read as well as their attitudes towards reading, both in their mother tongue and in English. Towards the end of the article, the author suggests that learners may be appropriately guided to read at their reading ability levels if only the language teacher “can somehow manage to break free from the constraints of the syllabus and the curriculum.” We hope teachers of English manage to do this.

Next comes the first of the two longer papers mentioned earlier. In this paper, Jayaron Jose and Mohammed Jafre Zainol Abidin argue for the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in teaching EFL writing. They report their findings of a research study carried out with EFL learners in the Sultanate of Oman using ICT tools such as online forum discussions (OFDs) and blogging to find out their effect on the Omani learners’ writing output. They report a favourable attitude towards electronic writing and its positive effect on their EFL writing.

The paper that follows is by Xavier Pradheep Singh and it is a kind of state-of-the-art article surveying the history of Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and presenting an overview of its current status. In his paper, Xavier has attempted to trace the various trends in CALL over six decades with a view to helping language ESL/EFL teachers to improve their classroom practices and support their learners in their learning of English. Three phases or stages in the history of CALL have been identified and discussed, i.e. Structural CALL, Communicative CALL and Integrative CALL.

The first of the two remaining articles is by Melissa Helen and she raises a very relevant and critical issue, namely the wide range of English proficiency among school leavers and graduates in India and the absence of a standardized proficiency test at the national level comparable to TOEFL and IELTS. This is the need of the hour, she argues strongly, and rightly so, although at least some ELT experts, if not many, might question the soundness of such a proposal. The last article by Srilatha discusses an experiment conducted for teaching vocabulary, particularly synonyms, antonyms and one-word substitutes, through pair and group work activities and reports positive learning outcomes.

Wishing you a professionally satisfying reading experience,

**P. N. Ramani, Editor**

# The Role of Phonetics in Teaching ESL Learners

**Komali Prakash**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Phonetics is usually regarded as a subject by itself and teachers of English consider it a tool in accent neutralization at the most. In this context, this paper shows the essential role of phonetics in the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL) with focus on segmental (phonemes) and suprasegmental (stress, accent, rhythm and intonation) features. For teachers, who have had a good model of English pronunciation in their growing years, the awareness may be intuitive and the features may have become part of their language. But for the others, who teach ESL, learning the nuances of phonetics may be considered a part of their continuing professional development (CPD).*

## **Introduction**

Most often, the English teacher's pronunciation becomes the only model that students adopt. This puts a great onus on the teacher. It is here that training in phonetics will stand them in good stead. A teacher trained in phonetics will be able to pronounce the words correctly, using the right rhythm and intonation in their rendering of a poem or a prose piece. This paper examines how knowledge of phonetics helps both the teacher and the learners.

## **The Role of Phonetics (Phonemics) in Making Speech Intelligible**

For all second language learners of English, there are some areas where they are likely to go wrong. It behoves the teacher to identify these problematic areas and correct them. Unless students feel the necessity to learn something, they will not be motivated

enough to learn it. They should be made aware of the lacunae in their pronunciation, so that they become eager to fill those lacunae. It is the responsibility of the teacher to show the students how certain sounds are missing in a person's speech and how they might try to substitute them by using other sounds, thereby making their speech unintelligible. If the teacher is familiar with phonetics she can take the time to prepare phoneme inventories of the students' mother tongue and compare them with the sounds of English (Received Pronunciation). This will also help the teacher adopt a comparative approach while teaching the sounds of English. One possibility is to make the students refer to the list of all the sounds in English and make them read example words given for each sound. This exercise will also show where the student is going wrong and

teaching material may be prepared accordingly. If the students are given adequate practice, they are likely to acquire the correct sounds in a very short period.

### **The Role of Phonetics (Intonation) in Communication**

Intonation has a communicative function and, as such, knowledge of intonation is essential in discourse, too. It shows the speaker's purpose in saying something: whether he is telling, requesting, asking, ordering, apologizing, greeting or thanking a listener. Usually a falling tone denotes 'speaker-dominance' and a rising tone indicates 'speaker-deference'; this means that the speaker does not know and so asks, does not have authority and so requests, etc. Intonation is employed to present ideas and information in utterances and conversations. Similarly, a conversation is governed by interactional tactics, i.e. by turn taking norms. Participants in a conversation evaluate each other's utterances to judge the right time when the speaker hands over the floor, and the listener takes his turn. Through intonation the speaker can deduce what is shared knowledge (given information) or what is a new piece of information.

Intonation also helps indicate if a sentence is complete or if there is something to follow. A falling tone has an implication of finality and a rising tone, an implication of non-finality. Even in the reading of a prose passage, intonation plays an important role. The essence of a passage is conveyed to the students only if it is read employing all the

rules of intonation. Usually, finding the tone group boundaries is quite easy and the teacher may not make a mistake in that. When it comes to tones, the low-rise tone is oratorical and is the usual tone employed for reading aloud. But if a passage is read with a wrong tonic and tone, it may not have a great appeal to the students, and they may lose interest in the text. But, by using the right tones on the correct syllable along with other prosodic and paralinguistic features like voice quality, tempo, and facial expressions and gestures, the teacher can make the reading of a prose piece lively and absorbing.

Apart from this, knowledge of different tones and attitudinal meanings associated with each tone should be taught to students. A person's personality, his upbringing, his psychology and so much more is revealed through what he says. In other words, intonation is an indicator of his character and personality; as Tench (1996) puts it, what matters is not what someone says, but how he says something.

### **The Role of Phonetics (stress, accent and rhythm) in Teaching Rhymes and Poetry**

One of the most commonly taught rhymes at school is **Twinkle, twinkle, little star**. Most often, the significance of the segmental features, word stress and rhythm which contribute to the musical quality of the rhyme are overlooked. English has, what is called, a stress-timed rhythm. Therefore, when it is read with syllable-timed rhythm (as most of the Indian languages have syllable-timed rhythm), it sounds un-English.



ˈTwinˈkle ˈtwinˈkle ˈlitˈtle ˈstar  
How ɪ ˈwɒnˈder ˈwʌt ˈju ˈɑː  
ˈʌp ˈɑːbʊv ˈðe ˈwɜːld ˈso ˈhaɪ  
ˈLiːk ˈɑː ˈdiːɑːmɒnd ˈɪn ˈðe ˈskaɪ.

As shown above, each syllable is given the same emphasis, which results in a syllable-timed rhythm. It suppresses the original rhythmic characteristic of the English language which has to be brought out by the varying degrees of stress carried by syllables. The rhythm of English is mainly a matter of syllables and stresses. These two operate together to give the language the rhythmic drive that it naturally has. Only some syllables are produced with extra energy, and there is a regularity of these stressed syllables. In other words, in the English language, stress plays a dominant role. The desirable rendering should be as follows:

ˈTwɪŋkl ˈtwɪŋkl ˈlɪtl ˈstɑː  
ˈHaʊ I ˈwɒndə ˈwʌt ju ˈɑː  
ˈʌp ɑːbʊv ðe ˈwɜːld so ˈhaɪ  
ˈLiːk ɑː ˈdiːɑːmɒnd ˈɪn ðe ˈskaɪ.

This rhyme has been shown as a simple example but it is true of any poem in literature. Meter, whether in music or poetry, is a way of organizing rhythm. In other words, meter is a way of organizing syllables and stresses resulting in a recurring pattern – a pattern in which the stressed syllables are perceived as beats and the weak syllables as off-beats between the

beats. In a metrical poem, the most likely place for beats to occur is on the stressed syllables. Most kinds of verse in English are in stress meter where the stress rhythm of the language dominates the syllabic rhythm. Thus, the number of syllables between beats varies even as the number of beats remains constant.

Nursery rhymes, popular ballets and other kinds of poems have four-beat meters. In most of the poems, the number of unstressed syllables between stressed syllables is consistently one or two. Although the stress-timed nature of English rhythm means that we can squeeze and compress the unstressed syllables into a shorter time so as to maintain the isochrony of stressed syllables, it puts a strain on the reader if there are more than two syllables. It is here that the knowledge of rhythm is essential for a teacher of English. They should know which syllable is stressed and which is unstressed. A non-native speaker teacher needs to acquire this awareness. When we learn to speak English, it is not just a matter of learning only the sounds of the consonants and vowels but also internalizing the use of muscles in the speech organs in a certain way so as to produce a sequence of sounds. Just as one learns activities like swimming or playing the piano, one has to learn the unique rhythm of English speech, which is different from the rhythms of other languages. All languages have their distinctive rhythm and each language has its own way of harnessing the energy of the body.

The purpose of teaching English rhymes and poems to students is to make them familiar with the rhythm of English. Poetry, in particular, intensifies and regularizes the natural rhythm so as to make it possible to experience beats and hence the study of poetry cannot exclude this rich experience. The ESL teacher may use online resources for teaching stress, rhythm and intonation (e.g., <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/stories-and-poems>).

### Conclusion

This paper examines how awareness of phonetics, especially rhythm and intonation, enriches the teaching of English. RP (Received Pronunciation) provides the teacher and student a good model as it is most widely researched and in which there is abundant instructional material available. Questions may be raised as to why include RP and who speaks RP. With years of experience in learning and teaching English to Indian and foreign students, I can say with confidence that RP is more a means to an end than an end in itself.

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# Developing Reading Skills in English: The Role of Motivation and Attitude

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Language skills in English have become more important today than ever before. The need for proficiency in English is quite pronounced in the educational field and also at the workplace. In order to cater to this demand, institutions are giving more importance to communication skills today. The onus of turning out students who possess good skills in English is on the English language teacher. But often, the issue of a learner's motivation to learn English is not adequately addressed. This paper attempts to create a general awareness with regard to concepts of motivation and learners' attitudes towards English. The paper looks at these issues with regard to reading. It discusses certain theoretical aspects of reading before focusing on motivation and attitude.*

## **Introduction**

In our routine life, we're involved in various forms of reading. These include, but are not limited to, serious academic reading, reading for entertainment, glancing at newspaper and magazine headlines to know whether the article is worth reading, reading aloud in class or elsewhere and looking at schedules. From a cognitive point of view, Day and Bamford concisely define reading as "the construction of meaning from a printed or written message" (2012, p.12). The meaning thus constructed is relative to individual readers. The individual reader cannot be expected to see or understand only that meaning which the author intends. Rather, the reader is using his knowledge, experiences, values, beliefs, etc. with regard to what he reads. Tickoo argues that "efficient reading is not just finding or gathering meaning from the printed page;

it often lies in creating personal meanings in interacting with the message on the page or the screen. Good readers arrive at their own best meanings by making use of the most effective and economical means, that is, those that demand minimal investment of time and energy to produce maximal gains" (2010, p.22). Thus, reading is an active process that involves the reader, the text and meaning making.

## **Reading as Interaction**

From a theoretical perspective, there are several models that try to explain the reading process. Two prominent ones in this regard are the bottom-up model and the top-down model. The bottom-up model of reading is a conventional view of reading according to which readers are mostly passive receivers of whatever a text provides. Meaning here primarily exists within the text

and the reader is expected to decode this. The reader has to decode the letters, symbols and other linguistic features on the written page and convert these to their auditory equivalents so as to make sense of the text. Though it is true that words and other formal features of the language are required to comprehend a written text, the bottom-up theory has often been criticized for its over-reliance on the formal structure and for not considering the reader as an active player.

The top-down model, based on a cognitive perspective, came as a counter to the bottom-up theory. Here it is the reader and not the text that is at the centre of the reading process. While interacting with the text, the reader makes certain assumptions and hypotheses, confirms or even rejects these hypotheses, makes new assumptions and proceeds with the text in this fashion. This theory of reading brings into play the reader's prior knowledge or schema. It lays stress upon the interactive nature of reading and the constructive nature of comprehension. While this theory may have gained prominence, it is also important to note that it is not possible to discard the bottom-up model completely, for without adequate knowledge and understanding of the form and structure of the language, readers cannot link the written symbols to their spoken equivalents.

There is also the metacognitive view of reading which focuses on the control readers execute on their ability to understand a text. Metacognition lays stress on what a reader is thinking about even as he is reading. That

includes many aspects like identifying the purpose of the reading before reading, identifying the form or type of the text before reading, projecting the author's purpose for writing the text (while reading it), choosing to skim, scan or read in detail, and making continuous predictions about what will occur next, based on information obtained earlier, prior knowledge and conclusions obtained in the previous stages.

An individual might have several reasons for reading. This varies from reading an advertisement, a lecture note, an application form, a map and a telephone directory to reading a legal document, the schedule of trains leaving a particular railway station or the label on a processed food packet. The way we read each one of these is influenced by our purpose for reading. For example, the quick scanning of the telephone directory to find a specific piece of information is entirely different from the careful attention paid to each word in a legal document.

Unlike the reading done in a second language classroom, where the focus is often on things like sentence structure, pronunciation, grammar, and so on, in all the examples mentioned earlier, reading is undertaken so as to obtain something—information, facts, ideas and enjoyment from the material. This, in short, is the message that the reader attempts to comprehend. The term 'message' is an important component in the communication process. It is something that is transmitted from the sender/encoder to the receiver/decoder. The writer here is the encoder who

has a message which may be an idea, an argument or facts which he wants to share. For this the message must be encoded, i.e., put into words. Once it is encoded, it becomes a text and is now available to the reader who decodes the message which enters his mind and communication occurs.

This is too simplistic and problematic too, because here it is assumed that the reader is by and large passive by nature and accepts the message/text in its entirety. We know that not all meaning in the text is understood by the reader in the manner the writer intends. The reader brings into play his values, beliefs, knowledge, culture and ideologies, all of which play an important role in his understanding of a text. The meaning of a text is not something that exists within a text waiting to be soaked up by the reader. Rather, the reader plays an active role in attempting to get the meaning out. If a writer and a reader share similar ideological beliefs, backgrounds, attitudes, and so on, the reader may be able to interpret the text with little conscious effort. Even here there is the danger of reading meanings in a text that are not there simply because the reader's sense of having much in common with the writer is very strong. But if the writer and reader are from different backgrounds and cultures, then the reader has to make more effort in comprehending the text. The writer too has an important role to play here, as the text is what he has formulated; it is the message that he is attempting to communicate. What is important to note is that the reader, the writer and the text are all integral

constituents of the reading process and each contributes towards the comprehension of meaning.

### **Attitude and Motivation**

All these theories and facts about reading and the reading process are no doubt relevant to get a holistic view of reading as a skill. How do we apply these when we examine reading in relation to our students? We often find that the students' 'willingness to learn' plays a decisive role in their ability or inability not only to grasp important aspects of the language, but also to show an inclination to be practically involved in the process of language learning. This is the issue of attitude and motivation.

Day and Bamford ask the following questions about students of an ESL class that I'm sure English language teachers can identify with: "Are students reluctant to read? Do they seem forced or under stress? Do they come to class with fear and trepidation? Do they read anything in the 2nd language class other than the prescribed texts?" (2012, p.3). As teachers, we know that while the answers to the first three questions are 'yes', the answer to the last question is by and large 'no'.

Both attitude and motivation are important affective factors in the development of reading skills. Attitude is defined as "a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor" (Day and Bamford, 2012, p.22). It is a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to a

person, event, action, etc. But attitudes can be changed. For a language teacher, it is important at the very outset to know and understand the sources of student attitudes towards second language reading. We can begin by looking at students' general attitude with regard to first language reading. Studies have shown that learners with a positive attitude towards reading in their respective mother tongues are more likely to have a similar attitude towards second language reading than those for whom reading in the first language is not so important.

The family and home atmosphere also have a role to play here. Often those learners who see their parents, siblings and others at home engaged in reading activities are bound to value the importance of reading. It is also unfortunate that at times our educational system and we who are enmeshed in this system as teachers end up changing a learner's positive attitude towards learning to a negative one. It is widely believed among teacher trainers that given an option between choosing skill development and promoting positive attitudes, teachers often prefer the former. We feel that skills are more essential for learning than the attitudes students exhibit towards learning. We forget that without a positive attitude all the skills that we try to impart are not going to be fully acquired. The second language classroom environment too determines a learner's attitude. A learner's satisfactory experiences and feelings in the classroom with classmates, materials, activities, tasks and

also the teacher can help in shaping a positive attitude towards reading.

There is a general tendency to view both attitude and motivation as belonging to the same plane. Though both these can be attributed to the behaviours and actions of an individual, there are differences. Franken argues that the study of motivation has traditionally been concerned with the arousal, direction and persistence of behaviour (1988, p.3). To put it bluntly, motivation is what makes an individual do or not do something. From a teacher's point of view, there is a particular cognitive model which argues motivation as having two components—expectations and values. It is important to note that people generally undertake those tasks which they expect to be accomplished, while tending to avoid those which they think cannot be accomplished. Likewise, they do things which they value and avoid things that have little or no value for them, even if they expect they can do these.

If we apply this understanding to the realm of reading, we can see that unless learners have a reasonable expectation that they will be able to understand what they are going to read, they are less likely even to begin the task. On the other hand, if they feel that a particular reading material has great value as far as reading skills are concerned, they may actually try to read even difficult texts, because the value attached to reading overshadows the expectation that they will find it difficult to read such texts.

Along with the aspect of positive attitude,

Day and Bamford also identify a learner's socio-cultural environment as an important variable in motivating him (2012, p.29). A learner's family, friends and the society too have important roles to play in making him an interested or disinterested reader. What kind of support and encouragement is a reader getting at home? Are books valued among the peer groups? The relevance of books in the lives of a reader's near and dear ones will have an impact on his reading habit too. The very classroom environment needs to be positive so as to value and encourage reading. Such a classroom "can counteract the influence of society, family and friends if they're less than encouraging towards reading" (Day and Bamford, 2012, p. 30).

Do we have such classrooms? I'd like to refer to an actual experience. In our university, the department had initiated an entry level course for the freshers, specifically for improving their reading and writing skills. Therefore, the materials chosen for the course focused on developing students' basic academic skills. In short, the course aimed at helping students read and write without making errors. There were also students who were proficient and who felt that the materials used in the class were less challenging. One of them gave the following feedback about learners who were not very good in English: "It is expected that a person who has opted for an English Literature course is proficient in the language. If they're not, then it is up to them to reach the required standards. And if they cannot or will not, then it raises the question as to why they have opted for the course in the

first place?" A negative and discouraging mindset of this kind can be extremely detrimental to the learning environment. It becomes a roadblock in the path of a less proficient but willing learner and make him feel inferior, thereby demotivating him completely.

### **Conclusion**

The atmosphere in the classroom has to be encouraging and supportive. That includes the teacher, fellow learners, materials, teaching aids, classroom activities, etc. All these are integral elements that play important roles in facilitating the reading process. In a mixed ability classroom, reading abilities would also be varied. Low level reading abilities would also lower the learners' expectation of success and thereby lower the motivation to read. Many a time, an ESL teacher in the Indian second language classroom is constrained by the curriculum. He has to deal with the syllabus regardless of the reading abilities of the learners. If he can somehow manage to break free from the constraints of the syllabus and the curriculum, learners can be guided to read at levels appropriate to their respective reading abilities. This will go a long way in minimizing the frustration that learners feel when they are forced to read beyond their reading capabilities.

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# Promoting EFL Writing Through ICT Integration with Special Focus on Electronic Writing in Oman

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## ABSTRACT

*Students' passion for ICT devices gives educators opportunities to impart knowledge in a non-traditional manner. Also, this opens up a lot of opportunities for EFL teachers to promote electronic writing. The paper will highlight the importance of ICT in promoting EFL writing, and it will shed some light on different tools that can be employed to facilitate electronic writing. The paper tries to justify the use of ICT in promoting writing skills of EFL learners. The researchers have made use of some of the data collected through their research using ICT tools such as online forum discussions (OFDs) among EFL students in the Sultanate of Oman. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected to understand the effect of online forum discussions and blogging on the participants' EFL writing output, and the findings have been reported in this paper.*

## Introduction

Symbolic language, writing and printing are three main landmarks that have led to electronic writing in the present world of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies). Ferris (2003) states that these three historical components of communication revolutionized the way humans interact in the form of writing. Moreover, the ever evolving computer and electronic technologies of the modern high-tech world reiterates the significance of electronic writing in the lives of people from all walks of life especially businessmen, professionals, academicians, teachers and students. An outline of the evolution of writing in the form of symbolic language, writing and printing will provide the

background for this paper before reviewing the significance of ICT and electronic writing.

Symbolic language began along with the beginning of human life and culture. The ability to communicate through spoken language is the one that distinguishes humans from other living beings. However, it is limited to one's cognitive capacity and memory. It is also limited to the number of people who could listen to the spoken words prior to the use of recording system (Schmandt-Besserat, 1986). Writing has helped humans to record their ideas and to communicate them beyond the boundaries of space and time. It could enable the human not only to record what is spoken, but also to refer to what has been recorded, thereby

giving writing its features of permanence and completeness (Ferris, 2003). Third, with the printing press, writing was given its characteristics of durability and re-productivity, leading to the preservation of language. Print has codified writing and standardized the language due to mass dissemination of printed materials. It has given way to modern education where students need not depend solely on a single teacher, and it has also led to the commercialization of writing and mass publication leading directly to the industrial and electronic era that produced computers (Eisenstein, 1983; Ferris, 2002) and electronic writing is the product of the computer age.

#### **Definition: Electronic Writing in ICT**

According to Stefan (2006), the term electronic writing refers to any form of writing that takes advantage of the possibilities afforded by [Information and Communication technology (ICT)] – such as the internet, or graphics programs such as Illustrator or Photoshop, or animation / audio / interactive programs such as Flash – in their creation and presentation (p.1). But it is also the types of writing that are known by a new pattern of thinking brought on by the integration of ICT (information and communication technology) which has influenced the world, i.e. forms of writing which are done following the technical rules of the database, or that writing centrally presented as general messages spread over the internet, or writing in the particular form of “Dispositions,” that was done with the help of devices working on Global

Positioning System (GPS) relying on ICT or computer technology in writing (Chen, 2014). *McGraw Hill Dictionary of Science and Technology* (2012) defines electronic writing as “the use of electronic circuits and electron devices to reproduce symbols, such as an alphabet, in a prescribed order on an electronic display device for the purpose of transferring information from a source to a viewer of the display device” (p.26).

According to Ferris (2003) electronic writing is the cluster of writing which can be carried out *on* and *through* a network of computers. Such electronic writing consists of writing for asynchronous inter-personal interaction (as in Online Forum Discussions (OFDs), e-mail, news groups, mailing lists, etc.), writing for synchronous interpersonal interaction (as in Multi-user object oriented dimensions (MOOs), chat rooms, and Multi-user dimensions (MUDs) and the use of World Wide Web (WWW) for writing.

#### **Technology and Teaching English**

Technology has become an integral part of EFL or ESL teaching and learning in terms of all the language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. With a special emphasis on writing, Bradbury (2014) argues that teaching with technology is central to teaching writing and she found in her study that the students’ “views were changing as they worked through . . . and they moved beyond their initial fatalistic and uncritical views of technology as one of her subjects commented . . . Technology is not a foe . . . Technology is a wonderful, powerful, useful tool in engaging

students . . . technology can create another platform for nature, another way in . . . and we always need and should want another way in . . . especially when technology is the way for our . . . students” (p.56).

### **Traditional (Paper-and-Pencil/Pen) Writing Vs Electronic Writing**

With the computer age, electronic writing began to replace traditional, paper-and-pencil writing. Ever changing and advancing electronic devices started redefining traditional writing. **Table 1** summarizes the differences between traditional writing and electronic writing.

A study by Wolff (2013) found that we, as scholars and teachers, need to pay more attention to the interactivity that is embedded in and afforded by Web 2.0 applications and that a successful writing involvement with Web 2.0 applications requires an engaging interactive set of practices. and suggests that what is learned

about these practices has the potential to transform one’s understanding of writing and the teaching of writing within and outside of a Web 2.0 ecosystem. Moreover, electronic writing or documents have more varieties, attributes, efficiency and long life. They are also more persistent (difficult to destroy), and easily and quickly changeable/editable, collaborative and redundant. Further, the magnitude of electronic writing is much larger than traditional writing (one personal hard drive = 1.5 million pages) (Johnston, 1998; Pence, 2001).

Considering the significance of electronic writing in ICT and its increased relevance in the Middle East, the writer undertook the study among Omani EFL learners. The need for the study is evident from the lack of literature in the field of ICT focusing on electronic writing in EFL. Moreover, the learners are found exposed to ICT in their daily social life as well as academic life in the region.

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**Table 1: Traditional Paper-and-Pencil Writing Vs. Electronic Writing**

<b>Traditional Writing</b>	<b>Electronic Writing</b>	<b>Sources</b>
<b>Literacy</b> ● Exposition, individual thinking	<b>Orality</b> – Phatic Communication, temporal immediacy, arguments, group thinking	Ong (1982); Lee, 1996; Johanyak, 2002; Ferris & Montgomery, 1996
<b>Linearity and sequentiality</b> ● Logically arranged	<b>Connectivity</b> – no linearity (e.g. emails); Hypertext – non-linear, but dynamic and non-sequential	Gibson, 1996 Bardini, 1997
<b>Fixity</b> ● fixed & permanence ● finite alphabet	<b>Fluidity</b> ● dynamic & no permanence ● binary codes	Murray, 1985; Lanham, 1992; Bolter, 1991
<b>Passivity</b> ● solitary activity ● passive traditional writer assisted by editor or publisher	<b>Interactivity</b> ● author or writer, medium and reader ● engaging ● cyber-writer as editor and designer	Bolter, 1991; Gibson, 1996 & 1997  Ferris, 2003
<b>Quality</b> ● limited readers ● specific functions ● specialized genre with special quality	<b>Value</b> ● large reading public reader ● extensive and democratic mediums ● what one desires shared among numerous audience ● available general public	

**Research Objective and Questions**

The study was undertaken with the objective of finding out the effectiveness of using electronic writing on the quantity of EFL written output. This paper, therefore, focuses on the effectiveness of electronic writing on the linguistic quantity of EFL written output. The study also attempts to find the learners’ attitudes towards electronic writing. Based on the objective, the following research questions are answered along with their null-hypothesis.

- 1) Is there a significant difference in the quantity of words in EFL written output between before and after the electronic

writing treatment?

- 2) Is there a significant difference in the quantity of Language T-Units in EFL written output between before and after the electronic writing treatment?
- 3) Is there a significant difference in the quantity of clauses in EFL written output between before and after the electronic writing treatment?
- 4) What are the attitudes of the learners towards electronic writing?

**Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were formed to test the significance of the findings of the study.

- 1) There is no significant difference in the quantity of words in EFL written output between before and after the electronic (writing) treatment.
- 2) There is no significant difference in the quantity of Language T-Units in EFL written output between before and after the electronic (writing) treatment.
- 3) There is no significant difference in the quantity of clauses in EFL written output between before and after the electronic (writing) treatment.

### **Methodology and Study Design**

A comparative experimental study design was used. The students were enrolled in an e-learning course on Moodle. The researcher used the Forum tool on Moodle for the study. Ten topics were listed on the page for the students to write about electronically, following instructions. The topics were selected to promote argumentative writing. The topics were relevant to the learners' academic and social context. For example, the students were asked to write electronically about *students' use of mobile phone in the class, working Omani women, sports in Omani colleges*, and so on.

The participants were 28 Omani EFL learners whose mother tongue is Arabic. A pretest was administered to the students before their writing electronically using Moodle forum tool. The pretest was a writing task on a selected topic for 40 minutes, closely following the students' level exit writing exam model. After the pretest, the students were given training

for two weeks on how to use the forum tool for interactive electronic writing, and the learners were asked to involve in meaningful electronic writing for 40 minutes every Thursday for a period of one semester (10 weeks) on given topics on their own. They were given feedback on their electronic writing regularly in the form of online forum discussions. After the treatment period, a post-test was conducted following the same pretest criteria. Both quantitative (written output through tests) and qualitative (interviews) methods of data collection were used. The qualitative method enabled the researcher to understand the learners' attitudes towards electronic writing which could not be understood otherwise from the quantitative data. The quantitative data was descriptively and inferentially analyzed using SPSS, and the qualitative data was collected through semi-structured interviews. The quantitative data of the pre-test and post-test were analyzed using paired samples t-test on SPSS. The interview was recorded, transcribed, coded into main categories and subcategories, and interpreted.

### **Test Instrument**

As mentioned above, the researcher used writing tasks on selected topics based on the learners' Level Exit Exam (LEE) criteria for pretests and post-tests. The learners were given 40 minutes each for the pre-test and post-test to write about the topic argumentatively or expressing their opinions. The sample topics were *road accidents in Oman, use of telephone in classrooms*, etc.

### Writing Measure (Hirotani, 2009)

The following writing measure (Hirotani, 2009) was used to measure the quantitative

data, i.e. results of pre-test and post-test in terms of the quantity of EFL written output.

**Table 2: Writing Measure (Adapted from Hirotani, 2009)**

Category	Subcategory	Measure
Language Output	Word	Number of words
	Language Unit	Number of T-Units
	Clause	Number of Clauses

Many researchers have considered language output as the quantity of language produced in terms of number of words, language units (T-Units) and number of clauses (Hirotani, 2009). Egi (2010, p.8) defines that “tokens are number of words in a text or corpus; and types are number of different words.” A T-unit refers to “minimum terminable unit” (Nagy & Beers, 2007, p.188), which includes both an independent clause and any number of dependent clauses and, in measuring the quantity, the number of clauses is separately counted.

### Interview

A semi-structured interview was conducted with three of the participants to know their attitudes towards electronic writing in the EFL context.

### Findings

A paired Samples T-Test was conducted to compare the difference between various dependent variables in electronic writing pretest and Electronic Writing Posttest in

terms of quantity in accordance with the research questions. This article focuses only on the finding in relation to the quantity of language output as a result of electronic intervention in writing.

**Question 1:** *Is there a significant difference in the quantity of words in EFL written output between before and after electronic writing treatment?*

The paired Samples descriptive Statistics (**Table 3**) showed that there was a significant difference in the mean scores for the number of words in the pre-test (M = 191.03, SD = 74.50) and the post-test (M = 274.57, SD = 55.39);  $t(27) = -7.478$ ,  $p = <05$ ) (**Table 4**). These results suggested that electronic writing (synchronous) did have an effect on the quantity (number) of words in the written output. Particularly, the study results revealed that when Omani EFL learners were involved in electronic writing (online forum discussion synchronously), the number of words increased in their written output.



**Table 3: Descriptive statistics for the quantity of words – Paired Samples Statistics**

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Number of words (OFD Pre-test)	181.0357	28	74.50	14.08
	Number of words (OFD Post-test)	274.5714	28	55.39383	10.47

**Table 4: Statistical Test: Number of Words – Paired Samples Test**

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Words (OFD Pre-test) Words (OFD Post-test)	-93.54	66.19	12.51	-119.20	-67.87	-7.48	27	.000

**Question 2:** *Is there a significant difference in the quantity of Language T-Units in EFL written output between before and after the electronic writing treatment?*

The paired Samples Descriptive Statistics (**Table 5**) showed that there was a significant difference in the mean scores for the number of language T-Units in the pre-test (M=22.39, SD = 8.39) and the post-test (M=31.79, SD=7.94);  $t(27) = -5.51$ ,  $p =$

0.000 ( $p < .05$ ); (**Table 6**). These results suggested that electronic writing (synchronous) did have a statistically significant effect on the quantity (number) of language T-Units in the written output. Particularly, the study results revealed that when Omani EFL learners were involved in electronic writing (forum), the number of language T-Units increased in their written output.

**Table 5: Statistics: Quantity of Language T-units – Paired Samples Statistics**

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Language T-Units (OFD Pre-test)	22.39	28	8.39	1.59
	Language T-Units (OFD Post-test)	31.79	28	7.94	1.50

**Table 6: Statistical Test: Quantity of Language T-units – Paired Samples Test**

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	T-Units (Pre-test) T-Units (Post-test)	-9.39	9.02	1.70	-12.89	-5.90	-5.510	27	.000

**Question 3:** *Is there is any significant difference in the quantity of clauses in EFL written output between before and after electronic writing treatment?*

The paired Samples descriptive Statistics (**Table 7**) showed that there was a significant difference in the mean scores for the number of clauses in the pre-test (M=13.82, SD = 6.13) and the post-test (M=23.18, SD

= 8.48);  $t(27) = -5.309$ ,  $p = 0.000$  ( $p < .05$ ) (**Table 8**). These results suggested that electronic writing had a statistically significant effect on the quantity of clauses in the written output. Particularly, the study results revealed that when Omani EFL learners were involved in electronic writing synchronously, the number of clauses increased in their written output.

**Table 7: Statistics: Number of Clauses – Paired Samples Statistics**

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Clauses (OFD Pre-test)	13.82	28	6.13	1.16
	Clauses (OFD Post-test)	23.18	28	8.48	1.60

**Table 8: Statistical Test: Quantity of Clauses – Paired Samples Test**

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Clauses (OFD – Pre-test) - Clauses (OFD – Post-test)	-9.36	9.33	1.76	-12.97	-5.74	-5.31	27	.000

### **What are the attitudes of the learners towards electronic writing?**

The interview found that the participants were generally very positive about writing electronically. For example, one of the interviewees (Participant 1) said, *“I am so happy because it’s easy, and it helps to build the future so fast, and I think the other reason that makes me happy: I love electronic things.”* Another interviewee (Participant 2) remarked, *“I feel comfortable, and I feel pleasure that we used another type of writing; we changed the routine of the old type of writing which is by paper; for that I feel I used something that will ..I will get benefit.”* However, the participants felt some challenges too. One of the interviewees (Participant 3) said, *“Bad feeling. Because I lose everything, every information.”* To summarize, the interviews helped the researcher to find out themes such as motivation, newness of ICT and its challenges. Students were motivated to use the new type of writing for their passion for electronic gadgets such as computers, laptops, iPads and Smart Phones, etc. The learners also felt that electronic writing was new to them compared to the traditional paper-and-pen writing, and they felt some practical value in pursuing electronic writing. Nevertheless, the words of the interviewees conveyed that electronic writing posed some difficulties or challenges to them such as what they wrote got deleted abruptly due to their lack of computer or keyboard skills.

### **Discussions and Conclusion**

The study found that electronic writing treatment had a statistically significant effect on the EFL learners’ writing performance in terms of quantity – number of words, number of Language T-units and number of clauses. One of the reasons could be their motivation to write electronically.

The qualitative data collected through interviews was analyzed and it was found that students were more motivated to attempt electronic writing tasks interactively such as online forum discussions in EFL teaching and learning for its newness and students’ liking for electronic gadgets such as smart phones, tablets and laptops. The learners had a very positive feeling for the use of electronic writing. The interactive element in the electronic writing forum distinguished it from individual electronic writing. The learners expressed their interest to write more electronically in their ELF courses.

The researcher, therefore, recommends that educational institutions in Oman and in the Middle East should incorporate ICT in EFL teaching and learning more effectively. Teachers and students should be given due training in the use of keyboard typing, LMSs (Learning Management System) such as Moodle and Blackboard. This will not only encourage the learners’ ELL (English Language Learning), but also equip them to meet ICT demands at the workplace.

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# The History and the Current Status of Computer Assisted Language Learning

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## **ABSTRACT**

***Researchers and practitioners of Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) must have a thorough understanding of the field and its history for successful implementation of technology in ESL learning. This paper attempts to trace the history of CALL over the past six decades and discusses its current status. The awareness of various paradigms of CALL will enable ESL teachers and researchers to improve their classroom practices.***

**Keywords: CALL; History of CALL.**

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is a broad, well developed and diversifying field (Motteram 2013a, 177). Researchers have defined CALL in various ways. Each definition reveals some characteristics of the field. A well-accepted broad definition of CALL is “the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning” (Levy 1997, 1; Amaral 2011, 365). This definition admits the multidisciplinary nature of CALL. Psychology, Instructional Technology, Artificial Intelligence, Human-Computer Interaction, Computational Linguistics, Applied Linguistics, and Second Language Acquisition are some of the key areas that have contributed to the advancement of CALL. These areas have contributed not only “their specific body of knowledge” but also “their methodological paradigms to undertake scientific investigation” (Amaral 2011, 371).

Beatty offers another definition which

accommodates the changing nature of CALL: “any process in which a learner uses a computer and, as a result, improves his or her language” (2003, p.7). Hubbard raises two questions about this definition: “What do we mean by ‘computer’? And what do we mean by ‘improve’?” (2009, p.1). He himself provides answers to these questions and his answers highlight the varying nature of CALL. According to him, computer “does not include simply the canonical desktop and laptop devices” but also “the networks connecting them, peripheral devices associated with them and a number of other technological innovations such as PDAs (personal digital assistants), mp3 players, mobile phones, electronic whiteboards and even DVD players, which have a computer of sorts embedded in them” (2009, pp.1–2). To the second question, Hubbard identifies learning efficiency, learning effectiveness, access, convenience, motivation, and institutional efficiency as areas that CALL

attempts to improve (2009, p.2). Hence, CALL may involve any technological device to improve any of the areas mentioned above. This “complex, dynamic and quickly changing” (Hubbard 2009, 1) nature of CALL makes it “both exciting and frustrating as a field of research and practice” (Hubbard 2009, 1).

Egbert’s definition of CALL recognises the context and the method of using computer technologies in learning a language. According to him, CALL means “learners learning language in any context with, through, and around computer technologies” (2005, p.4). The context or environment of learning a language may vary from classrooms, to computer centres, language labs, homes, cafes and similar public places, the Web and Mobile computing (Hubbard, 2014).

Though the phrase Computer Assisted Language Learning implies that the field is all about learning a language using computers, it encompasses all areas associated with the use of computers in language learning, teaching and testing. So, a vast array of areas such as Material Development, Learner Training, Language Testing, Assessment, Evaluation and Teacher Training comes under CALL. The definitions and descriptions of CALL mentioned above bring out the following characteristics of the field. CALL is a multidisciplinary field; it is complex, dynamic and quickly changing; it involves various contexts and methods; and it encompasses various activities associated with learning a language using computers.

## **History of CALL**

Using computers in language learning dates back to the early 1960s when prestigious universities used mainframe computers for language learning (Motteram, 2013b, p.5; Levy, 1997; Davies et al., 2012). Since then, CALL has developed into “a symbiotic relationship between the development of technology and pedagogy” (Gorjian, Hayati, and Pourkhoni, 2013, p.35; Stockwell, 2007, p.118). By the early 1980s, using computers in language learning has become a widespread practice throughout America and Europe. It was at this moment that CALL emerged as a distinct field as CALL-themed conferences and professional organisations accompanied the advent of the personal computer in the 1980s. Many researchers have hitherto attempted to trace out the evolution of CALL and have proposed different typologies of CALL (Levy, 1997, pp.13–46; Sanders, 1995, pp.6–14; Graham, 1997, pp.27–48; Davies, 2012; Butler-Pascoe, 2011, pp.17–27; Delcloque, 2000; Warschauer, 1996; Warschauer and Healey, 1998, pp.57–58; Kern, Ware, and Warschauer, 2008, pp.281–282; Bax, 2003, pp.14–19; Warschauer, 2004, pp.20–21).

Of all typologies proposed by researchers, two stand unique: One by Warschauer (1996, 2000, and 2004) and the other by Bax (2003). Both typologies divide the history of CALL based on phases rather than approaches. Warschauer’s typology is based on the three phases in the history of CALL, such as Structural CALL, Communicative CALL and Integrative CALL. But Bax reassessed the history of CALL and proposed

a new typology in terms of three different approaches to CALL, such as Restricted CALL, Open CALL and Integrated CALL. Since Warschauer's typology is chronologically divided, this paper takes it into account in tracing the history of CALL over the past six decades.

### **1. Structural CALL**

The first phase in the history of CALL, labelled earlier as 'Behaviouristic CALL' and later as 'Structural CALL' by Warschauer (Warschauer, 1996, p.5; Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p.59; Lee, 2000; Fotos and Browne, 2004, p.5; Warschauer, 2004, p.20), was envisaged in the 1960s and executed in the 1970s and the 1980s. CALL, in this phase, was considered a subset of the broad, all-embracing field of Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI). The psychological principles of Skinner (1957) provided a strong footing for Structural CALL. Skinner's operant-conditioning model of linguistic behaviour, which leaned excessively on positive reinforcement, developed a structure for the learning process providing feedback, repeated reinforcement, branching and self-pacing (Butler-Pascoe, 2011, p.17). This model of CALL involved repetitive language drills such as "dialogues and pattern drills designed to condition learners to produce automatic, correct responses to language stimuli" (Kern and Warschauer, 2000, p.3). These exercises were easy to program on the computer because of their "systematic and routine character" and "their lack of open-endedness" (Kenning and Kenning, 1990, p.53; Taylor and Gitsaki, 2004,

p.132). They also stressed imitating the correct linguistic structure, reflecting the strong influence of the school of behaviourism (Ozkan, 2011, p.12).

Structural CALL viewed computer as mechanical tutor (Warschauer, 1996, p.3; Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p.57; Ahmed 2004, p.24; Gündüz, 2005, p.198) "ideal for carrying out repeated drills since the machine does not get bored with presenting the same material and . . . can provide immediate non-judgemental feedback" (Warschauer, 1996, p.3; Pim, 2013, p.36). Founded on this notion, many CALL tutoring systems were designed for the large mainframe computers which were prevalent at that time. One such best-known tutorial system was the PLATO (Programmed Logic for Automated Teaching Operations) introduced at the University of Illinois, USA (Butler-Pascoe, 2011, p.17; Egbert et al., 2011, p.17). The PLATO system ran on its own special hardware containing a central computer and terminals (Warschauer, 1996, p.3; Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p.57). Based on the grammar-translation method (Butler-Pascoe, 2011, p.17), it included vocabulary drills, brief grammar explanations and drills, and direct translation tests at various intervals (Warschauer, 1996, p.3; Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p.57). The PLATO was not an exclusive CALL venture but a "monumental effort that produced significant material in a wide range of academic disciplines, including foreign language, that continued for years and was eventually used in institutions across the country" (Sanders, 1995, p. 9).

## **2. Communicative CALL**

The late 1980s and the early 1990s witnessed Structural CALL being challenged by two significant factors: first, the rejection of behaviouristic approaches to language learning at both theoretical and pedagogical levels; and secondly, the greater prospects bestowed on language learning by the introduction of personal computers (Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p.57; Warschauer, 1996, p.6; Lee, 2000; Gündüz, 2005, p.199). Meanwhile, a crucial paradigm shift occurred in second language teaching that resulted in Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Egbert et al., 2011, p.21), which emphasised the functional use of language and attempted to foster learners' communicative competence. Against this backdrop, "a demand for interactive and communicative uses of the computer for language teaching" evolved in the second language teaching scene (Egbert et al., 2011, p.22). Hence, this phase of CALL is referred to as Communicative CALL by researchers (Warschauer, 1996, p.4; Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p.57; Warschauer, 2004, p.20; Fotos and Browne, 2004, p.5; Ahmed, 2004, p.24)

Proponents of Communicative CALL downplayed the drill and practice method of Structural CALL as it did not promote authentic communication. Rather, they accentuated an intense focus on the use of language forms than on the forms themselves, the implicit teaching of grammar, encouraging learners to produce original utterances instead of manipulating prefabricated language forms, and

ultimately using the target language predominantly (John, 1984, p.52; Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p.57; Lee, 2000; Warschauer, 1996, p.5). All these ideas were originally proposed by Underwood, one of the chief advocates of Communicative CALL, in his seminal work (1984). Other pioneering contributions of this phase include the ones by (Higgins and Johns, 1984) and Ahmad et al. (1985). Many key professional organisations, such as the Computer Assisted Language Instruction Consortium (CALICO) in the United States and the European Association for Computer Assisted Language Learning (EuroCALL) in Europe were established during this period.

Communicative CALL corresponded to cognitive theories which regarded learning as "a process of discovery, expression, and development" (Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p.57) and as "a cognitive process where learners actively generate and transform knowledge" (Ozkan, 2011, p.12). Its main concern was not what learners did on the computer but what they did with each other while working on the computer (Gündüz 2005, p.199). Through such interaction, according to Warschauer (2000), "learners can develop language as an internal mental system" (p.65). Thus, during this phase, the computer was viewed as a stimulus whose intention was not to have learners discover the right answer but to foster discussion, writing, and analytical and critical thinking (Warschauer, 1996, p.5). Software developed during this Communicative CALL phase offered skill

practice but in non-drill format. Programmes such as text reconstruction, paced reading and language games were some examples. In these programmes, computers possessed the right answers but the process of discovering the answers involved a reasonable amount of learner choice, control and interaction (Warschauer, 1996, p.5). Another model of computer as tool was also popular during this phase. In this model, computer programmes, though not developed specifically for language learning, were utilized to make learners understand language (Warschauer, 1996, p.5). Examples of computer as tool include word processors, spelling and grammar checkers, and concordances.

### **3. Integrative CALL**

By the turn of the 1990s, many educators realised that Communicative CALL had failed to live up to its potential since computers were used in a disconnected manner and thereby made contributions to marginal rather than to central elements of the language teaching process (Kenning and Kenning, 1990, p.90; Warschauer, 1996, p.5). The Critics of Communicative CALL found that teaching compartmentalised skills or structures was not beneficial. Rather, they along with educators attempted to develop models that integrated various aspects of language learning process.

Many language teachers, at this juncture, relocated their stance from a cognitive approach to a more socio-cognitive approach, which placed greater emphasis on language use in authentic social contexts

(Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p.58). Consequently, language learning was viewed as “a process of apprenticeship or socialization into particular discourse communities” (Warschauer and Meskill, 2000, p.306). Language learners need to be given maximum opportunity for authentic social interaction, not only comprehensible input but also practice in the kinds of communication they will later engage in outside the classroom. This can be achieved through student collaboration on authentic tasks and projects while simultaneously learning both content and language. As a result, task-based, project-based, and content-based approaches to language learning came to be proposed. All these approaches sought to assemble learners in authentic environments and to integrate their various skills of language learning and use. This led to a new perspective on technology and language learning, which was named Integrative CALL (Warschauer, 1996, p.6; Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p.58), a perspective which seeks to integrate language skills as well as technology more fully into the language learning process. For Kern and Warschauer, this change stems from both theoretical and technological developments: “Theoretically, there has been the broader emphasis on meaningful interaction in authentic discourse communities. Technologically, there has been the development of computer networking, which allows the computer to be used as a vehicle for interactive human communication” (Kern and Warschauer, 2000, p.11). Thus, the second generation web launched in the first decade of the 21st



century had integrative capabilities perfectly matched to the new era of integrative approaches to language teaching (Butler-Pascoe, 2011, p.24).

In an integrative approach, learners learn to use an array of technological tools in an ongoing process of language learning and use, rather than visit the computer lab once a week for isolated exercises (Warschauer and Healey, 1998, p.58). With a wide range of powerful web tools, learners are engaged in collaborative learning, interacting with authentic audiences that fosters their comprehension and production (Butler-Pascoe, 2011, p.24). In other words, learners have the opportunity to interact not just with the tutor computer but also with “their peers, teachers and other people all around the world” (Ozkan, 2011, p.13).

### **Current Status of CALL**

According to Warschauer (1996, 2000, and 2004), the three phases of CALL do not fall into a linear timeline. As each new phase emerges, the previous phases too continue to coexist. The commencement of a new phase “does not necessarily entail rejecting the programs and methods of a previous phase; rather the old is subsumed within the new. In addition, the phases do not gain prominence in one fell swoop, but like all innovations, gain acceptance slowly and unevenly” (Warschauer, 1996). The following table summarises the three phases of CALL based on Warschauer’s typology (Warschauer, 1996; Warschauer, 2000, p.64; Warschauer, 2004, p.11; Taylor and Gitsaki, 2004, p.134).

Over the past few decades, CALL has transformed “from being a niche field practised by a few early adopters, to being mainstream” (Motteram, 2013c, p.6). The main drive behind this transformation is that many digital technologies have moved to the centre of daily life in many parts of the world. Their speedy adoption has expanded the means by which one connects to and communicates with the others. They have changed the sources from which people gather information. They also play important roles in many facets of life: education, work, recreation, etc. Thus, these digital technologies have become “normalised” to the extent that they are invisible, hardly even recognised as a technology, taken for granted in everyday life” (Bax 2003, 23). As a result, CALL has moved from the peripheral interest of the language teaching community to mainstream thinking, education and practice.

Due to the diversity of digital technologies, CALL has evolved to represent a set of various divisions such as Computer Mediated Communication, Blended Learning, Virtual Worlds, Gamification, etc. Further, the field has many sub-divisions such as CALL for ESP (English for Specific Purposes), CALL for EAP (English for Academic Purposes), CALL for young learners, and so on. Thus CALL is no longer a single, unified subject.

CALL has remained predominantly a practice-oriented field. Here, practice informs research and development of new technologies. All CALL studies have showed



**Table 1 : The Three Phases of CALL**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Structural CALL</b>	<b>Communicative CALL</b>	<b>Integrative CALL</b>
Duration	1970s – 1980s	1980s – 1990s	21st Century
Technology	Mainframe Computers	Personal Computers	Multimedia and Internet
English Teaching Paradigm	Grammar - Translation & Audio-Lingual	Communicative Language Teaching	Content-Based, ESP/EAP
View of Language	Structural (a formal structural system)	Cognitive (a mentally constructed system)	Socio-cognitive (developed in social interaction)
Principal Use of Computers	Drill and repetitive practice exercises	Text reconstruction, gap filling, speed reading, simulation, vocabulary games	Authentic Discourse
Principal Objective	Accuracy	Fluency	Agency
Computer	Mechanical tutor	Stimulus for talk	Tool for communication
Teacher	No role	Coordinator / planner	Facilitator
Learner	Passive recipient of language	Communicator	Active, Autonomous and Creative

“practitioners using their own networks, knowledge and resources rather than turning to classroom research for new ideas” (Stanley, 2013, p.54). The field had been the same even in the past. Many researchers have confirmed this notion. In 1977, Kemmis et al. stated, “CALL is practitioner-led as opposed to research-based” (Kemmis, Atkin and Wright, 1977, p.6). In 1977, Levy too shared a similar view: “many developers rely on their intuition as teachers rather

than research on learning” (Levy, 1997, p.4).

CALL is an established and recognised but also quickly evolving academic field (EuroCALL, 2010; Motteram, 2013c, p.5). Zhang and Barber in 2008 asserted that CALL is “maturing and heading toward a better balance between technology and thinking” (Zhang and Barber, 2008, p.xviii). They also acknowledge that technology is developing faster than our thinking

processes which, in turn, is driving forward. In such a race, CALL practitioners and researchers have learnt “to recognize and deal more effectively with the dissonance between the speed of technological development and the speed of our thinking” (Zhang and Barber, 2008, p.xviii). As a result, today more and more technologies have been integrated into classrooms “physically and pedagogically rather than being an add on” (Kern, 2013, p.92). More importantly, the computer is now seen and used as a tool to accomplish certain tasks or to communicate.

Numerous teachers’ associations across the world are aspiring to keep up with the pace of technological developments. There have emerged as technology-specialised professional associations. Wikipedia lists as many as twelve such associations: APACALL, AsiaCALL, AULC, CALICO, EUROCALL, IALLT, IATEFL, JALTCALL, IndiaCALL, LET, PacCALL, and WorldCALL (Wikipedia contributors, 2014). There are also a number of journals exclusively dedicated to the field of technology and language learning: *CALICO*, *CALL*, *International Journal of Computer Assisted Language Learning and Teaching*, *Language Learning and Technology*, *ReCALL* and *Journal of Technology for ELT*. Journals that have a more general focus on education also include articles about CALL. Recently, there has been a growth of articles in journals that address very specific domains of CALL, such as CALL for young learners (Macaro, Handley and Walter, 2012), social media in language learning, digital games, mobile

learning, virtual worlds, and so on.

All these factors make it clear that “we are now at a time in human development where digital technologies are making an increasingly significant contribution to language learning in many parts of the world” (Motteram, 2013b, p.177). Therefore, CALL can now be defined as “the full integration of technology into language learning with its three elements of theory, pedagogy, and technology playing an equally important role” (Garrett, 2009, p.730; Quoted in Kern, 2013, p.92).

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# ELT in India: Need for a Standardized Test that Reflects LSRW Skills



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## **ABSTRACT**

*This paper proposes to explore the solutions for revamping ELT against the backdrop of the MNCs and the shrinking of the world into a global village. Proficiency in English language is seen as a means of empowerment and, therefore, right from schools a number of them have initiated activity/practical/project-based teaching. However, when it comes to employability skills, the predominant learners, i.e. rural /vernacular medium students, are still left out as disadvantaged students. The paper proposes that in such a context, at the level of higher education, introducing changes at the policy level which would make it mandatory for students of all undergraduate programs to take the exam set by an All India English Language Testing Authority, which is conducted by the English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU), Hyderabad.*

## **History and Policies regarding ELT in India**

The history of the English language and its position in this multilingual country of ours is indeed both peculiar and interesting. The English language was originally introduced with a vested interest of aiding the administration. Sir Charles Wood's epoch-making **Dispatch of 1854** led to the enthronement of English as the medium of higher education.

However, the introduction and implementation of English as a medium of education has been intermittently opposed for multiple reasons by both politicians and freedom fighters including Mahatma Gandhi. On several occasions Mahatma Gandhi emphasized the mother tongue as

the medium of instruction. He said: "The babe takes its first lesson from its mother. I, therefore, regard it as a sin against the motherland to inflict upon her children a tongue other than their mother's for their mental development." Again, "The medium of instruction should be altered at once and at any cost, the provincial languages being given their rightful place. I would prefer temporary chaos in higher education to the criminal waste that is daily accumulating."

Unfortunately, the chaos continues today. After Independence and the subsequent linguistic reorganization of the states, many states began to adopt the three-language formula. There were a number of court cases filed in different states across India and arguments regarding the status of English were divergent.



The Gokak Committee appointed by the Government of India to report on the study of English in India made a number of interesting observations. The All India Council for Education recommended the adoption of the Three-Language Formula (TLF) in September 1956. This was a major attempt to arrive at a language policy for education. In 1968, the National Policy on Education (NPE) laid special focus on the study of English and other international languages. The NPE insisted that India must not only keep pace with scientific and technological knowledge, but also should contribute to it significantly. It was for this purpose that the study of English required to be strengthened. The institutions which helped in strengthening the national system of education are the University Grants Commission (UGC), the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), the Medical Council of India (MCI) and the Dental Council of India (DCI).

### **The Contemporary Scene**

For instance, in the State of Andhra Pradesh where there are about 2,800 secondary schools, the medium of instruction and examination, in all but a handful of exclusive schools in the bigger towns and cities, is the regional language. English is, no doubt, still being studied in all the schools, but as a compulsory second language. English is relegated to a period of 40-50 minutes every day. This implies a virtual elimination of English from schools which follow the regional languages as the medium of instruction. As a result, students

who have studied in the regional medium of instruction up to their high school, plus two and even graduation levels in some cases are the worst affected when it comes to their employability skills, particularly their communication skills in English.

### **Importance of English in India Today**

At this juncture, it needs be reiterated that the rate of success of students in the examinations in the regional language medium is encouraging up to a certain level. However, we are living in an era that Mahatma Gandhi did not anticipate when he said, “Who can calculate the immeasurable loss sustained by the nation owing to thousands of its young men having been obliged to waste years in mastering a foreign language and its medium, of which in their daily life they have the least use and in learning which they had to neglect their own mother tongue and their own literature?”

This is an age of tremendous and unanticipated changes ushered in by developments in science and technology, especially revolutions in the field of information technology. Students with a strong grounding in the English language have an undoubted edge over their regional medium counterparts in employment or in higher studies. Education today cannot be divorced from employment. With a few exceptions, all of us would agree that education today is intertwined with employment.

The continuation of English as an official language along with Hindi (even in the Hindi

speaking states) is tantamount to a tacit acknowledgement that the English language is 'window to the world', 'link language' and a 'language of library'. In 2008, the Government of Andhra Pradesh came up with a proposal to introduce CBSE pattern in its schools. The proposal backfired for a number of reasons. Ironically, even today, some of those who argue in favour of the vernacular medium may not be sending their own wards to those schools. Again on 7th November, 2012, *The Hindu* (School Edition, Hyderabad) carried a report titled "It will soon be Telugu versus English in Schools."

While the importance of the mother tongue cannot be undermined, the victims are the hapless students who feel demoralized, diffident and finally deprived of employment opportunities, especially after their graduation from professional courses. Teachers of the English fraternity have the onus on them to wave their magic wand and make their students as proficient as possible in the limited time allotted to them for the purpose. Unfortunately, however, frequent changes in the language policy have led to widely heterogeneous groups of learners in the classrooms in terms of their English language competency. This can be frustrating for teachers and students alike.

In order to meet the rising need for candidates with English language proficiency, variants of general ELT have paved the way for English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English for Academic Purposes (EAP), English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), and so on. In all these

variants, the purpose involved is self-evident. While attempts have been made to make English language teaching more rigorous and skill-oriented, there is a large gap between students' marks in English projected in their certificates and their actual proficiency in English. This is particularly so for students from the underprivileged and disadvantaged classes, government and rural schools. It also needs to be mentioned that students from English medium schools are not necessarily proficient in all the four skills of the language, nor do they possess a vast repertoire of vocabulary.

In many situations where emphasis in their plus two level is only on the core subjects, what has been learnt in their high school is forgotten and is undone when they go to higher education institutions. Sometimes a student from a disadvantaged group has excellent grip over the grammar of English but is unable to prove himself in the activities related to speaking, and vice versa. The differences exist in various degrees and skills. The teacher at the undergraduate level has to help the students gain confidence by developing their oral fluency in English and also help them improve their writing skills. They have the onus of imparting/improving their students' soft skills. Most universities have designed curricula which show a giant leap taken towards this goal.

#### **Need for a standardized test**

Nevertheless, a point of concern is the lack of a standardized test that truly assesses

the students' proficiency in English. While the West has IELTS, BEC and TOEFL for admission to their universities, in India we have no such tests that provide a frame of reference for assessing a student's proficiency in the English language.

The English and Foreign Languages University (Hyderabad) has designed a test under the All India English Language Testing Authority (AIELTA). The test is very different from the traditional memory-based language tests that are prevalent in the country. It is a general proficiency test in English and is not based on or linked to any prescribed school or college syllabus. The aim of this three-hour test is to determine how well an individual can use English for communicative purposes – it assesses a candidate's proficiency in reading, writing, listening, grammar and vocabulary.

This is a middle-level test and is meant to judge a candidate's ability to use English for routine purposes at the workplace and for study purposes in post-secondary education. It should serve to distinguish between excellent, adequate and average users of English in the contexts of language use mentioned above. The ability to use English as defined for this test includes accurate and contextually appropriate use of language.

We are all painfully aware of the fact that at the intermediate or secondary school level, students can easily score 80s and 90s. The syllabus and the assessment pattern aim to bail out students from the regional

media. Therefore, there is an urgent need for a new policy to be evolved where taking a skill-based test such as the one developed by AIELTA must become mandatory for all graduates.

All undergraduate programs are for a three- or four-year period. While universities should be given the freedom to design and implement their ELT programs as they deem suitable and required, students should be under obligation to take these proficiency tests at as many levels as possible. The modalities are understandably difficult, but not impossible to overcome.

The need of the hour is to conduct these tests more frequently than once in a year as it appears to be given now, and publicize it and also make it mandatory. Language teachers or some centres may be allowed to help students prepare for such exams. Familiarizing students with the pattern of the test is essential, as the results of the 2012 show that out of 57 students who took the test at the Hyderabad centre not one of them could get an A grade in Part 1 and only three got an A grade in Part 2.

### **Conclusion**

The Government of India and EFLU can explore ways of evolving a certificate that will validate the marks according to their proficiency levels. The University should make vigorous efforts to publicize this test and conduct it more frequently. Experts can be drawn from various fields to look into the modalities of making this a possibility where standards will be maintained, and the quality of the tests is retained. It is

unfortunate that many of our students, even after years of education in the English medium, require coaching to appear for TOEFL and IELTS which are mandatory for admission to foreign universities. What is more tragic is the fact even after nearly seventy years of Independence, we have not developed a standard test of English in India which could at least serve a similar purpose or be valid within the country.

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ELTAI is happy to announce its consultancy in the use of technological tools for the teaching and learning of communication skills in English. The consultancy will specifically provide resource persons for conducting teacher training workshops on virtual learning, covering primarily the use of the following tools: Virtual Classroom; Wiki; Google Drive; Google and Yahoo Groups; Blogging; Social Networking; Mobile Learning; Flipped Classroom.

ELTAI resource persons may also conduct workshops on using these tools and technological resources for developing specific language skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing, as well as teaching grammar interactively.

Institutions which require consultancy in these areas may write to Prof. S. Rajagopalan at [elta\\_iindia@yahoo.co.in](mailto:elta_iindia@yahoo.co.in) with CC to Dr. P. N. Ramani at [ramanipn@gmail.com](mailto:ramanipn@gmail.com).

# Pair Work and Group Work: A way to Enhance English Vocabulary

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## ABSTRACT

*When students are asked to speak on a given topic, they try to speak, but they may not express their views effectively due to lack of vocabulary. Owing to this, they lose confidence and hesitate to speak. Even to write a piece of composition they need to generate ideas. So they try either to escape from it or postpone it due to scarcity of appropriate words. Though it is difficult to grasp words, it has become unavoidable to the students of vernacular background to build up communicative competence. Moreover, they show reluctance to learn vocabulary in English as there is no coordination between spelling and pronunciation in many of the words. After several experiments the author felt that pair or group work was the best way to motivate the students of a heterogeneous group to enhance their communicative competence. The present article focuses on teaching vocabulary (synonyms, antonyms and one-word substitutes in particular) through either pair or group work.*

## Introduction

When learners are asked to and attempt to speak on a given topic, they are not able to express their views effectively due to lack of lack of vocabulary. Owing to this, they lose confidence and hesitate to speak. Vocabulary is the knowledge of words to communicate in different contexts. As Stahl (2005) says, "Vocabulary knowledge is knowledge; the knowledge of a word not only implies a definition, but also implies how that word fits into the world." Vocabulary is crucial even for writing (Leki & Carson, 1994; Polio & Glew, 1996). To write a piece of composition, learners need to generate ideas. So they either try to escape from the task or postpone it due to lack of appropriate words. Though it is difficult to grasp words,

it has become unavoidable to the learners of vernacular background to build their communicative competence. Moreover, they show reluctance to learn vocabulary in English as there is no coordination between spelling and pronunciation in many of the words. Fuente (2002) stresses the point that learner's interaction and negotiation plays a vital role in acquisition of vocabulary, so pair or group work seems to be the best way to motivate learners to learn new words.

Learners of a heterogeneous class who come from the vernacular background have little exposure to the target language. They are expected to speak or write on a given topic without proper training. They hesitate to speak due to lack of ideas and fear. "Ignorance coupled with fear and inhibition

obstruct the students' thinking capacity" (Lowernica, 2011). Hence they fail to reach the target. The present article focuses on teaching vocabulary (synonyms, antonyms and one-word substitutes in particular) through either pair or group work to enhance their vocabulary.

### **Background of the study**

Some learners have fluency, but when they are asked to write they make blunders because they are not aware of the spelling of the words they use. So, they hesitate to write. Some learners have subject knowledge, but they are unable to express their ideas due to lack of minimum vocabulary. Lack of exposure to English (L2) is the reason for their inability. To get rid of the fear from their mind, it is necessary to facilitate the learners to learn in their classroom. It is very difficult to learn vocabulary through formal instruction; in fact, it depends on various factors like learners' mood and understanding capacity, and also the teacher's approach to vocabulary teaching. "Vocabulary instructions should be based on a variety of teaching techniques and activities in order to cater for individual learning styles and to break the classroom routines" (Takac, 2008, p.23). Pair work with a little motivation promotes readiness to interact and learn.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Learners from the vernacular background have fear of learning vocabulary in English due to lack of consistency between spelling

and pronunciation of many of the words. Moreover, lack of exposure to the language makes them feel it is impossible to master a foreign language like English. They do not show interest to learn. So it is the teacher's responsibility to make them feel comfortable in learning new vocabulary. Pair work or group work is found easier to make them learn and memorise new words. Furthermore, they need to know synonyms and antonyms to avoid monotonous speech. Besides this, they have to learn one-word substitutes to make their speech clear and concise. They need to have good vocabulary to meet the challenges of the competitive world.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The first objective of the study is to make learners learn new words from the known words. Later, with group or pair work they learn a number of new words with their spelling, pronunciation, meaning and usage. The second objective is to make them analyze the multiple meanings of new words in different situations. The third objective is to make even the advanced learners practise the learnt words in both speech and writing.

### **Rationale of the Study**

Learning English vocabulary is difficult for L2 learners as there is no coordination between spelling and pronunciation in most of the words. So, they show reluctance towards learning. Pair work or group work is found as the best way to make the learners participate actively and learn with interest.



## Methodology

### Study Design

The present research was designed to help the learners to improve their vocabulary by making them involved completely in the process of learning. Pairs of cards and dictionaries were used in the pair work. During this activity, the learners learn new words (synonyms/antonyms; one-word substitutes) with their spelling, pronunciation, meaning and usage in different contexts. Handouts are used in the group work. In this activity learners interact and practice the learnt words. They also build up their creativity. They overcome their fear and improve their confidence level. The enhancement of their competence can also be assessed through this activity.

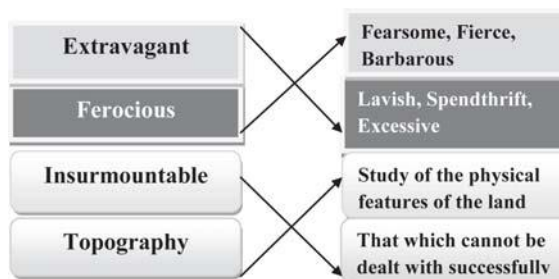
### Material

#### 1. Pairs of cards:

Fifteen pairs of cards of two colours were made. On a yellow card a new word was written and its synonyms were written on the other side of other colour card, and vice-versa. So, each one of the pair had a set of synonyms of the word on the other card and a new word on the other side whose synonyms were on the other side of the second card.

Similarly for one-word substitutes, pairs of cards were made. Two one-word substitutes to be taught were written on two separate colour cards and their “explanation” was written behind the card of the other word of the pair.

### Samples



#### 2. Dictionaries

#### 3. Handouts:

- a) Consisting of a short, familiar story or passage with the difficult words highlighted, followed by multiple choice type questions focusing on vocabulary; and
- b) Consisting of interesting pictures of different themes.

### Participants and Duration

Thirty learners, for a one-hour-and-forty-minutes class (Lab). (For pair work, if there are 60 learners, two more colour cards with the same words should be used. Based on the number of learners, their capacity and time limit, the teacher can decide the number of words to be taught and hence the number of pairs of cards).

### Procedure

#### Pair Work:

Pairs of cards were used for pair work. All the thirty cards were shuffled and distributed to the learners. They were asked to find out their partner having the synonyms. The rationale behind the two colours is to make their job easier, i.e., they need not go to

learners with similar colour cards. Dictionaries were provided to the paired learners. They were asked to write one antonym for better understanding and use the synonyms in different sentences to make them analyze the difference in meaning of those synonyms.

Similarly, to teach one-word substitutes, the learners were asked to look at the explanation and find out their partners with the key word. Then the pairs of learners were asked to use the key word (one-word substitute) in their own sentences.

### **Group Work**

Handouts were used for group activity. The learners were divided into groups (4 or 5 learners in each group). Vocabulary was taught through a reading or listening activity. Instructions were given beforehand. (For listening activity, the learners asked to read the handouts prior to listening to the text; while listening they answered the questionnaire in the handouts.) It was a reading activity here, as the handouts were printed texts. The learners read and did the task.

A second set of handouts (consisting of pictures) was given to groups of learners. They were asked to write down a few lines about at the picture using the words learnt. It encouraged their creativity. Later, the learners were asked either to read or speak out.

### **Role of the Teacher**

As “knowledge of the words may progress

from superficial to deep at various stages of learning (Laufer, 1998),” the teacher should be ready to facilitate the learners at various stages. S/he should help them in tracing their partners, if it is a difficult word by giving a clue and should be familiar with the pronunciation of the given words to help them in pronouncing the words. S/he should discuss the minute differences in meaning of the synonyms by providing examples.

The teacher should motivate the learners by setting a time limit and making them compete among the group members. S/he should monitor the learners and help them to comprehend the picture.

### **Evaluation**

The second set of handouts (consisting of pictures) was used for assessment. The learners were judged based on the number of new words used in their speech. Even their pronunciation could be assessed.

### **Results**

The learners learnt thirty new words along with their usage in different contexts. They got accustomed to the new words in the group activity. They also enjoyed the activities and found them useful in learning new words and their usage.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Some learners may not understand the minute differences among the synonyms. They may not show interest in using those words in sentences of different situations due to lack of ideas. It is difficult to get pictures for all the words to be used.

### Recommendations of the Study

- a. The teacher should monitor and encourage the learners by guiding them in using the words in different sentences.
- b. If the learners are more in number, ten pairs of cards with multiple colours should be used.
- c. Based on the level of the learners and the time available, the teacher should decide on the number of words to teach along with discussion.
- d. Class time may not be used for introducing new words, but for making the learners practise the words already learnt.
- e. If the learners make mistakes/mispronounce the words while speaking, they should not be corrected then and there, but later, and even then corrections should be made in general with the whole class.

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Members of ELTAI are free to give their views on the articles published in this journal. The letters should reach the ELTAI ([eltai\\_india@yahoo.co.in](mailto:eltai_india@yahoo.co.in)) with cc to the Editor ([ramanipn@gmail.com](mailto:ramanipn@gmail.com)) within a month from the date of publication of the journal.

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### **THEME**

Content-Based Instruction (CoBI) and Learning: Redefining the English Language Curriculum

### **SUB-THEMES**

- Recent developments in ESP
- Building academic language in/for content classrooms
- Understanding disciplinary discourses
- Using English to learn subject content
- Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) and bilingual education
- Promoting higher order thinking skills through CoBI
- Discipline-specific authentic materials for language learning
- Teaching Language through Literature
- Integrating technology in CoBI/Technology-supported CoBI
- Challenges in implementing CoBI/CLIL
- Authentic multi-disciplinary content in language classes
- CoBI and Competency-Based Instruction
- Models of CoBI/CLIL (e.g., themed language lessons; skill-based and content-based language lessons; content-specific materials for language learning; language pedagogy training for subject teachers; subject training for language teachers; content and language teachers teaching classes together; content teachers trained to teach vocabulary and grammar as part of the content course.)
- CoBI within the four-skills approach
- Skills approach within CoBI

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## ***The Journal of English Language Teaching (JELT) – ISSN-0973-5208***

[A publication of the English Language Teachers' Association of India (ELTAI)]

### **Submissions**

The *JELT* is an international, **peer-reviewed journal** published by the English Language Teachers' Association of India based at Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India, but with over 55 chapters in different parts of India. **Please see the front inner cover for details of the establishment and objectives of the association.**

The *JELT* is published **six times a year** – February, April, June, August, October and December. The overall aim of the journal is to promote the professional development of its readers, namely English teachers teaching at all levels, researchers and teacher trainers around the world. The journal, therefore, accepts submissions on all aspects and issues relating to the teaching and learning of English in ESL settings.

### **Criteria for Evaluating Submissions**

Each submission will be evaluated for its suitability for publication in terms of the following criteria. The article should:

- ★ Reflect current theories and practices in English language teaching.
- ★ Be relevant and appeal to the wide readership of the journal.
- ★ Be well written and organized, with sufficient explanation and examples to enable readers to apply the ideas and insights in their own classes.
- ★ Discuss the topic in the context of other work related to the topic.
- ★ Be written in clear and concise language, making it easy to read.

### **Guidelines for Submissions**

Each issue of the journal addresses a specific theme. Authors should send submissions related to the theme before the deadline indicated for the issue. *See the ELTAI website and the journal for the themes (if any) and deadlines for the subsequent issues.*

Authors should follow these guidelines while preparing their articles for submission:

1. The article should not have been published previously in any form (print or online).
2. The maximum length of the article should be 2000 words (excluding an abstract in 150 words).
3. All pages should be double-spaced with a clear margin of 1 inch on all sides.
4. The title should be brief and focused, not broad or vague.
5. The article should carry only the title, abstract and the main paper.
6. The title, author(s)' name(s) [the last name first], affiliation [i.e., the name of institution(s) the author(s) belong(s) to; city, country] and email address should be provided on a separate cover sheet for the article, along with author(s)' photo(s) [**.jpg**].
7. Only sources cited in the article should be listed as references at the end of the article.
8. The article should use the author-date format for citations and references (e.g., Anderson 1997; Anderson 1997, p.17). *See the Chicago Manual of Style (15<sup>th</sup> edn.) for more details and examples.*
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10. **The filename of the article (in MS Word format) sent as an email attachment should contain key words from the title and the author(s)' names.**

## SPEAKING ACTIVITY

### Playback Performance\*

**Dr. K. Elango**, National Secretary, ELTAI &  
(Formerly) Professor of English, Anna University  
Email: [elangoela@rediffmail.com](mailto:elangoela@rediffmail.com)

- Objective** : To enable learners to revisit their memorable moments/defining moments, and to enact them in narrative or non-narrative forms.
- Preparation** : Learners can be encouraged to recall and to reflect on some of their significant (even life-changing) events and articulate those events to themselves. The mental rehearsal, besides giving clarity to their thoughts, has cathartic effect as well.
- Participation** : Individual
- Duration** : About 5 minutes

#### Procedure :

- Teacher, if resourceful enough, demonstrates a playback performance or shows a video clipping or explains the concept and gets a couple of student volunteers to perform.
- After the demonstration, students are grouped into 6 members and instructed to perform in their respective groups and to get feedback from the members.
- If need be, the teacher could set the guidelines for effective performance:
  - They need to think of an authentic experience from their own lives.
  - The story chosen could be ordinary, extraordinary, hidden or difficult but something that impacted them.
  - There aren't any rigid forms or practices to the performance, but it should be interesting to others.
  - This performance breaks away from the scripted theater hence, spontaneity plays a vital role.
  - Towards the end, a performer may invite reflections on the performance from the audience which could even become a sort of conclusion to the story.
- Once the group activity gets over, the teacher gets a group or two to re-enact their performances to the whole class and wraps them up with a feedback.
- The session could end with the teacher/a proficient learner highlighting different stories shared in different groups and some skilful expressions employed by learners during their sharing.

#### Learning outcomes :

1. Learners realize that everyone has the natural capacity to perform and share their innate personal experiences.
2. Learners understand that when different students share their life stories, transformations can be brought about in others as their stories could hold certain shared values.

#### Further activity :

Learners should ruminate on their life experiences and share them with others at appropriate moments, as often as possible.

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*\*Playback theatre is originally an improvisation theatre in which participants narrate stories from their lives and watch them enacted. It was founded in 1975 and since then it has inspired many people. This format is followed in different parts of the world in as varied places as schools, prisons, conferences and festivals. The police also often get the criminals to reenact the crime scenes in the same spot where they have committed the crime so as to reconstruct and to comprehend the whole episode.*

*The crux of the playback performance is sharing of personal stories, which could be from the past, the present or the future. Its prime objectives are spontaneity and the release of creative juice.*



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