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The

OF ENGLISH

English Language

LANGUAGE

Teachers' Association

TEACHING

of India

(A Peer-Reviewed Journal)

Journal of English Language Teaching

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

Periodicity

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

Contributions

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 2000 words maximum

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

Please send a short note about yourself. You may give your name as you want it to appear in the Journal.

Articles should be sent only an an email attachment – **AS A WORD DOCUMENT** to: eltai_india@yahoo.co.in (copy to: ramanipn@gmail.com).

CDs and hard copies will not be accepted.

It should be declared that your article has not been published already and that it is not being considered by any other Journal.

Please go through the manuscript submission guidelines for authors printed in this journal (see pp.46-48).

The views expressed in the articles published in *JELT* are the contributors' own, and not necessarily those of the Journal.

Objectives of the Association

● To provide a forum for teachers of English to meet periodically and discuss problems relating to the teaching of English in India.

● 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.

● To promote professional excellence among its members in all possible ways.

The Journal is sent free to all the registered and active members of the Association. Our Literature Special Interest Group brings out a free online quarterly journal, *Journal of Teaching and Research in English Literature.*

Our consultancy services include teacher training and bi-monthly meetings on current ELT themes relevant to the Indian context.

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

JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

(A Peer-Reviewed Journal)

Our Founder Editor & Publisher: (Late) Padmashree S. Natarajan

CONTENTS

The views expressed in the articles published in JELT are those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect the stand of the editorial board.

EDITORIAL

Greetings! We hope all of you, your families, friends, and neighbours are safe and fine. Please stay at home and stay safe.

We know that you will receive your copy of this issue of JELT very late in view of several factors including the prevailing COVID-19 crisis all of us are going through and are earnestly hoping to tide over soon. We sincerely appreciate your patience and support in these moments. We hope to return to normalcy as soon as we can. We seek your forbearance for a little longer.

The first paper reports the findings of a study on "story-listening" using "comprehension-aiding supplementation", conducted by Beniko Mason, Ken Smith, and Stephen Krashen in an attempt to replicate four such previous studies. The study reported here was conducted with EFL students from five Asian countries.

The article by Laxmi Birajdar reports the effectiveness of using the British Council Score Test using the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) in assessing the various levels of proficiency in English of a group of polytechnic students. The one by Sasi Kiran gives an account of how she used "chunking" as a strategy in teaching reading, which, she reports, would enable students to become fluent readers.

Dhareppa Kumar discusses how videos available online can be productively used to improve the speaking skills of students at the tertiary level through group activities, the rationale (or the underlying assumption) being "the more they see, the more they learn". Shalini Bhargava, in her article,

discusses the problems and challenges that students and teachers in engineering institutions in India face in learning-teaching English.

In his article, Praveen traces briefly the history of teaching English in India over a century and in doing so attempts a SWOT analysis of the present situation in this respect. The analysis has led him to argue strongly for an India-centric approach to teaching English to replace the tendency to adopt "imported" approaches, methods, and techniques, especially in the context of the Draft New Education Policy 2019 and the need to prepare the teacher of English accordingly.

This issue of the journal also carries the regular columns: 'Grammar Guru' by Saraswathi, the 'Story of English' by Lal, and a reading activity by Elango (which explores the use of graphic organizers in aiding comprehension and review of new information gathered from many sources). We have also included in this issue details of the ELTAI 2020 Conference, but please check the websites of ELTAI as well as the conference for updates about the dates.

We have also reproduced from an earlier issue of the journal a piece by Mohanraj on writing a research paper besides our guidelines for authors for preparing and submitting their manuscripts for publication in JELT. We request you to go through both of these and help us to serve you better in selecting articles/papers of quality for publication.

Happy Reading!

Story-Listening in Indonesia: A Replication Study

Beniko Mason, Ken Smith and Stephen Krashen

ABSTRACT

This study reports on an attempted replication of four previous Story-Listening studies. Conducted with EFL students from five Asian countries, findings confirmed that subconscious vocabulary acquisition can not only occur from Story-Listening using Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation, but also confirmed that gains are durable.

Keywords: Replication; vocabulary acquisition; Story-Listening (SL); Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation (CAS).

Introduction

We present here a partial replication of four studies (Mason and Krashen, 2004; Mason, Vanata, Yander, Borsch, and Krashen, 2009; Mason and Krashen, 2018; Clarke, 2019), which investigated vocabulary acquisition in a foreign language resulting from hearing a story with visual and linguistic supplementation designed to make input more comprehensible (Krashen, Mason and Smith, 2018).

All four of these studies reported that:

(1) gains were found in vocabulary development from listening to stories,

(2) gains were durable, that is, present on delayed post-tests, and

(3) gains were greater than and more lasting than vocabulary development from direct instruction.

In this study, we attempted to replicate results (1) and (2), as no comparison group was involved.

PROCEDURE

Subjects were 12 college students from five different countries: Malaysia (3), Indonesia (3), South Korea (4), the Philippines (1), and Japan (1). Subjects' proficiency levels ranged from beginner to high intermediate.

This study was done as part of a course in second language acquisition taught by two of the co-authors (BM and KS) at a university in Indonesia, which met for 17 days over three weeks (July 2 to July 18, 2019). The course was titled "Story-Listening and Guided Self-Selected Reading."

Story-Listening

The teacher helped listeners understand potentially unfamiliar words using "Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation" (Krashen, Mason and Smith, 2018) such as drawings (Mason, 2019) and paraphrase, and writing familiar and unfamiliar words on the board. Using the students' first language (translation) was not possible as the instructors did not know all the students' first languages. It took about 30 minutes to present

the story in this way.

During the experiment one instructor told the story using Story-Listening methodology as described just above. A second instructor made sure that the instructor who was delivering the story used the words that were on the test.

Measures

In order to determine the vocabulary acquisition rate from hearing a story once, the "The Juniper Tree" [1] was selected to suit the students' interests. A pre-test (translation test) consisting of 31 words [2] contained in the story that were thought to be unknown to the students was given one day before they heard the story. The pretest results (see below) confirmed that most of the words were indeed unfamiliar.

The test simply asked students to provide a translation of the words in their first language. Five native speakers helped score the test: one professor from the Philippines, one student from South Korea, two Indonesian students, one Malaysian student, and the first author, a native speaker of Japanese. The first two authors sat with the other scorers and bilingual dictionaries were available to help in grading. Full credit was given when the translation was reasonably accurate, e.g. when "pious" was translated as "religious" in the participants' first language.

A post-test was given immediately after the students heard the story and a delayed post-test was given one week later. The post-test and the delayed post-test were identical to the pre-test. Subjects were not told that there would be a delayed post-test. The order of the words on the test was the same each time.

During the remaining class time, approximately 90 minutes, the students read a book and then heard another story. Two stories were included in each class session during the course. [3]

RESULTS

Subjects showed a clear and significant gain in vocabulary knowledge, with very little attrition between the posttest and delayed posttest (Tables 1 and 2). [4]

Table 1. Means & Standard Deviations (SD)

	Pretest (7/10)	Post-test (7/11)	Delayed Post (7/18)
Mean	9.25	16.92	16.33
SD	3.31	7.28	7.68

Table 2. t-test results (t-test with correlated samples)

	t	p
Pre-Post	4.43	0.002[a]
Post-Delayed	0.19	0.43[b]
Pre-Delayed	4.71	0.0003[a]

a = one-tailed test; **b** = two-tailed test; **df** = 22

The effect size (based on the pre-test and delayed post-test) was substantial, **d** = 1.29.

The Story-Listening session lasted 30 minutes, and the overall gain, from pre- to delayed post-test was 7.08 words, a gain of .24 words per minute. This rate is very similar to what has been reported in earlier studies of Story-Listening (Table 3).

Table 3. Vocabulary acquisition rates from previous studies

Study	N	Rate from Story Listening
Mason & Krashen (2004)	27	.25
Mason, et. al. (2009)	7	.10~.23
Mason & Krashen (2018)	21	.17
Clarke (2019)	6	.19

NOTES:

(1) Source: Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, Von dem Machandelboom, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (Children's and Household Tales - Grimms' Fairy Tales), no. 47. (https://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm047.html).Translated by D. L. Ashliman. © 2000-2002.

(2) The words on the test: 1) pious, 2) pare; 3) sigh; 4) sore; 5) eagerly; 6) drawer; 7) stoop; 8) cease; 9) bury; 10) to and fro; 11) bid; 12) bough; 13) clap; 14) soar; 15) perch; 16) threshold; 17) pincers; 18) claw; 19) gaze; 20) millstone; 21) heave: 22) pole; 23) goldsmith; 24) murder; 25) parlor; 26) chatter; 27) veins; 28) tear; 29) flame; 30) crush; and 31) flat.

(3) The experiment was done in the middle of the course, after participants had some experience listening to stories.

(4) It is possible that students' reading contributed to the positive results on the delayed Post-test: Students read between 240 and 1512 pages during the course (mean = 614 pages) and in their reading they may have encountered some of the words included in the story they listened to.

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Checklist for Manuscript Review

1. Does this article present and/or discuss ***issues that are important and relevant*** to the teaching and learning of English in an ESL/EFL context?

2. Is the ***title*** clear, short and appropriate for the content of the article?

3. Is the ***abstract*** brief, clear, inclusive and consistent with the content of the article?

4. Is the ***introduction*** relevant, meaningful and purposeful?

5. Is the ***literature review*** relevant to the article and focussed?

6. Does the article establish a clear ***rationale*** for the study and state the ***problem*** clearly?

7. Are the ***techniques and tools*** used appropriate for the study?

8. Are the ***results*** clearly presented and discussed?

9. Are the ***findings*** based on a robust analysis of the data and clearly presented?

10. Are the ***conclusions*** appropriate and reasonable, and linked to other studies on the topic?

11. Are ***implications*** of the findings discussed in the article?

12. Are the ***references*** appropriate, current, sufficient and consistent with in-text citations?

[See 'Manuscript Submission Guidelines for Authors' on pages 46-48.]

Application of CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference) in Testing the English Language Proficiency Level of Polytechnic Students

Laxmi M. Birajdar

ABSTRACT

In these gadget-driven days, our hunger for electronic devices and technology in every field of human life is growing fast. Several technological devices have been developed and updated in the last few decades. Among them the mobile phone has brought satisfaction in human life. Especially among students it is a very popular tool; they cannot imagine their life without this device. Though parents and teachers are against students carrying mobiles into the classrooms as they distract students from their learning, students are still carried away by its applications. Mobile phones have revolutionized the world with their impressive database over the globe. There are, however, a few possibilities of turning this craze for using mobile phones for learning language and testing their communication skills. This study is an attempt to assess English language skills of students and to motivate the learners to improve their language through mobile applications for language learning. This paper discusses the benefits of using mobile phones for learning purposes, particularly for improving technical students' English language skills through the British Council English Score*, which is an online tool for testing English proficiency level in alignment with the Common European Framework of Reference (**CEFR**), a globally recognized language proficiency standard. I conducted the English proficiency test with the final year polytechnic students using the British Council app. The paper concludes with the findings of the test and some recommendations.*

Keywords: Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL); Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR); Assessing English Communication Skills.

Introduction

In today's world everyone is promoting the use of ICT in education for better teaching-learning process. The researcher feels that students are already using much of their time using computers and mobiles. They are also fascinated by using these devices. We can explore and experiment with a variety of technologies already at hand in the lives of students. There should be a leap frog e-learning through m-learning, it's time to share innovative ways of learning with and through mobile technologies and using them to achieve educational goals. Smartphone performs several functions of computer with a touch screen interface having internet access with a large storage. Students can access the digital technology with the help of Smartphones while travelling or waiting. The mobile phone has become basic need of students, so we can turn this obsession of

using mobile for learning English language. We spent several hours researching and testing educational learning apps recommended by educators, teachers and parents. The researcher tested students' English proficiency through class tests and noticed some students were poor in vocabulary; some were poor in grammar, some in reading comprehension. After that, the researcher provided learning materials to students. Then, after three months, the researcher gave another test and the results of the test are analyzed in this paper. This shows how technology is instrumental in developing language skills.

The phase of undergraduate study plays a vital role which determines students' further education and careers. Students need to assess themselves and be assessed by teachers to know their level of language for further improvement. The nature of assessment determines their learning. The impact of assessment on the language learning process has been focused by a number of researchers (Crooks, 1988: Heywood, 1989: Newble & Jaeger, 1986). Kumari (2017) has shown the same thing by assessing English communication skills of BA and B. Com. students.

The result of globalization is the entry of multinational companies and electronic gadgets in India. These companies require management skills for effective functioning of their organizations. Major management functions are planning, organizing, delegating, controlling and coordinating. All of these functions need effective communication skills. To achieve their goals, professional organizations focus on soft skills. All the required soft skills require the basic skill of communication. Every professional organization expects effective communication skills in their employees. One has to fulfill employer's expectations during one's professional life.

Importance of English proficiency for technical students

Communication may be oral or written; it involves all the skills of language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Communication plays a pivotal role in an organization, whether it is a business enterprise, an industry, or an academic institution. All managerial or administrative activities like planning, organizing, recruiting, decision making, coordinating, writing reports, giving instructions, and reading brochures involve communication. Communication serves as an instrument to measure the success or growth of an organization. English language proficiency is the basis of effective communication. The various types of communication not only help an organization to grow, but also enable the communicators to develop certain attributes. It is regrettable that, though most professionals are well aware of the importance of communication, they do not develop their skills to good effect in their sphere of work. The higher your position, the greater is your need to communicate. Very soon the polytechnic students will enter careers where they need to be aware of the vital role of communication skills.

The role of Smartphones in learning a language

The Smartphone performs many of the

functions of a computer, having a touchscreen interface, Internet access, and an operating system capable of running downloaded applications. A mobile app is a computer program designed to run on a mobile device, such as a smartphone. Students can use these functions to learn languages. Some useful apps are: Duolingo; Memrise; Busuu; BBC Learning English; Hello English; Learn English; English conversation practice; Drops; Ankidroid; Beelingua app; Fluent forever; Translate; and IELTS apps.

Data collection

About a hundred students were randomly selected from last year's batch of Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering, and Computer Engineering from A.G. Patil Polytechnic Institute, Solapur to assess their Vocabulary, Grammar, Listening and Reading skills in English.

The British Council English Score, an English language exam for students, teachers and job seekers (with the globally recognized CEFR scale for describing English language proficiency), was used to conduct the test and collect the data.

The selected students were given detailed explanations about the test by the researcher. Having downloaded the British Council English Score app on their mobiles, all the selected students took the test by following the instructions given on the app and recorded their score with level and analysis given by the app. The scores obtained by the students were analyzed for providing further assistance to the students for improvement.

Results and data interpretation

The results of the scores obtained are given in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Results of Scores Obtained by the Students on the British Council English Score Test

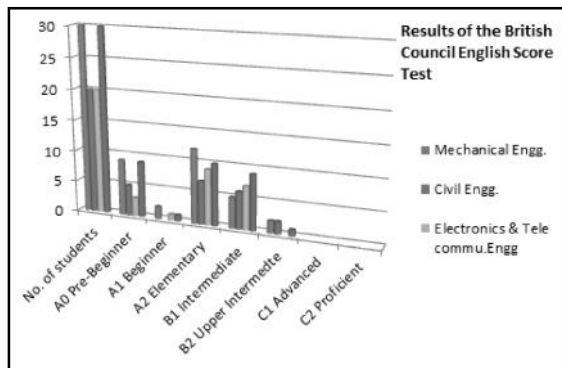| Branch / Group	No. of students	No. of students Placed at A0 level pre Beginner	No. of students Placed at A1 level Beginer	No. of students Placed at A2 level Elementary	No. of students placed at B1 level Intermediate	No. of students placed at B2 kevel upper Intermediate
Mechanical Engg.	**30**	09	02	12	05	02
Civil Engg.	**20**	05	-	07	06	02
Electronics and Tele-communications Engg.	**20**	03	01	09	07	-
Computer Engg.	**30**	09	01	10	09	01
TOTAL		**26**	**04**	**38**	**27**	**05**

Figure 1. Results of Scores Obtained by the Students on the British Council English Score Test

The results show that the number of learners with proficiency in English at each of the levels was: the Pre-Beginner (A0) level (26), the Beginner (A1) level (04), the Elementary (A2) level (38), the Intermediate (B1) level (27), and the Upper Intermediate level (05). It may be noted that no learners achieved Advanced C1 or C2 level. The Beginner level students need to be improve their English skills by practising more in all levels. Elementary and Intermediate learners have to take extra efforts to become proficient in the language; they have to improve their LSRW skills along with vocabulary and grammar. Overall, the students showed a lot of enthusiasm in taking this test and later were determined to make use of mobiles as a tool for learning the language.

Findings of the Study

The key findings of the study are as follows:

1. The learners with pre-beginner and beginner level English proficiency were 30%, while those at the Elementary level were 38%; students with intermediate and upper-intermediate levels were 27% and 5% respectively.

2. The learners came from a family background where most of the parents do not speak, read or write English.

3. Inadequate vocabulary knowledge was reflected in their poor performance in the test.

4. With the dominance of the mother tongue at home and in the neighbourhood, the students took less effort in learning English.

5. They lack confidence and motivation in speaking English, though they have a basic knowledge of English.

6. There is greater focus on mathematics and technical subjects in technical education than on English.

7. Learners do exam oriented study.

8. There was inadequate provision in the language laboratory; the language learning software should be regularly updated and utilized properly.

Suggestions to improve the communication skills of students, teachers and job seekers

1. With self-motivation, students should make conscious efforts to communicate only in English.

2. They should learn words through situational contexts.

3. They should read English newspapers daily to get acquainted with new vocabulary while also updating themselves in current affairs.

4. They should develop technical vocabulary.

5. They should be exposed to online learning apps for improving their

communication skills.

6. The focus should be on language learning rather than on completion of syllabus.

7. Students should be encouraged to maintain a diary and write in it a few new words and new phrases that they come across every day.

8. They should be good listeners to become good communicators in English. They should listen more than they speak. Listening helps them to become familiar with the rhythms of English.

9. They should also read aloud to improve their pronunciation and listen to native speakers of English.

10. They should watch movies and TV programs in English through which they can learn vocabulary, idioms, and pronunciation.

11. Talking to oneself in English narrating one's actions in English can be an effective way of improving spoken English.

12. Qualified and trained English teachers should be provided in educational institutions and they should be encouraged to undergo professional training courses, workshops, and seminars to update themselves.

13. Students should spend sufficient time for improving their English proficiency on a daily basis.

Conclusion

It is always a challenge to acquire and master one's proficiency in English. There are good sources to teach the students English language skills and test them. Teaching without testing the students and their ability, their needs, and their proficiency will be a waste of time. When there are excellent digital tools available on the internet, they should be used so that they will be instrumental in bringing about good outcomes in respect of English language proficiency. Thus the study proposes app-based English learning for polytechnic students.

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Fluent Readers: Chunking as a Strategy in Teaching Reading

S. D. Sasi Kiran

ABSTRACT

The objective of this paper is to know whether chunking strategy is effective in improving students' reading comprehension and their attitude towards learning using the strategy. This research focused on improving students' reading comprehension. The instruments used were reading text, pre-vocabulary sheet, and plenary sheet. The findings of this research showed that chunking strategy was effective in improving students' reading comprehension. This activity was successful in solving students' problem in comprehending a text.

Keywords: Chunking Strategy; Reading Comprehension.

Introduction

The power of chunking as a strategy in reading a text ensures students' progress. Chunking allows one to read a text in parts or sections and yet comprehend the whole text. When a long string of information is broken into chunks, the focus on the text increases. This model of reading gives a sense of achievement to students and the teacher as well. It helps them to implement this strategy in their everyday reading, thereby enhancing their reading skill. It not only increases their reading speed but also enriches their vocabulary. I employ this strategy with students every semester and find them quite interested in doing the activity. Never is a sign of passiveness found throughout the session!

Material considered for activity

'6 Ways You CAN do University and Travel at the Same Time' by Vicky Philpott (*n.d.*)

Student Sample: 60 Students

Background

I asked the students, "What do you read in your everyday life?" Students came up with answers such as story books, comics, magazines, newspaper articles, letters, and menu cards. I told them, "You decide to work in the vacation and your friend proposes a long tour. Both of you are uncertain and approach your counsellor who hands over an article by Vicky Philpott and thereby you both decide to do study and travel simultaneously.

I started discussing some vocabulary items as a pre-reading activity, i.e. before they were asked to read the text on their own. It was quite encouraging and promising for the students to begin their chunk reading.

Pre Teaching Vocabulary

1. Semester / sə'mes.tɚ/

• **Meaning**

I explained the word to them using it in a context:

"I studied my UG and PG taking year-end exams. Do you do your course now in the same way?"

When they came up with the word *semester*, I asked them:

⊦ Is it a half year or a year you spend in a semester?
⊦ Did I spend a semester on a course during my study?

• **Form**

I asked them to develop two sentences using the word on flash cards and to break down the individual items in the structure.

• **Pronunciation**

I uttered the word asking everyone to repeat together at the same time. Then, students at random were asked to repeat the word.

2. hang out / hæŋ.aʊt/

• **Meaning**

I announced:

"My colleagues told me in the staff room that my student Ms. Kiran hangs out with boys too much. I wish she would stop hanging out with that crowd of boys."

Then I asked them:

- Does Ms. Kiran spend too much time with boys?

- Do my colleagues object to Ms. Kiran

talking to boys?

- Do I decide to reduce her moving with boys?

Students by this time understood that *to hang out* means *to spend a lot of time*.

• **Form**

I asked students to develop two sentences using the word on flash cards and to break down the individual items in the structure.

• **Pronunciation**

I asked everyone to repeat together at the same time. Then, I selected students at random to repeat.

3. Weekend / ˈwiːkend/

• **Meaning**

I told the students:

"We managed the weekend in between together, mostly catching up on domestic chores – Friday night in the downstairs laundry room of my apartment."

Then I asked them:

- Did I go outing in my weekend?

- Which days do you think I spend on domestic chores?

- Was it a two-day weekend?

• **Form**

I asked them to develop two sentences using the word on flash cards and to break down the individual items in the structure.

• **Pronunciation**

I asked everyone to repeat together at the same time. I also selected students at random to repeat.

Justification of authentic material (Reading)

The material is appropriate for use with my students in terms of: a) their age; b) their number; c) their semi-urban exposure; d) cultural appropriateness; e) their needs; f) their interests; and g) the level of their language ability. Students were focused already on 'systems and skills' in the previous sessions and they needed to upgrade their skill in reading. The duration of each session was 45 minutes and their communicative ability and zeal to learn allowed for practice to develop their language skills. The handouts were designed suitable for their intended use so that they would facilitate specific instructional outcomes. Students would face a dilemma between movie/class; picnic/attendance, library/sms but they learnt how to balance them.

Receptive skill task design

A: Two subskills chosen: a. skimming; **b.** scanning

a. Task designed for *Skimming*

The gist reading came in hand for them to talk after an opportunity to practise and to improve their language skills considering their communicative purposes for real world uses. While they were on the task designed for skimming, I encouraged and included students into the team with ease. Planning and rolling out the task on my part ensured

their skill development.

Aim: To enable students to pick up some of the content

• I displayed pictures. (1min)

• I asked them to match with the cuttings of 8 subheadings and handouts were distributed (1m) after an ICQ: "Do you paste sub-headings for each picture? Do you work individually? (1min)

• Whoever matched the sub-heading with a picture had to justify it. (5 min)

• I asked them to confirm.

• I introduced three words: *semester*; *hang out*; *weekends*. (2 min)

Feedback

• I asked them to put pictures as in the article individually. (2 min)

• They verified the order in pairs. (2 min)

b. Task designed for *Scanning*

It helped them to improve their fluency and accuracy when some awareness was created about intensive and extensive reading when the task designed for scanning was rolled out. Reading through scanning helped them to run their eyes over the text looking for specific pieces of information they must use while progressing with the task. They demonstrated accuracy and fluency in their ability to identify words and to comprehend the text.

Aim: To enable students to acquire familiarity of content in a short span of time

• The text was divided into chunks and

students were put into groups. (1 min)

- According to Scrivener (2011a, p.184), "Reading to oneself is like listening, a receptive skill … People read at different speeds and in different ways… [those] who can control the speed they work at in a reading activity…" Each group did the segment-reading for specific details. By doing chunk-reading students learnt how to put huge amounts of information together in a short period of time. (8 min)

- They were regrouped such that each group consisted of members reading different chunks. Care was taken to include readers from all chunks into a group; they were asked to share their reading and the rest had to listen to comprehend. (7 min)

Feedback

- I instructed them to come up with five *Yes/No* questions. (2 min)

Productive skill task design

Aim: To develop students' ability to showcase their writing and speaking skills

I think the procedures, materials, method, gestures, seating, grouping, appointing a spokesperson and silence while reading employed by me, enable the students to respond accurately during a task designed to showcase their productive skill. I hope to encourage them to collect and read newspaper articles. By raising their awareness I can make my students find out easily overall/specific information in their everyday academic activity.

Writing and Speaking

I asked the students to write a post card earlier. I introduced and summarised the main writing task, as suggested by Scrivener (2011a, p. 194). Each one wrote a post card on: 'Express 5 curious facts about study vs. vacation'. They had already brainstormed the topic and were familiar with the vocabulary, so they developed a post card.

- I asked them to observe other students' post cards and to make notes. (10 min)

- Further, they were asked to recommend to decide the best card from each group (other than their own) and designate them as leaders. (3 min)

Feedback

I asked the leaders to conduct a plenary and the other members of the group were asked to respond. They were asked to prepare *True/False* type of statements for the plenary. The confidence of the students was built; they were eager to speak and their sense of achievement promoted a student-centric environment. I shared what was observed and noted to reinforce learning through a quick feedback session. (4 min)

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Appendix – 1

Plenary as Feedback for Productive Skill Task Design (Students were asked to conduct it.)

Say yes/no in a flash.

1. Studying abroad and living somewhere may not be exciting. T/F

2. Money is not an issue as many EU countries offer study for free. T/F

3. Studying abroad for a semester within a course is possible with many UK universities. T/F

4. Use always your vacation sensibly. T/F

5. There are plenty of options to travel at low cost. T/F

6. Vicky Philpott worked as a radio DJ and medical camp counsellor. T/F

7. Winter isn't a great time to travel abroad. T/F

8. Bringing your local culture in the UK is a good strategy. T/F

9. Travel vicariously grants you free stays globally. T/F

10. One can flash the student card in Europe to see places. T/F

11. Hostels in the UK are costly. T/F

12. Travel cost becomes cheaper in all UK flights if there is no luggage. T/F

13. The writer recommends not to waste holidays. T/F

14. Travel fully and don't hesitate to repeat a year. T/F

15. Proper organizational skills and productivity levels allow balance between both work and fun. T/F

Key

1. F.   2. T   3. T   4. T   5. T   6. F
7. F   8. T   9. T   10. T   11. F   12. F
13. T   14. F   15. T

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Use of Online Videos to Improve Speaking Skills

Dhareppa Konnur

ABSTRACT

While learning the mother tongue, people never feel that they are learning a language, but while learning a foreign language they become cautious. When language learners are asked to speak in English on a given topic, they try to speak, but they may not speak well or fluently due to lack of ideas, information, exposure, and confidence. Even to write a piece of composition they need to get ideas. So, they escape, avoid or postpone due to scarcity of ideas. Owing to this, they lose confidence; they hesitate to speak and show reluctance to write. It becomes inevitable to the learners of vernacular background to acquire communicative competence in English. Using online videos would be a better idea to motivate the learners of heterogeneous groups to enhance their communicative skills. The core of the approach is: 'the more they see, the more they learn'. The approach presented and discussed here will provide a platform to cater for learners to meet the needs of the present-day world through "computeracy". The present article focuses on teaching speaking skills through group/team work.

Keywords: Teaching speaking skills; online videos in ELT.

Introduction

In today's world of Information and Communication Technology, every learner must be tech-savvy and should be ready to have their "computeracy" updated and upgraded easily and voluntarily. So, the researcher felt it would be an innovative idea to make the learners get acquainted with the English language in an easy and interesting way by using technology. When learners are asked to speak on a given topic, they may not show interest to speak, but they are attracted towards online videos because of the audio-visual effect and begin to concentrate more and learning becomes more pleasurable.

As Benson (1991) says, "Learners' interest, aptitude and motivation for learning English and the chances of success in foreign language […] depend to a large extent on the favourable attitude towards English language" (p. 202). Online videos provide ideas to speak on. They infuse confidence in learners who will be easily persuaded to speak. "Motivation […] plays an effective role in academic achievements among students in general and English in particular" (Abdelrahim, 2012). So, the researcher felt that online videos from YouTube will be better to motivate the learners to speak, particularly the learners of heterogeneous groups, to enhance their oral competence. The present paper focuses on teaching speaking skills in English by using online videos from YouTube and WhatsApp and different online modes.

Context of the study

In the context of a poor education system, very few opportunities are being provided for language learning. Earlier, a language learner had to suffer a lot to get a good English teacher in most of the rural places. When the learners of heterogeneous levels come from vernacular backgrounds, they have less exposure to the target language, which is English. They are expected to speak or write on a given topic or context without being given proper training. The learners hesitate to do it because of fear, lack of ideas, and lack of confidence, and are unable to do it. "Ignorance coupled with fear and inhibition obstruct the students' thinking capacity" (Lowrencia, 2011). Hence they fail to acquire proficiency in the target language. So, the researcher felt that a better way to motivate the learners to speak in the target language would be to generate ideas and persuade them by showing online videos and video clippings. In the world of communication, there is no scarcity of internet resources. As most of the learners use WhatsApp, sharing selected online videos from YouTube through WhatsApp to each group inculcates curiosity and they are encouraged to learn and will be persuaded to speak. Various forwarded online videos in social media are motivational, inspirational, and persuasive. In the classroom, when the teacher screens such online videos, he/she explains and discusses the concepts or ideas and sets the objectives of viewing them. Later, the learners can be asked to watch them and understand them. The benefit is that the learners can watch them repeatedly with their peer group.

Objectives of the Study

Video increase student engagement, which in turn helps to boost achievement. If students are interested in the material provided, they will understand the process better and remember it. The videos offer the flexibility to pause/stop, skip or replay throughout the video to have class discussions or review of particular areas.

According to Wang (2015), there are three goals of teaching English with video materials. The first is to facilitate the development of EFL learners' language skill. It means that the video can give a lot of information for the learners, get their attention to focus on the material in the video and improve their comprehensive linguistic competence. The second is to cultivate the student's competence in intercultural communication. When the video is screened in the classroom, it does not only give information about the language, but the learners can also learn about the culture of the native speakers of English. Then, it can support the learners' communicative competence in English. The third goal is to inculcate in students aesthetic values and the ability to appreciate videos of artistic value. In this case, the video screened does not only provide information about what the students have watched, but it is expected to make the students have aesthetic impressions of the video in their mind. It can encourage them to have deep critical thinking and critical review. So, the students can get a lot of benefits from the videos they watch.

The objectives of this approach are:

a) to instill courage in the learners to speak

in the second/target language and to remove the sense or feeling of inferiority in terms of language use;

b) to boost their confidence level, make them fluent in the second/target language, and to develop in them a flair for the language;

c) to make them competent by minimizing the influence of the mother tongue and improving their accuracy;

d) to strengthen the active vocabulary of the learners in the second/target language; and

e) to prepare them for making formal presentations and public speeches in the second/target language.

Participants and Duration

A batch of thirty learners and a two-hour Lab session are enough to hone their speaking skills. If we have more students, it will not be suitable for the language activity.

Methodology

Methodology includes the design, procedure, materials, and the assessment procedure.

Research Design

The present activity has been designed to help the learners to improve their fluency by making them involve themselves completely in the process of learning. During this activity, each group gets a different and unique video clipping or online video, and the respective handouts related to the video clipping. The learners watch the video clippings or online video, answer the questions, and express their views in the handouts, interact with the members of the group, overcome stage fright and speak. They also build up their creativity and improve their confidence level. In this activity, the classmates or friends need to support the learner. The teacher should know how to prevent demotivating factors from affecting the students' learning.

Procedure

The teacher divides the learners into five groups of six learners each and distributes the relevant handouts to each member of the group. The mobile/tab with only the video clipping or online video should be given to each group. Learners are asked to watch the video and write the answers to the questions given in the handouts. The members of the group discuss, share their views, and complete their writing individually. Once the groups are ready, the teacher plays each video in the classroom, so that all the learners in the class watch the video clipping or the online video and then the learners from the group come onto the stage to express their ideas related to the video. The teacher plays the next video after appreciating the group with positive remarks and the procedure continues until the completion of all the groups. In the last five or ten minutes, the teacher invites two or three learners to come forward and describe their experience of the group activity and the teacher ends the class with suggestions. Finally, the teacher takes feedback from the learners and gives his feedback in detail.

Time Management

While conducting such activities, time management is very important; otherwise, the core focus of the activity will be lost. Division of learners into groups, distribution of tab/

mobile and handouts, and giving instructions should be done within the first ten minutes. Twenty minutes of time should be given to complete the task initially and time may be extended by five or ten minutes to motivate them to perform better. After playing a video, each group should be given eight to ten minutes of time to speak. Later, one should keep some time for sharing of experiences and for giving feedback.

Materials Used

Mobiles/tabs with video clippings or online videos, handouts, computer with projector, speakers and internet connection.

Handouts

The handouts are to be prepared based on the video clippings or online videos including questions related to that video clipping or online video. The common questions are: What message did you get from the video? What did you learn and what do you want to do? Is the video useful or informative? Did you face any such incident in your life? If you did, do narrate it. Comment on aspects like style, the language, vocabulary and accent, action, characters, theme, suggestions, etc. What is the takeaway from the video clipping or online video? Do you want to share this video clipping or online video with others? If yes, with whom? And why?

Role of the Teacher

To achieve the objectives of the activity, the teacher must be a facilitator, mentor, guide, and a minute and careful observer. The teacher should give a tab or a mobile with only the video clipping to each group and the corresponding handouts to each member of the group. The teacher should give instructions and facilitate the learners at various stages. S/he should monitor the learners and help them to comprehend the video. The teacher should motivate the learners by giving a time limit to complete the task. The teacher should build an atmosphere of healthy competition so that it can motivate learners to learn thoroughly. While giving feedback, the teacher must be careful not to demotivate the learners. The teacher has to explain to the students the importance of active vocabulary.

Evaluation

Evaluation is an integral part of any learning process, as it opens new channels of learning for the students. Learners are evaluated by listening to their interpretation and critical analysis of the video clippings from their speech and from the answers written in their handouts. Even their pronunciation can be analyzed. Posture, body language, eye contact, hand movements, audibility, tone and other aspects of formal presentations must be observed.

Results

a) Each learner has spoken on the video clipping or online video in their own language and from their perspective.

b) The interaction of the each learner with their peers in their team has helped them to analyze and understand the video clipping or online video from various perspectives.

c) The video clippings have generated ideas and thoughts and even the learners from vernacular backgrounds have overcome stage fright and have spoken confidently.

d) Their logical thinking and analytical skills are developed.

e) Learners' communicative competence is enhanced gradually.

Recommendations of the Study

a. The teacher should select motivational/ inspiring/ heart-touching/ sensible videos with different themes with social implications. Before selecting each video, he/she must check whether the video fulfils the objectives.

b. The teacher should watch the videos well in advance, analyze, understand thoroughly and prepare handouts accordingly. The questions should cover all the objectives of the activity.

c. The teacher should also give numbers to the videos and handouts to avoid confusion

d. The teacher should see that there should be only the video clipping in the mobile or tab to avoid distraction.

e. The teacher should monitor and guide the students in analyzing the video and encourage them in completing the task in the given time.

f. If the learners make mistakes/ mispronounce the words while speaking, they should not be corrected then, but later; corrections should be made in general.

g. The teacher should select the suitable time slot for screening the videos.

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Grammar Guru VI

V. Saraswathi

Here are some interesting phrases from hoardings and shop name boards:

Beauty care that let's me be me!

Recruitment at it's best!

Chicken's and egg's

To my darling wife - your the only one!

What are these? They are all examples of the abuse of the punctuation mark *apostrophe* sent to the Apostrophe Protection Society.

In Greek, the word *apostrophe* means 'turning away' and hence, omission or elision. It looks exactly like a humble, modest, single inverted comma. The apostrophe has two main functions as expounded by experts in grammar:

(i) It denotes missing letters, e.g. *can't*, *don't*, *it's*.

(ii) It denotes possessives, e.g. *cat's tail*, *school's emblem*, *Rita's father*.

An apostrophe is never ever used to denote plurals. It is wrong to say *banana's for sale; 1000's of bargains.*

The history of the apostrophe is quite fascinating. In the beginning, true to its lineage, it indicated only omission of letters, as seen in Shakespeare's **Hamlet:**

"Fie on't! Fie!"

'Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished"

"I am too much i' the sun."

Later its use was extended to singular possessives in the 17th century: e.g. *a girl's dress*. During the 18th century, it conquered the territory of plural possessives as well: e.g. *girls' dresses.*

An Association for the Abolition of the Aberrant Apostrophe was operated by Keith Waterhouse. The British founder of the Apostrophe Protection Society earned in 2001 the **Ig Nobel Prize** for his efforts to "protect, promote and defend the differences between the plural and the possessive."

Apostrophes are too important to be dismissed as non-principal punctuation marks. They can effect drastic change in meaning as demonstrated so cleverly by Kingsley Amis:

(i) *Those things over there are my husband's.* (= Those things belong to my husband)

(ii) *Those things over there are my husbands.* (= I'm married to all the men over there)

The most common but serious mistake we make is the confusion of the possessive and contractive forms of *it: its* and **it's.** Here's a rule to help you:

The word **"it's"** stands for **"it is"** or "*it has*".

The word **"its"** stands for the *possessive.*

It's *hot in here.* [It is hot in here]

It's *been raining for an hour*. [It has been raining for an hour]

*The dog wagged **its** tail when I came in.*

Don't ever say **it's** when you mean the possessive.

In his *Language Instinct,* Stephen Pinker claims that possessive apostrophes do matter and their usage affects the meaning of written English. Here's his brainteaser for you. Can you sort out the four different meanings of the four sentences below?

My sister's friend's investments.

My sister's friends' investments.

My sisters' friend's investment.

My sisters' friends' investment.

Good luck and God speed!

Dr. V. Saraswathi, (Formerly) Professor of English (ELT), University of Madras.

[Editor's Note: *This is part of a series of articles contributed by the author and published earlier in* The Times of India, Education Times *from May 2008 to May 2013. We are thankful to the author to permit us to publish those articles in our journal.]*

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Teaching English in Engineering Institutions in India

Shalini Bhargava

ABSTRACT

English plays an important role as it has emerged as the lingua franca for all types of transactions around the globe. It is the language of education, science, technology, business, industry, commerce, law, etc. It acts as the link language in the multicultural and multilingual social setting of a country like India and also has a strong association with higher education, career enhancement and global employability. The teaching of English to learners from different social and cultural backgrounds in engineering institutions is a potent challenge for the language teachers. These include problems like mother tongue interference, lack of motivation to learn and other sociolinguistic factors. This paper focuses on the prominent problems that interfere with obtaining the desired results in the language classrooms and the techniques that can be adopted to overcome them.

Keywords: Teaching English in India; Teaching English to engineering students.

Introduction

English has received prime attention in academic and professional settings in the past fifty years and is an asset for those who need to strengthen their skills in interpersonal communication in the international arena for growth in their career. It has emerged as a global language and the youth pursuing professional courses in the present era have to gain competence in the language to ensure a successful career and a bright future ahead.

The socio-cultural explanation looks at the way people all over the world, in many walks of life, have come to depend on English for their economic and social well being. The English language has penetrated deeply into the international domains of political life, business, safety, communication, the media, entertainment, and education (Crystal, 2003, pp. 29-30). Thus, English has emerged as a language which is necessary to strengthen global human relations and foster growth in the international arena.

English in the Socio-Cultural Context

The learners of English can understand and appreciate the multicultural view of the language and interpret it in relation to their own culture, which promotes wider learning. "Culture is a set of beliefs and values about what is desirable in a community of people and a set of formal or informal practices to support the values" (Javidan & House, 2001, p. 292). Language learning is a social phenomenon and exposes the learner to the culture of the foreign language and also helps in identifying the uniqueness of the home culture where it is learnt. This approach to learning can also create global learners who

have a better understanding of the world around and can also adapt to the multicultural environment of the language classroom and appreciate differences in the culture with a new perspective.

When a language is learnt, there must be an underlying purpose for which it is learned. The language must have some internal social function in the community. In multilingual states, people who do not share a common mother tongue may use another language for communication. This orientation places the second language in a clearly specified social context or situation. The social context subsumes in it socio-historical factors responsible for the adoption of a foreign language for internal communication in a country (Kuchdekar, 2002, pp. 37-38). In the Indian context, academics as well as researchers need to be proficient in the language to excel on the global front by bringing in technological advancements and innovations through scholarly papers and research projects.

The Current Scene of Engineering Institutions

Communication is a multidisciplinary activity and acquiring competency in the English language involves mastering the four skills: listening, reading, writing, and speaking. The engineering students need to master these four skills to enhance their employability and also perform well in their academic programmes. The current scene is not good, as the employers feel that the upcoming engineers lack this crucial skill, i.e. English language proficiency, which is a hurdle not only in securing placements but also in career growth. It has been found that engineers also lack public speaking skills, debating, group discussion skills, analytical skills and interview skills due to their inefficiency in the language.

Acquiring a language is 'picking it up', i.e. developing the ability in a language for use in natural communicative situations. Language learning is "knowing the rules, having a conscious knowledge of the grammar" (Kudchedkar, 2002, p. 96). The learners are unable to grasp the language and adopt it in their daily interactions, which is one of the prominent problems faced by engineering students in India. This is due to myriad reasons including socio-cultural factors, lack of motivation, ineffective learning and teaching methodology, and the attitude towards the language. Although the number of engineers produced is large, their employability is low due to poor quality. Therefore, there is a need to focus on the professional competency of the learners by integrating hard and soft skills into the academic curriculum and inspiring the learners to improve their language proficiency with a positive attitude.

It is also noted that students from vernacular medium schools have limited proficiency in the English language. The teachers in these schools resort to code switching while teaching and also provide simplified notes and handouts to the students, i.e. the material to pass the exams with no real learning. The learning in such schools is at the factual level and hence such students are unable to express themselves in English in the written as well as spoken form due to their inefficiency to carry their thought process in the target language. When such students enter

institutions of higher learning, they are incapable of dealing with the multicultural environment, where they are disadvantaged due to their inefficiency in English discourse. Engineering colleges in India face a major problem in this regard.

These language learners need intensive support in learning English. The learners need a great amount of visual and contextual exposure and an interactive learning environment where they can make errors, which are an integral part of learning. Their peers with higher proficiency levels and different socio-cultural backgrounds can also act as a medium to clarify the ideas and instructions, which in itself is an element of motivation in learning the language.

Cultural Factors Influencing Language Learning

The adult learners in engineering colleges want to learn English mainly for economic reasons, i.e. to secure a good job and also to attain success in their chosen professional sphere, as English exposes them to the world around and also helps in securing better opportunities. A learner may find it difficult to deal with the stress and anxiety when they come from a different culture with different values, which happens when a person from a rural background moves to an urban area and is exposed to the widespread use of English language and its implications in attaining success in their career. Such students may feel awkward in learning a foreign language with its cultural implications and different values. They need to understand that working in an international environment requires patience and tolerance, and the students need to adapt to the multicultural milieu respecting the

values from a wider perspective, which will facilitate the learning of the foreign language.

Teaching English in the Multicultural Language Class

The multicultural ESL classroom poses a potential challenge to the language teacher and as he/she nurtures and deals with this diversity there is a need to integrate action and provide ample practical exposure to the learners. The first challenge is the language itself, which is other than the native language or mother tongue, and so the teacher needs to deal with this cultural shock and adapt to this and also motivate the learners to adjust.

"The spread of English has two sides. One represents those who use English as their first language, and the other represents those who use it as an additional language. A significant proportion uses English as its other tongue… Such use varies, from broken English to almost native or ambi-lingual competence . . ." (Kachru, 1992, pp. 2-3). Such use of the language poses a real challenge to teaching English as a second language. The multicultural milieu of the classroom and the diversified competencies of the learners in English are other hurdles, as the teacher has to keep in mind the different proficiency levels of the learners.

The language teacher has also to deal with the different accents and pronunciations caused due to mother tongue influences, which are deeply ingrained in the learners and difficult to correct. The tone, accent, speed, pronunciation and pitch of the teacher can also at times be a challenge for learners and thus, the teacher needs to be careful considering all these factors while

conducting the English class. The teacher has to adopt a bilingual teaching methodology to connect to the learners from different backgrounds that relate well to their mother tongue and are also motivated by the use of their language to understand English. Sometimes, students are frustrated while adapting to the language as they undergo the challenges of accuracy, fluency, adequate vocabulary and correct pronunciation, which leads to stress and tension, and dissuades them from learning English.

Sometimes, the content learnt can itself be a challenge as the cultural implications may not fit into the native culture and create confusion in the mind of the learner as stereotypes and values of learners differ according to their cultural background and pose a serious threat in imbibing a foreign language.

Thus, the language teachers also need guidance on how to use the course books in the classrooms in engineering institutions so as to fulfill the purpose for which they are intended so that the students learn with a positive attitude. The teachers should focus on the enhancement of four skills, i.e. LSRW, through different techniques and appropriate use of technology. The students should be motivated to develop the habit of reading newspapers, which can be followed by quiz and discussions on general topics. This will also help in consolidating their skills in the language. Adequate listening and speaking practice sessions should be conducted in the class and students should be made familiar with the phonetics of English sounds to improve their pronunciation skills. The weaker students

should be included in such discussions and their spoken skills should be improved through healthy interactions to remove inhibitions created due to cultural backgrounds. Students can discuss everyday situations in classrooms to gain clarity and fluency, which will arouse their interest in the language.

Teachers in professional institutions focus on English for professional purpose and can provide intensive practice in letter writing, report writing, preparing documents, making presentations, email writing, etc. They also practically train the students in interview skills and group discussions to improve their employability. Such training removes their hesitations and even the weak learners come forward and participate as they develop the urge to learn in a motivating environment. The use of technology can further improve the situation as the colleges provide ample exposure to English in well-equipped language labs, which offer extensive training in LSRW skills through latest software for this purpose.

Thus, the language learners in engineering colleges can be oriented to overcome the cultural inhibitions and hesitations in adopting a foreign language, which is a key to professional success. A positive attitude, a comfortable and motivating classroom environment, and an integration of technology can aid learning. The teachers can promote universal values in the multicultural environment and may employ varied teaching techniques in the language class to enhance learning and inculcate interest in the learners, which will improve the quality of the future professionals.

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Some useful web tools for speaking skills

English Central (http://www.englishcentral.com/)
English Central is a video site bringing voice to learners. It makes use of both speech recognition and text-to-speech facilities for language learning.

Online Voice Recording Tools
Audiopal (http://www.audiopal.com)
Vocaroo (http://vocaroo.com/)

Both Audiopal and Vocaroo are very simple voice recording tools. You don't need to sign up in these sites. You can record your speech and download it as an mp3 file from these sites. You can preview your recording and can email it to anyone right from these sites. Additionally, Audiopal offers some more facilities. You can record your speech by making phone calls to the numbers given in Audiopal.

Podcasting Tools
Podomatic (http://www.podomatic.com)
Spreaker (http://www.spreaker.com)
Audioboom (https://audioboom.com)

A podcast is an audio broadcast over the web. It is broken up into parts or episodes. Most podcasts are similar to news radio programs and deliver information on a regular basis, but they can also be comedy shows, special music broadcasts or talks. You as a teacher can set up a podcasting channel in Podomatic, Spreaker, or Audioboom.

Voki (http://www.voki.com)
Voki lets you create customized speaking characters. Voki can be an effective tool to practise speaking skills in literature classes. It encourages creativity and interactivity in your classes.

WhatsApp groups
Whatsapp offers another opportunity for language learners to practise their speaking skills. Teachers can create a WhatsApp group for their classes. Learners can record their speeches (up to 1 minute) and can share them in the group. This allows interactivity and peer support in your speaking skills class.

[***Contributed by Dr. Xavier Pradeep Singh***, Dept of English, St Joseph's College, Trichy]

New ESL Teacher for the New Education Policy: A SWOT Analysis

C Praveen

ABSTRACT

The vision of the New Education Policy (NEP-Draft) 2019 reads: ". . . An India-centred education system that contributes directly to transforming our nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high-quality education to all." The chapter on Teacher Education reads: "Teacher preparation is an activity that requires multidisciplinary perspectives and knowledge. . . Heartbreakingly, the teacher education sector has been beleaguered with mediocrity . . ." (p.283). The paper works on the assumption that the shift to an India-centred education necessitates addressing several issues. The author-cum-researcher attempts a SWOT analysis of the English as a Second Language (ESL) scenario vis-à-vis NEP 2019. The paper begins by listing perceptions of writers since 1907 and draws on recent research findings to propose appropriate strategies to address the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. It is hoped that the presentation would benefit curriculum developers keen on preparing a road map for ESL curriculum design and teacher training.

Keywords: ESL; India-centred education; NEP 2019; SWOT analysis.

Introduction

Since June 2019, several forums across the country have been assiduously discussing the Draft of the National Policy on Education 2019. While some perceive in it "excellent individual recommendations on school education" (Kingdon), some opine that NEP "in its current form may prove disastrous" (Robinson). Perhaps the reason for a sense of apprehension arises from the fact that the Draft does not lay out a roadmap for realizing its proposed vision.

The vision of NEP 2019 reads: ". . . *an India-centred education system that contributes directly to transforming our nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society, by providing high quality education to all.*" In the Draft, two observations on Teacher Education in Chapter 15, which formed the trigger to the thoughts and ideas presented in this paper include:

1. "*Teacher preparation is an activity that requires multidisciplinary perspectives and knowledge. . . .*"

2. "*Heartbreakingly, the teacher education sector has been beleaguered with mediocrity as well as rampant corruption. . . .*"

What are the implications for ESL teacher training in view of the suggestions of NEP identified above? How can we refine the 'mediocre' teachers of English who have already entered the profession? What should be the nature of multi-disciplinary training

for ESL teachers in India? How can such training encapsulate an India-centred education? These are some of the questions this paper would attempt to answer.

To answer these questions, the author-cum researcher, who is a teacher-educator by profession, begins by attempting a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis of the issues involved. At each stage of the SWOT analysis, the author identifies pointers that give the direction for ESL teacher training *vis-a-vis* NEP 2019.

SWOT Analysis in a nutshell

For an 'India-centred education' and the evolution of a 'vibrant knowledge society', several changes have to be made at various levels. NEP 2019 has made a reference to the 'mediocre' level of training imparted in teacher training institutions. This then prompts one to inquire about those 'mediocre' products who have already assumed the teacher's role in schools across the country. This is a major **threat**. The **opportunities** of providing an India-based education through teachers likely to produce citizens who are true products of Indian culture, who will steer clear of the current tendency to ape the West, are indeed great. The **weakness** related to the issue is that no one has really thought about a way to overcome the current crisis or even proposed a proper roadmap for an India-centred education. There is, however, a great **strength** and this lies in the fact that Indians are multilingual. So ferreting out Indian treasures, particularly the knowledge database available in an oft-ignored language like Sanskrit, through multilingual instruction where English can be the lingua franca is

likely to be easy for Indian teachers of English.

Utilizing the Strengths

For years, schools in India have been following the three-language-formula, which implies the compulsory study of English, the student's Mother Tongue, and Hindi. Indian teachers of English have been particularly privileged by the fact that they could rely on bilingual instruction or even resort to code-switching while teaching a second language like English. For instance, Anderson and Lightfoot (2018), who studied trans-lingual practices in English language classrooms in India, found occasional use of other languages in the classrooms, most often for comparing and contrasting language features, explaining concepts, managing the classroom and translating for learners. Replacing or including the learning of Hindi with Sanskrit could possibly pave the way for a cultural renaissance in India. The strength lies in the fact that India is multilingual and a teacher of English who can draw on the content of Sanskrit literature while teaching English, can not only make access to our rich heritage a feasibility but also pave the way for unearthing treasures in Sanskrit literature.

In this context, it is worth noting the observation of an erudite Sanskrit scholar Ramaswami Sastri: "The writings of Indian poets and dramatists, historians and biographers contain evidence not only of richness of imagination and variety of feeling, but of a remarkable talent for expressing precisely those adventures of the spirit, which chiefly give to human life its meaning and significance." Perhaps, the path to transforming English language teaching is the

inclusion of chunks of English translations of Sanskrit literature as content of ELT course books. The rationale is that, in Indian classrooms with multilingual settings, when Sanskrit is compulsorily taught, gradually but surely, it will transform into a living language. Even otherwise, teachers can automatically rely on bilingual instruction and occasionally attempt at code switching both in the English classrooms and the Sanskrit classrooms.

A paper penned by the author illustrates the incorporation of English translation of lines from a Sanskrit story by designing specimen tasks focusing on 21th century skills for new ESL course books *vis-à-vis* NEP 2019 (Praveen, ICITELL)

Overcoming the Weaknesses

Before attempting to suggest a solution for the 'mediocre' teachers who have graduated from teacher training institutions, it would only be proper to look into the nature of prior instruction received at the undergraduate or postgraduate level by students who join the Bachelor of Education (BEd) programme with English as an Optional Subject. Incidentally, possessing a BA or an MA degree in English Literature is mandatory for seeking admission to a BEd course in English in most universities across the country. What follows is a review of the nature of pedagogy and the kind of students who register for a programme in English literature both in pre-independent and post-independent India.

In an article titled 'The English Teacher in India' published in **The Indian Review,** Fraser (1907) said: "… the English teacher in India would have his own contribution to bring forward…the first business of the professor is to explain to his students… the ideals by which English literature is penetrated…" Analyzing the pedagogy involved, Fraser observed "…to begin with, there is the grand difficulty of language…Both students and teachers spend much of their time groping about in a fog, striving in vain to catch hold of each other. The effect on each side is depressing: but this is only the first of the teacher's difficulties. The next is the absence of those daily experiences which throw light on the views and ideas of nature. The very climate and scenery of England are wholly unknown to his pupils; much more the manners of the country and the facts of life. Of course, it is part of his task to supply information about these; yet this always remains incomplete."

Almost two decades before Indian independence, Mahatma Gandhi lamented the misplaced importance given to English language by youngsters: ". . . knowledge of English is necessary. . . . giving the nation the best of Western literature, thought and science. That would be the legitimate use of English, whereas today English has usurped the dearest place in our hearts and dethroned our mother tongues . . . it is doing violence to the manhood and specially the womanhood of India. . . . to rid of the infatuation for English is one of the essentials of Swaraj . . ." (*Young India*, 2-2-'21). Incidentally, quoting Gandhi, the present author recently proposed a reinventing of 'Swadesi Movement' to match an India-centred education proposed in NEP 2019 (Praveen, 2019).

More than a century has passed since the article by Prof Fraser was published, but the

craze to pursue English literature continues in the Arts stream in colleges across India. Curiously enough, one seldom asks whether the teachers of English literature in India are performing as effectively as teachers of history or geography.

Times have changed and today English Literature classrooms in the country no longer focus on a monolithic, fixed interpretation of the texts. Instead, the text is open to multiple interpretations, based on discussion, dialogue and debate, thus paving the way for a more fruitful negotiation. But what kinds of students register for a course in English Literature? Singh (2004), who studied the teaching of literature in colleges, observed: "Our students join English courses for various purposes – to enhance their social mobility, status, matrimonial prospects, prepare for competitive examinations and a few to enter and appreciate magical world of English literature and thereby enrich their literary sensibility. A good number of them are "immigrants" or "leftovers" from other faculties – would-have-been scientists, doctors or engineers."

If this were the case, wouldn't it be a more fruitful exercise to study Sanskrit literary classics in translation instead of learning English literary texts, the social milieu of which is alien to the Indian student? Perhaps, if excerpts from English translations of Sanskrit literary texts along with English literary texts which do not demand a thorough grasp of British culture were introduced in courses in English Literature, it would not only open the rich treasures of ancient Sanskrit texts but also help prune the student's own perception of self and life in general.

One problem of immediate concern to be tackled is to develop an appropriate roadmap for actual renaissance in the Indian education system. In recent times, an approach to language teaching that is gaining currency across the globe is Content-Based Instruction (CBI). Research, both of a pedagogical and research nature, has endorsed its effectiveness in language development and content learning (Grabe & Stoller, 1997). Perhaps, an English translation of the Upanishads, texts on the Fine Arts, and various Shastra texts dealing with living crafts could be taught following the strategies applied for content-based instruction.

Online resources which we could rely on include *Samskrutam Studies*, which is an educational portal on Sanskrit language, literature, grammar, stories, puzzles and several other resources to study 'Sanskrit-and-Indic' subjects. Another site worth mentioning, which through many links leads to a mine of resources, is the *Portal to Sanskrit Resources*. And, finally, if one is in quest for multidisciplinary possibilities in the teaching of English, the *Indology* resource site is a must visit. Recently, the author explored such a possibility by conducting a session using quotations from Chanakya's *Neetishastra*, the translation of which is available in English, for fostering critical thinking (Praveen, 2019).

Exploiting the Opportunities

Pandey (2010) begins his article entitled 'Aping of Western Culture by Younger Generations' thus: "The younger generations like fun, enjoyment and adventures. Their fascination for the materialistic culture is quite obvious. They ape western culture.

They are indifferent to their great cultural heritage. Their attitude to the age-long customs and values is quite lukewarm. Sometimes they openly defy and make mockery of traditions, old ideas and ideals…" Well, it is a fact that the current generation of youngsters lives in a media-saturated world and is constantly bombarded by messages which glorify a materialistic way of life, making many acquire the false ideal that the more the money, the more the happiness, and the more money one makes, the more successful one is.

It is commonly acknowledged that with the arrival of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC), lifelong learning and 'anytime, anywhere learning' is becoming a reality. Incidentally, the University Grants Commission is currently exploring the feasibility of permitting students in India to pursue dual degrees simultaneously. The author believes that if MOOC's on ancient Indian texts is offered for college-going students, it will turn out to be a window of opportunity for educators to instill in the youth traditional Indian values such as 'simple living and high thinking'. In this context, it is worth recalling a pronouncement made in *Pragyata*: "Sanskrit forms the substratum of all achievements of the Hindu civilization. In order to access the immense knowledge of the ancients and then applying it to solve problems of the modern era, the revival of Sanskrit is absolutely necessary."

An extract from the chapter on Teacher Education in the Draft of NEP 2019 reads: "Teacher preparation is an activity that requires multi-disciplinary perspectives and knowledge. . . ." (p.283). With regard to higher education, there is a novel proposal for a Liberal Arts Approach. Significantly enough, the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (2010) made significant observations regarding interdisciplinary study: "Education as an area of interdisciplinary knowledge is not merely an application of a few core disciplines, but a praxis and content where theories and practical wisdom are generated continuously" (p.10). This is similar to the current trend in the Arts stream in many universities in the country where there is a move towards interdisciplinary study. It is generally accepted that modern literature draws from disciplines of history, philosophy, sociology and psychology. Given the fact that those intending to pursue a Bachelor of Education programme to become a secondary level teacher of English in Indian schools should have undergone an undergraduate programme in English Literature, the proposal for Liberal Arts Education in NEP 2019 is an added boost: "Liberal Education through an array of different disciplines that include the Arts, Humanities Mathematics and Sciences suitably integrated with a deeper study of a special area of interest" (p.29). However, in a recent critique of the term 'multidisciplinary study' proposed in NEP 2019, the present author expressed concern regarding the pedagogical practices of 'multidisciplinary' instruction particularly in the Arts stream (Praveen, 2019).

Addressing the threat

The reference to 'mediocrity' in NEP 2019 with regard to the teacher education sector, has to be accepted with certain reservations. It is doubtful whether such a generalization

can be made with regard to teacher education programmes particularly in the state of Kerala whose educational programmes are often hailed as novel by the flagship of Indian school education, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). A tangential affirmation is found in the attempt by the present author to classify Indian teachers of English in a study undertaken over a period of time. Drawing on the metaphor of soccer field positions, the teachers were classified as 'Strikers', 'Midfielders' and 'Defenders' and pointed out that each group had its own merits and demerits but is capable of scoring a goal in teaching the English language (Praveen, 2008). The findings of the study prompt the author to perceive the statement of 'mediocrity' as slightly biased and far removed from reality.

Incompetent teachers are definitely a threat to any education system. And in a country like India, where there is a great demand for well qualified and experienced teachers, incompetent teachers are likely to affect the quality of instruction being provided to the new generation who is our hope for the future. Perhaps a proper needs analysis followed by selective training of those who are already in service and compulsory in-service training with a focus on continuous professional development is the only way out. In fact, various researches and studies have shown that in-service training programmes positively improve the quality of education imparted by the teacher, which would ultimately benefit the students (e.g., Patel, 2007). Here, too, several texts from indology can be drawn to enrich the teacher. For instance, Dev (2018) explored the possibility of drawing on the dialectical method in the *Dasopanishad*.

Summing up

In recent years, we have been witnessing a complete shift in perspective in several areas of study in the field of education. Perhaps the time has come to shed the subservient mindset being displayed by many ELT experts and teacher training institutions in the country who tend to assume that the best ideas about teaching a language like English can come only from the land of the native speaker. It is a pity to note that departments of English in major universities continue to think that western culture and literature – British, American or Canadian – are superior to those of our own and are unaware of the gems of Indology. Perhaps the time has come to refine both the teaching of English Literature and ESL pedagogy in the country to realize the aims of an India-centred education and help nurture future citizens who assimilate the wealth of our own nation reminiscent of the ancient universities of Nalanda and Taxila. Great would be the day when those who take up the teaching profession in the country are ones who are living embodiments of the dictum: *Ajnana-Timirandhasya Jnananjana-Salakaya; Chakshurunmilitam Yena Tasmai Sri Gurave Namah* [Translated as: Prostrations to that Guru who, by the collyrium-rod of Knowledge, opens the eyes of those who are rendered blind by the darkness of ignorance – **Guru Tatva**]

This article has attempted to analyze the issues to be addressed for preparing the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher for resurgent India in terms of pre-service and

in-service training. Appropriate strategies, and pointers for the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats vis-à-vis ESL pedagogy for an India-centred education have been highlighted.

The author would, however, like to acknowledge the fact that the observations and suggestions made above are to a large extent the product of research, informal discussions and experience gained from having taught English at secondary, higher secondary, undergraduate, postgraduate, pre-service and in-service levels for over two decades. It is hoped that the views and ideas presented here would benefit curriculum developers keen on preparing a road map for training ESL teachers for a resurgent India.

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Some useful web tools for speaking skills

Podcasting Tools

Podomatic (http://www.podomatic.com)

Spreaker (http://www.spreaker.com)

Audioboom (https://audioboom.com)

A podcast is an audio broadcast over the web. It is broken up into parts or episodes. Most podcasts are similar to news radio programs and deliver information on a regular basis, but they can also be comedy shows, special music broadcasts or talks. You as a teacher can set up a podcasting channel in Podomatic, Spreaker, or Audioboom.

[*Contributed by Dr. Xavier Pradeep Singh*, Dept of English, St Joseph's College, Trichy]

The Story of English 6: Middle English

C A Lal

The period we generally refer to as Middle English is roughly between two major battles, in which two English kings were killed in action – King Harold at Hastings in 1066 and Richard III at Bosworth in 1485. After the first battle, William I ascended the throne of England, and the second set the scene for King Henry VII to establish the Tudor line of kingship. For convenience, we say that Middle English is from around 1150, when the impact of the Norman Conquest became well visible, till 1500, which adumbrated the dawn of English Renaissance.

This was a period of great changes in the English language, both as a result of the Conquest, and as a continuation of tendencies that had begun in Old English prior to 1066. These changes considerably affected the Middle English sound system, grammar and vocabulary. A considerable number of Old English words were lost forever as they were replaced by words adapted or borrowed from French. At the beginning of the Middle English period, the language was very different from the English spoken today, and even Chaucer's English of a few centuries

Whan that Apryll with his shoures sote
The droghte of March hath perced to the rote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the Ram his half cours y-ronne,
And smale fowels maken melodye,

later (see image), reads like a distinct language which needs to be learned. By the close of the age, however, English had become very much like that of today.

For over a century after the Norman Conquest, English was pushed to a status inferior to that of French and Latin. Things changed eventually, and by the fourteenth century, English had found its way back into universal use, and in another century French had almost totally disappeared. The contribution of writers like John Gower and Geoffrey Chaucer played a major role in this reestablishment of English. John Wycliffe's translation of the Bible, copies of which were widely in circulation in the late fourteenth century, contributed immensely to popularize English. The language slowly returned to the palace, to the courts of law, and eventually to the schools.

The most significant change in English language during this period was the great reduction of inflections. The endings of nouns, adjectives and verbs changed considerably. In nouns, much of the word endings disappeared and only –**s** for showing plural remained. The decay of inflections in nouns and adjectives made it necessary to depend less on gender-related suffixes, and more on word order and the use of prepositions. There was a corresponding loss of inflections in pronouns, where several forms indicative of different gender, number and case disappeared in most dialects of Middle English.

Nearly a third of the strong verbs in Old English died out during this period. Strong verbs (usually called irregular verbs) show tense difference by changing the vowel of the base form; for example, *give/gave* and *stick/stuck*. This was most common during Old English and early Middle English. Many of these were systematically replaced by 'weak' verbs. Weak verbs (more commonly called regular verbs) show tense change by adding **-ed, -d,** or **-t** to the base form of the verb (for example, *call/called* and *walk/walked*).

The Norman rulers and their kith and kin who settled in English towns after the Conquest spoke a variety of French known as "Anglo-Norman". This variety died out about two hundred years later, after exerting a long and profound influence upon English. In the 13th and 14th centuries, English was exposed to a new wave of French influence; this time it came from Parisian French, a variety of a more cultivated, literary kind.

The effect of these successive and overlapping waves was seen in a large number of French words in Middle English. Nearly all the words relating to the government and administration of England are French by origin: *assembly, authority, chancellor, council, counsel, country, court, crown, exchequer, govern*. Close to this group are words related to the feudal system and words indicating titles and ranks of the nobility: *baron, count, countess, duchess, duke*. A good number of words belong to the domain of law and governance, which were controlled by the Normans: *acquit, accuse, attorney, case, cause, condemn, court, crime, damage, defendant, false*. Several other French words in English are related to the Church and religion: *abbey, altar, archangel, Bible, baptism, chapel*.

The setting up of Caxton's printing press in 1476 led to the partial standardising of all the new grammatical conventions, the vast changes in vocabulary and the features of spelling. Of the major Middle English dialects, East Midland emerged as the prestigious variety of the period, replacing West Saxon of the Old English period. East Midland became predominant in London, which was fast developing as the capital of the country, and this London dialect which was precisely a northern variant of East Midland, assumed further significance in the coming centuries, and it is from this variety that the 'standard' Modern English evolved.

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[**Editor's Note:** *This is part of a series of articles tracing the history of the English language, to be continued in this column.*]

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Members of ELTAI who read the contributions to the journal are free to give their views on the contents of the articles/papers published here. The letters should reach ELTAI (eltai_india@yahoo.co.in) with **Cc** to the Editor (ramanipn@gmail.com) within a month from the date of receipt of the journal.

Reading Activity – Graphic Organizers*

K. Elango

Objectives

Enabling readers to create graphic organizers for better reading comprehension (verbally and visually) and retention and to develop their higher order thinking skills.

Participation: Individual

Material

Any text – Example: "Children – handle with care". This is a very informative essay dealing with how children have to be helped for their holistic development in three significant areas, viz. academic excellence, social development and emotional development and the parents' and teachers' roles in nurturing them. (http://vikaspedia.in/education/child-rights/children-handle-with-care)

Preparation

Attempting consciously to form graphic organizers for better understanding of different kinds of texts.

Procedure

• Read the selected text rapidly to get a gist of it.

• As you read the text a second time in a detailed manner, make an attempt to convert the text or the key ideas into a suitable visual form, depending upon the nature of the text.

• The essay on "Children – handle with care" lends itself to the visual image of a spider map – the main idea to be placed in the centre and all the related ideas around it. [See the image on the next page.]

• The visual image leads to, besides better comprehension and retention, a plan of action. If one were to be affected by the issue, one would attempt to analyze the causes in one's own context and resort to rectify them to the extent possible or at least resolve not to contribute to such a state of affairs by oneself, which is clearly the purpose of education.

• Visual learning enables one to recall the images with least effort and facilitates the thinking process of analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating the information, leading to an action plan.

Learning outcomes

1) Learners recognize that converting ideas/concepts into visual forms can lead to better understanding and longer retention.

2) Learners realize that scaffolded learning leads them to express themselves effectively, both in spoken and in written modes, even spontaneously, and act on them.

Further activity

Creating different forms of graphic organizers while reading a text (at least mentally, if not in written form) to make it an unconscious reading strategy for better

reading comprehension.

*Graphic Organizers are visual aids, which are used to organize ideas and to show relationships among them. They are found to be very useful for facilitating learning and retention. They are also referred to by different terms, such as story map, concept map, knowledge map, cognitive organizer, and so on. There are many forms of graphic organizers and some of the commonly used ones are flow chart, timeline, fishbone diagram, spider map, KWL, Venn diagram, step-by-step chart, and inverted triangle.

Spider Map

A spider map is an organizational tool used to display knowledge in a visual framework which resembles a cobweb. We can organize information from our reading and make connections in a meaningful structure. Still more importantly, it helps us remember details as one chunk rather in a linear way and plan to act. Besides parents and teachers, a student's circle of friends plays a far more critical role.

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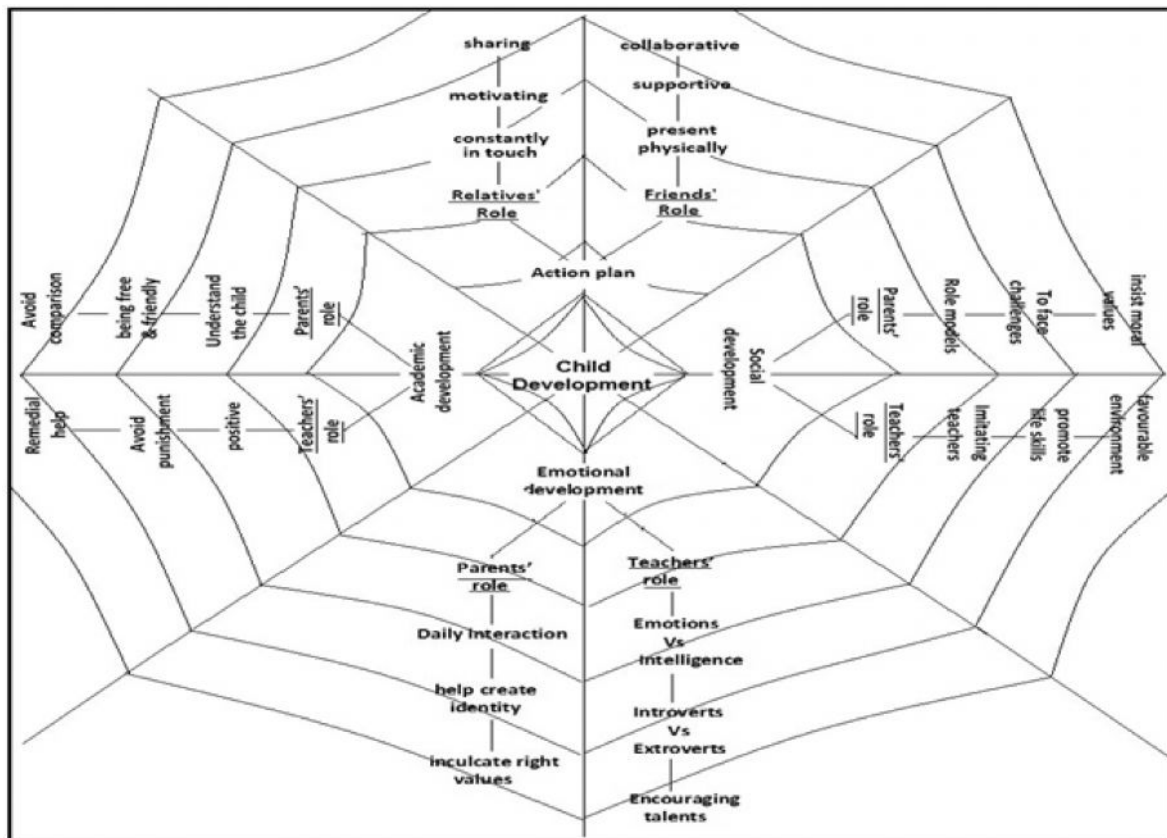
To write or not to . . . The art of writing a research paper.

S Mohanraj

Writing a Research Paper is more of procrastination, speculation, hesitation than execution. I do not say this in any negative sense, but in reality this is what happens to all of us. We do not sit at the computer and start keying in our papers impulsively; a lot of thinking, introspection, revision, discussion (within self or with others) has happened before something can appear on the paper.

Research by definition is *re-search*. We do not aim to find out something new, invent a new thing, but make ourselves aware of what has been around us for a long time, and giving it a reason for people to believe in. If you look at several of the concepts put forth in the field of ELT, you will become more than aware of this fact. We are reminded of what we have been doing in the class as a good method with reasons to prove that it is good. For example, we have been teaching our learners to use language by making them repeat what we have said or make alterations to come out with their own sentences. Using language as the best means to learn it was well practised before it was said in most obvious terms.

Any good research paper should begin with a commitment, a sense of faith and belief in the work we are doing. Why am I taking up this research? Is this a genuine problem? Do my friends have a similar problem? An answer to these questions leads us to think and arrive at a problem (tentative or confirmed) which can be stated crisply. The title of a research paper should not read like the title of a thesis. Here is an example: 'Teaching writing to undergraduates through communicative strategies' might be good enough for a paper, while in a thesis it would be "Developing Writing Skills among Undergraduate Students Using Communicative Strategies in the State of Jharkhand". Perhaps, the research problem in both these cases remains the same, but the scope may change.

Having arrived at the title, it is necessary to reason out what the focus of the paper is on. In this case, we may have students whose writing is weak because of weak competence in language, weak vocabulary, unorganized thought processes as manifest in disjointed sentences or any other reason. A research paper cannot focus on all these aspects. The author has to pick one of these, which appears to be most important (*prioritize*) and pick that up and formulate a strategy (*action research*) to help the learner overcome the weakness. This can be stated as a problem or a hypothesis. A hypothesis is a conditional statement that can either be proved and accepted or rejected. (Rejecting the hypothesis is not a reflection on the scholar's weakness or failure.)

The hypothesis when stated (e.g., 'If learners are exposed to good literary pieces, their organization skills in writing may improve.') can help the researcher plan strategies of teaching or remedying. In this case we have a hypothesis that needs to be established. The learners are undergraduate learners. Their textbooks have literary pieces. Can we analyse these pieces and look for their relevance in terms of their lexical, syntactic and conceptual load and replace them with

appropriate alternatives. The paper should delineate what criteria are used for selecting these pieces and how these can be analysed for their organization.

Some graphics (e.g., flowcharts, web charts, outlines) can be used to help the learners understand the structure of a paragraph which basically has a topic sentence (obvious or apparent) and how this is supported by other sentences. The graphics can show the linkers that bring about the unity among the sentences and how these can be made obvious to the learner. The paper should also suggest how much time is required for the teacher to teach these materials, perhaps six to eight teaching hours, and how these can be divided rationally and what strategies of teaching are employed (e.g., analysis of the text, brainstorming, developing web-diagrams, flow charts, discussing with others, using mother tongue as a support to understanding).

Notes on teaching in the classes followed by assignments written by the students provide the data for analysis. The data has to be presented in a proper form using tables, or using simple percentages where complex statistical analysis is not essential. Data organization in a systematic manner facilitates analysis. Analysis for a simple research paper can restrict itself to generalizing using percentages, or analysis of variance to establish significance of the experiment.

Once the analysis is over, an honest conclusion should be written suggesting to the reader why the author thinks the experiment has either been a success or a failure. Failures, let us remember, are the stepping stones to success. Let us not shy away from them.

One last word! While writing this paper, you would have relied heavily on earlier research. You would have gathered ideas from a variety of sources through your reading, discussion, etc. If you have used these ideas, remember to acknowledge them faithfully. There are accepted ways of acknowledging, and these days, your computer helps you organize your bibliography properly. Beware of plagiarism. This is taken very seriously these days.

These are a few stray thoughts I have put together on how to write a research paper. The key features of the process can be listed as follows:

a. Choose a genuine problem that bothers you.

b. Crystallize it in the form of a title.

c. Define your hypothesis – research problem/questions.

d. Plan your action and describe it.

e. Produce relevant data and analyse it.

f. Give your conclusion.

g. Acknowledge the sources you have used.

Happy writing!

S. Mohanraj, (Formerly) Professor of English, English & Foreign Languages University (EFLU), Hyderabad.

[Editor's Note: *This piece has been reproduced from the March-April 2019 issue of* JELT *(Vol. 61, No. 2), as it is felt that authors who wish to submit their articles/papers will do well to follow these tips from an experienced professional in the field.*]

Have Fun with English

(A Compilation)

These will ease stress from of our lives and make us laugh heartily. Have Fun!

1. What's the difference between a bird watcher and a bad speller?

   One watches birds and the other botches words.

2. What's a synonym?

   A word you use when you can't spell the other word

3. Teacher: You should not say, 'I ain't going'. You should say, 'I'm not going, he's not going, they're not going . . .'

   Student: Gee, ain't anybody going?

4. Why are teachers rather special?

   They are usually in a class by themselves.

5. Teacher: This test is 'multiple choice'.

   Student: Then I choose not to take it.

6. Teacher: What's the difference between an active verb and a passive verb?

   An active verb shows action. A passive verb shows passion.

7. Teacher: What did you do this weekend?

   Student: John and me went to the ball game.

   Teacher: John and I.

   Student: No, you weren't there.

8. Teacher: Who can give me an example of a double negative?

   Pupil: I don't know none.

   Teacher: Very good.

9. How is a judge like an English teacher?

   They both hand out long sentences.

10. Teacher to students: English is an easy language to learn.

    New student to English teacher: Says who? If English is such an easy language, then why does 'a fat chance' mean the same as 'a slim chance'?

11. 'Are your father and mother home, Ramesh?' the teacher asked the boy, a brother of the student she was visiting at home.

    'They was in. They is now out,' replied the boy.

    'Where is your grammar?' asked the shocked teacher.

    'Gra'ma,' said the small boy, 'has gone upstairs for a nap.'

12. 'I've just had the most awful time,' said a boy to his friend.

    'First I got angina pectoris, then arteriosclerosis. Just as I was recovering, I got psoriasis. They gave me hypodermics and, to top it all, tonsillitis was followed by appendectomy.'

'Jeez! How did you pull through?' sympathized his astounded friends.

'I don't know,' the boy replied, 'the toughest spelling test I ever had!'

13. Teacher: Lisa, can February march?

Lisa: No, miss, April may.

14. First girl: My English teacher is like a diamond!

Second girl: You mean, very nice?

First girl: You can't cut her classes!

15. About a boring person Benjamin Disraeli remarks: 'A bore is one who has the power of speech but not the capacity for conversation!'

[Editor's Note: *These fifteen items were selected and compiled by Dr. V. Saraswathi, which were published in May-June 2015 issue of our journal (Vol. 57, No. 2 – in the Golden Jubilee Year of the journal).* [s a r a s . l i n g u i s t i c s @ g m a i l . c o m; saras_linguistics@yahoo.co.in] Her source:

Charles Keller, *The little great book of school jokes*. New Delhi: Goodwill Publishing House.**]**

Here a few more from other sources.

1. George Bernard Shah to Winston Churchill: "I am enclosing two tickets to the first night of my new play. Bring a friend, if you have one."

Churchill in response: "I cannot possibly attend the first night. I will attend the second, if there is one."

2. Oscar Wilde: "He has no enemies, but is intensely disliked by his friends."

3. Samuel Johnson: "He is not only dull himelf; he is the cause of dullness in others."

4. Mark Twain: "Why do you sit there looking like an envelope without any address on it?"

5. Oscar Wilde: "Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, whenever they go."

6. Winston Churchill: "He has all the virtues I dislike and none of the vices I admire."

7. Andrew Lang: "He uses statistics as a drunken man uses lamp posts . . . for support rather than illumination.

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15th International & 51st Annual Conference of ELT@I

(2-4 July 2020)

[likely to be postponed in view of the Covid-19 crisis]
THEME

Turning 'Right to English' into Reality: Need for a Paradigm Shift in the Global Context

Venue: GLA University, Mathura – 281406 (Uttar Pradesh), INDIA.

SUB-THEMES:

1. Language Teaching Policy and its Implementation

2. Changing and Emerging Goals of Teaching and Learning English

3. Integrating Critical Thinking Skills in ELT

4. English for General, Academic, and Specific Purposes

5. Teaching English in the 21st Century: Approaches and Methods

6. Integrating Technology in Language Learning and Teaching

7. English Coursebooks, Workbooks and Supplementary Materials

8. Developing Indigenous ELT Materials

9. Teacher Training, Teacher Education and Teacher Development: Relevance and Usefulness

10. Alternative Modes of Assessment and Testing in ELT

11. Teaching English to Differently-abled Learners

12. Research in Language and Language Education: New Models and Methods

13. 'Global' or 'Local' English for our Learners?

14. English vis-à-vis First Languages in India

15. Indian Writing in English (especially since 1970)

Important Dates

(likely to be revised)

Abstract Submission	:	**25th April 2020**
Notification of Acceptance	:	**5th May 2020**
Full Paper Submission	:	**10th June 2020**

For further details, visit the conference website at:

https://eltaiconf2020.wordpress.com

Email your queries to: eltaiconf2020@ gmail.com or manish.iah@gla.ac.in.

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Manuscript Submission Guidelines

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 about 50 chapters in different parts of India.

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.

Please see the checklist for reviewing manuscripts given at the end of these guidelines.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSIONS

There is no specific deadline for manuscript submissions for each issue and authors may send their submissions anytime.

Authors are expected to follow strictly the following guidelines while preparing their articles for submission:

1. The article should not have been published previously in any form (print or online). A short declaration to this effect should be given on a separate page at the beginning of the article submitted.

2. The maximum length of the article including figures and tables should be 2000 words (excluding the abstract). The manuscript should contain an abstract in 100-150 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. ***Please note that the author(s) need NOT send their photo(s).***

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 (15th edn.) for more details and examples.*

9. The tables and figures used in the manuscript should have numbers in sequence and clear, descriptive titles. The titles should appear above the tables and below the figures. The tables should NOT be sent as images; the contents of the tables should be typed and included in the manuscript.

10. If authentic samples of students' written output are included, they should be typed. The scanned copies of such material should be sent separately as attachments for verification.

11. A list of all the references cited in the text should be given at the end of the article.

   - In each reference, only the author's last name and initials are to be provided.

   - The year is placed after the author's name.

   - Only the first word of the title and the

sub-title (after a colon) are capitalized along with proper nouns.

   - Titles of books and journals should be in *italics*.

   - Quotation marks are not to be used in the title.

   - For electronic sources such as websites, the date of accessing the source should be given in brackets after the URL.

12. ***The filename of the article (in MS Word format) sent as an email attachment should contain key words from the title and the (lead) author's name.***

CHECKLIST FOR MANUSCRIPT REVIEW

1. Does this article present and/or discuss ***issues that are important and relevant*** to the teaching and learning of English in an ESL/EFL context?

2. Is the ***title*** clear, short and appropriate for the content of the article?

3. Is the ***abstract*** brief, clear, inclusive and consistent with the content of the article?

4. Is the ***introduction*** relevant, meaningful and purposeful?

5. Is the ***literature review*** relevant to the article and focussed?

6. Does the article establish a clear ***rationale*** for the study and state the ***problem*** clearly?

7. Are the ***techniques and tools*** used appropriate for the study?

8. Are the ***results*** clearly presented and

discussed?

9. Are the *findings* based on a robust analysis of the data and clearly presented?

10. Are the *conclusions* appropriate and reasonable, and linked to other studies

on the topic?

11. Are *implications* of the findings discussed in the article?

12. Are the *references* appropriate, current, sufficient and consistent with in-text citations?

Consultancy Services by ELTAI

ELTAI is happy to announce its consultancy services in any area of teaching English, especially the use of technological tools for the teaching and learning of communication skills in English. The consultancy will specifically provide resource persons for conducting training workshops on virtual learning, covering the use of digital tools for teaching English in the context of the 21st century, including the following:

- 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 vocabulary and grammar interactively and in context.

Institutions which require consultancy in these areas may write to Prof. S. Rajagopalan at eltai_india@yahoo.co.in with **CC** to Dr. P. N. Ramani at ramanipn@gmail.com.

ELTAI also encourages its members to design and undertake action research (AR) projects at school and college levels and will be happy to support such projects financially to the extent possible. Teachers may submit their AR project proposals to either Prof. Rajagopalan or Dr Ramani, as indicated.

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