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# Journal of English Language Teaching

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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 as an email attachment – **AS A WORD DOCUMENT** to: [eltai\\_india@yahoo.co.in](mailto:eltai_india@yahoo.co.in) (copy to: [ramanipn@gmail.com](mailto: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.46-47).

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***  
Volume LXI Number 4 July–August, 2019

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Our Founder Editor and Publisher

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## **Editorial**

*Dear Members of ELTAI and other Readers*

*We welcome you again to go through and reflect upon the contents of yet another issue of our longstanding journal. We hope that we are offering you a good fare.*

*The salient feature of the current issue is an interview of ELTAI's National Secretary, Dr Elango, by Professor Robert Bellarmine on the former's views on the role of motivation and exposure in language learning, particularly in learning English as a second or foreign language. Based on his personal experience as a learner of English, Prof. Elango makes some insightful observations, which are worth pondering.*

*We hope you will also be eager to go through the regular columns on grammar (Grammar Guru') by Dr Saraswathi, the story of English by Dr Lal and reading activities by Dr Elango (focusing on reviewing a book in this issue). We would encourage you to file these regular features for your future reference.*

*Sangeetha Puthiyedath, in her paper, highlights the need to use the EFL/ESL classroom in order to provide a space for raising cultural awareness and strengthen multiculturalism among EFL/ESL learners, going beyond focusing on the functional aspects of English, and demonstrates how this can actually be done. She also points out how cultural awareness might be considered the fifth language skill besides listening, speaking, reading and writing.*

*Two papers included here deal with the use of technology for teaching and learning English. The one on the mobile English classroom by Akila Indurti shows how teachers of English in rural areas are disadvantaged in respect of facilities for improving their own competence in English and how this lacuna may be addressed using volunteers to help these teachers to enhance their English language proficiency via mobile teaching and learning. The second paper by Sree Prasad reports an experiment carried out by him in developing a software for enabling students at the undergraduate level to learn English vocabulary and use words and phrases confidently and appropriately.*

*In the next article on globalization of English, the authors, Mahesh Kumar and Hari Kumar, seek to clarify the real import of the term "global language" and attempt to trace the causes of English being accorded the status of a global language, such as industrialization, modernization, multiculturalism and the Internet. Prasad and Viswanatha Rao, in their short article on the importance of motivation in teaching and learning English discuss some of the ways in which the language classroom can be made motivating to learners in their efforts to learn English.*

*The last article included here is actually a brief report on a national level workshop on 'Using digital tools for developing learner autonomy' organized by ELTAI; the report is by Revathi Viswanathan and Joyceline Shermila. Before reporting the participants' feedback on the workshop, the authors have tried to discuss the concept of 'learner autonomy' and its importance in enabling learners to become lifelong learners.*

*Please send in your feedback on the articles you have read and go through the manuscript submission guidelines carefully before you send your articles/papers for consideration.*

*P. N. Ramani*

# Interview with K. Elango

## Robert Bellarmine

(Formerly) English Studies Officer, The British Council Division, Chennai, India.

**[Editor's Note:** *The main purpose of the interview, according to the interviewer, was “to discover the role Motivation and/or Exposure have played in [Elango's] learning of English.” The interview questions were sent to the interviewee in advance and the questions as well as the interviewee's written responses have been reproduced here.]*

**[RB:** Robert Bellarmine; **KE:** K. Elango]

**RB:** All in all, what do you think has been the sole or most important factor in your learning of English: Motivation or Exposure? (You can choose both, if that's closer to reality.)

**KE:** *I need to begin from the beginning.*

*English was introduced to me in my 6th standard, which was the practice then in Tami Nadu, but after a couple of years it became a part of the curriculum from 5<sup>th</sup>, and slightly later from 3rd onwards. English was one of the subjects along with four others – Tamil, Maths, Science, and History and Geography. Why we were made to study these subjects continuously till my SSLC, i.e. for 6 years, I have no answer even today. Even if it had to be explained then I don't think we would have understood at that age.*

*English was taught by subject teachers who*

*made no distinction between the language and the subjects they taught. Strangely, almost all those who taught me English were Maths teachers and I still remember one of the rare classes when grammar was taught – it was the usage of ‘will’ and ‘shall’. Although I am unable to recall the examples given, I raised a doubt about why we can't use ‘shall’ where ‘will’ is to be used and the response given was that I could use ‘will’ in 75 percent and ‘shall’ in 25 percent of the cases. And all they did was, with no exception, read out the texts and made us mark the answers for the questions given at the end of lessons and we were mandated to memorize them, mostly at exam times – quarterly, half-yearly and annual.*

*Added to all this, I presumed that Tamil was a universal language as everyone known to me used it for all purposes. No one knew English (looking back) in my village and it was a nil English setting.*

**[Aside:** *I was born in Adikarapatti, Dharmapuri district, a village with about 300 houses and 1600 people. My place had a high school for about 20 nearby villages but no elementary school as the neighbouring village had one. The two tea stalls in my village got the only newspaper – Thina Thanthi – and*

*the panchayat office radio bellowed Tamil songs and news from 4.30 to 8 pm, ending with the Tamil news, which elders in the village listened to and discussed, centring around Kamarajar and Periyar. We were not allowed to be part of it.*

*No house had any form of library (sadly, even today) (Dr. Kalam till his end was talking about the significance of home library), including the school and, in fact, we had an interesting practice of selling the textbooks immediately after the annual exams to our juniors and the proceeds were utilized to buy books from our seniors. If they were tattered, we would sell them off to shops, which were used for bundling the items bought from them.]*

*In short, there was no question of either motivation or exposure to any of us, so we never learnt English as there was no known purpose.*

**RB:** What was the earliest time when you became aware of this?

**KE:** *I became aware of the need to learn English as I stumbled upon to join B.A. Ed. at the Regional College of Education, Mysore, in 1972. Before that I did my PUC in Pachaiyappa's College, Chennai, and was made to study all the subjects in English. The scenario was an extension of my school but the only difference was we had bazaar notes for all, including English. . . . we did not have*

*many working days and I managed my college life with two words – “Yes, Sir”, when the attendance was taken and “No, Sir” when anything else was asked but there was not much need for it, as the class had 100 plus students. When I applied for B.A. Ed., I had to travel to Chennai to get the form filled in by my ‘contacts’, who were doing their degree courses.*

*Hardly did I realize I was applying for B.A. Literature programme, as I imagined that it was some kind of Arts course, having decided not to pursue science subjects. The shock came when I attended the first day's class and thought of discontinuing it the same day but what held me back was the stipend given to me – it was a merit scholarship for the 50 percent of the class, which was just Rs.75/- and that was more than enough for all the expenses.*

*The compelling reason for learning English was that most of my classmates spoke English, especially girls. In the first year I was more of an isolationist, as I did not have the language and did not do well in my studies and, consequently, lost my scholarship in the second year. So, the sense of shame and the loss of stipend made me realize that I needed to stay on course. The sound exposure to the language from my teachers, friends' circle and my study habit came to my rescue. I bought the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary, as suggested*

*by the teachers, which I used day in and day out. It was a sacred book for me. In short, to quote Pit Corder, there was a communicative compulsion and communicative environment for me to pick up English.*

**RB:** Was the integrative aspect of motivation part of *your* motivation? In what ways did it originate? How has it been strengthened or weakened? “Machiavellian” motivation is the opposite of integrative motivation. For example, the Indian leaders of our struggle for independence learnt English to fight against the British, to argue with them, and in various ways, use English in their struggle for freedom. In some ways, was this one of the aspects of your motivation? Can you please explain and illustrate this?

**KE:** *Hardly was I aware of either the integrative or Machiavellian motivation. All I desired was just to be able to interact with my classmates, teachers and friends in English. I often wonder whether these are some fancied notions of the empty theoreticians. I have known many professors who have had impeccable English and never deviated from their Indianness – continued to eat idly and sambar, enjoyed Carnatic music, prayed to Indian gods and goddesses – Muruga, Ganesa, Venkatachalapathy, Durga, and so on. Integration was never on anyone’s mind.*

*The most British among the Indians was our first prime minister and I don’t think even he*

*thought of integrating, despite all his connections, with the native culture. I guess, it is just a myth fashioned by the natives to create an ever-longing desire in us to integrate with them, knowing fully well about its non-achievability. It is like the American myth of a melting pot, which is now turned into a salad bowl, realizing integration is unachievable. Reflecting on it in today’s context, it appears to be merely a “Maya” or mirage. What will this achieve for us? I always want to remain an Indian and perhaps, integrate with the English teaching community nationally, if possible globally.*

**RB:** In your high school and college days, what ELT methods did your teachers use? (Please note: Although the “Language through Literature Method” has not been as well known as the Grammar Translation, Structural, Direct, Communicative and Communicational methods, it was certainly recognized as a method by CIEFL.)

**KE:** *In hindsight, I don’t think any of my high school teachers had even an iota of an idea about teaching methods, approaches, techniques, strategies for English. The only method they followed was reading out the prescribed texts aloud, (I wonder how fluent and accurate they were), and getting us to memorize the answers. At the undergraduate level, though I had great teachers, I am not aware whether they followed any particular method. I love to check with my teacher, Prof.*

*Suchita Medappa/Nagesh, who is quite active today in the ELT field.*

**RB:** Can you recall the teachers, both in your school and college days, who contributed to the increase and decrease of your motivation? In what ways did they increase or decrease your motivation? Were the materials and techniques and personal rapport some of the aspects of what affected your motivation?

**KE:** *None from my school or Pachaiyappa's college did it collectively but the Regional College teachers did it. I don't think they had done anything explicitly but I watched them in action and in turn got motivated. I wonder whether others among my classmates got the same level of motivation, as I suspect that they did not make the kind of progress that I made.*

**RB:** Apart from the prescribed texts, what did you use as sources of your exposure to written English? To spoken English?

**KE:** *My major thrust was familiarizing myself with the prescribed textbooks, which was demanding enough, hence I rarely read anything other than them. But I used to spend some time everyday reading through English newspapers and magazines. Even today I am not much of a reader as I find it taxing. I did not make any attempt to improve my speaking or writing skills independently. I was exposed to proficient English in my*

*classes and I carried out the assignments given to us and tried to speak some kind of English with my friends. I still remember one of the first few sentences I spoke – "Sleep is coming to me." I would say, my effort was to acquire the language naturally and holistically rather than the skill-based approach which we today swear by. I am in serious doubt, whether we have made some of our learners better speakers and some others better writers. Learners who gained some level of competence are able to perform equally well in all the four skills. We need to revisit the approach followed all over the world now.*

**RB:** Approximately, from what age to what age do you think you learnt English, irrespective of the levels of mastery? Are you still learning it? During this period, have Motivation and Exposure played the same role with the same intensity and vivacity? Can you explain or illustrate it?

**KE:** *Perhaps when I was nineteen (the year I joined RCE, Mysore) or twenty, I started employing some form of English. Of course, I continue to learn every day and today I learnt 'aces the role of the antagonist'. But the difference seems to be that of not focusing on individual words in isolation but in their contexts. I strongly believe in what Canto said three thousand years ago, Know what you want to say and the words would follow. When I focus on the chunks of language or*



*the ideas, expressions seem to stick on and become part of my mental lexicon. I have come across many learners with a good fund of vocabulary but unable to use them appropriately. Going by my experience I would restrict the use of books, which claim to teach vocabulary to the beginners, intermediate and advanced level learners. This straight-jacketing does not have to be authentic all the time. My daughter when she was just about 8 yrs old used the word 'remuneration' when she was talking to Fr. Peter. This surprised him, as well me, to hear an expression of this sort. We seem to be restricting our learners' natural learning capabilities by our approaches, at least in my case. When I joined RCE, I was thrown into the sea of words and I had the choice to choose what I wanted to learn. At my age and the kind of learner that I am now, I am no longer conscious of motivation and exposure.*

**RB:** Pit Corder said, "Given motivation and exposure, second language learning is automatic." But I believe that given motivation, exposure is automatic and therefore second language learning is. In contrast, Dr N S Prabhu said in the eighties that the only thing we can be sure of in second language learning is Exposure, Exposure in an extended sense to include methods and materials. What do you think?

**KE:** *If exposure is so very significant, all my*

*classmates in RCE should have acquired a commendable level of proficiency but which was not the case. And, having lived in Mysore for 4 years and Hyderabad for 2 years I remained unaffected by any of those local languages – What a shame! Exposure had no impact. African Americans even after 400 years continue to have their kind of English and pronunciation, despite being immersed in American English. NRIs I have interacted with have remained very Indian in their pronunciation and not any noticeable level of enhancement of English skills. The children of living legends, be they sports, literature, music, acting or any other domain, hardly exhibited the same level of the expertise of their parents, leave alone surpassing them. Arjun Tendulkar, Abhishek Bachchan, Kannadasan's sons or daughters, even one among them, despite exposure and motivation are unable to acquire any status.*

*If I venture to mention a couple of names, (I don't know whether they would agree with me) Dr. V. Murugan (one who edited Advanced Learners' Oxford English and Tamil Dictionary) and Dr. K. Chellappan . . . have turned out to be expert users of the language.*

**RB:** In the ELT context, do you think creating, arousing and maintaining motivation is partly the responsibility of the classroom teacher(s)? What about syllabus writers, textbook writers, and question-

paper-setters? Alternatively, is it solely the responsibility of the learner and their parents? If motivation is of paramount importance, why haven't the editors of professional journals included a permanent section on it? Will ELTAI's *JELT* do this one day?

**KE:** *As Robin Sharma, the author of The Man Who Sold His Ferrari, has put it, motivation is something which is fleeting. I guess, as it is a thought or feeling it can't remain at the same level even in a single day – one hits highs and lows. I am not downplaying its significance but it is not of paramount importance. Although everyone – syllabus designers, textbook writers, question paper setters and parents, collectively – has a role to play, it is ultimately the teacher and the taught, who are vital for getting inspired and sustaining it to the extent possible.*

**RB:** Can English or any L2 be learnt without any motivation? Is such a situation imaginable or plausible?

**KE:** *Learning, be it language or content, is a complex process. Foregrounding motivation and exposure alone is similar to missing the wood for tress. Given the high level of motivation – many say it with a sigh, “if only I knew English...”, and the best exposure, if learners don't invest their time and energy, and more importantly, possess individual ability/skill/talent learning is almost impossible.*

*Stephen Krashen's widely quoted concepts such as Affective Filter and  $i+1$  (as if these are final words in language learning) appear to be weird to me (or am I weird?) as I sincerely believe that some of my best learning happened when my teachers were devils in the class. And, leave alone teachers to decide for the entire class, even a single learner on any given day may not be aware of his  $i+1$ . So instead of being blindfolded by theories of this kind, we need to investigate the learning processes based on our realities.*

*Learning a language, or anything for that matter, even today resembles the proverbial story of 'The Elephant and Six Blind Men'. Although motivation and exposure are critical factors, there is more to it. Recently, a psychologist described the success mantra for any kind of learning as **grit**, i.e. passion and perseverance, and there are certain other factors, which could be culture-specific. When there are 37 percent of Indians who are bilinguals of whom 7 per cent are multilinguals, learning languages is in our DNA, so we need to tell the world how languages should be taught and learnt and not be eclipsed by the existing half truths.*

**RB:** On the theme of this interview, Motivation and/or Exposure, what are your final comments?

**KE:** *Learning English rather late in my life has just enabled me to acquire it only as a*



conscious competence and not an unconscious competence, which is required for automated or spontaneous use of the language. Further, having taught English for more than three decades at the tertiary level and conducted formal interviews for thousands of candidates, who were migrating from our country, I could state with certainty that rural learners, despite years of some kind of exposure and intense training some time, are unable to attain the proficiency level

of their urban counterparts in terms of fluency, pronunciation and range of vocabulary and grammatical items. Therefore, English or any language has to be taught early in life, as told by the Tamil poet Avvaiyar “ilamayil kal” (catch them young). No amount of English language teaching at the college level facilitates learners, even if highly motivated, to acquire it seamlessly. A few success stories cannot become the norm.

#### Letters to the Editor

*Read almost all, but the one which left the mark on me was Ramani's paper [on teacher development]. What a keen observation has been done and organised in [a] perfect way. The eagerness of learning, the untouched, the guilt of [been] accepting new ideas and leaving the old one. Both physiological as well as psychological struggling of a teacher or apt to say new learner is truly [portrayed] very well.*

**Michelle Amol Kharbas**, Sinhagad Public School, Solapur, Maharashtra

[Received on 23rd August 2019 through WhatsApp from Prof. Dhanappa Metri, Solapur]

*With interest, I read the article on 'Whither teacher development: Stubborn continuity or winds of change?' published in the [May-June 2019 issue of the] Journal. I would like to share my opinion.*

1. *Even now many attend the programme to get OD ['on duty' permission] from the college.*
2. *A few members try the new methodology but they are lagging behind in completing the syllabus.*
3. *As English is a helping subject, the respective HoDs object to our pedagogy and compel us to revert [to the usual routines].*
4. *Sometimes we need help in using technology, which is not available to us.*
5. *Digital learning is emphasized and that has stopped with uploading materials in the computer but no one seems to be serious about [it] as exams are being considered only on our text-based teaching.*
7. *Personally, I tried to introduce BEC [Business English Certificate] classes. Though it went on well for 3 years, I couldn't continue due to cost factor.*

*In short, I feel, unless the UGC insists on getting credits through value-added courses nothing can be done.*

**S. Padmasani Kannan**, Dr MGR University of Education and Research, Chennai

[Received on 28th August 2019]

# Exploiting heterogeneity: Culture awareness and the EFL classroom

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## ABSTRACT

*Can the EFL classroom be perceived as a space to raise cultural awareness and strengthen the idea of multiculturalism? Culture is considered as the domain of literature, and language teachers generally tend to shy away from any nuanced discussion concerning it. Even when we include concepts like critical reading and critical thinking in the EFL classroom, there is a resistance to introduce contested or controversial areas like what constitutes cultural awareness and the place of multiculturalism. However, perceptions are changing and prominent applied linguists have even described “culture” as the fifth skill placing it along with the four major skills, namely LSRW (listening, speaking, reading and writing).*

*Language is an expression of the culture that engenders it and carries embedded within it the markings of that culture. Therefore, if one approaches the question putting aside preconceived notions of what is viable within an EFL setting, one realizes that language teachers are situated in a unique position – they are already teaching a seminal aspect of culture! This paper proposes to examine the viability of introducing culture and intercultural communication and multiculturalism in the EFL classroom. It will also attempt to explore pedagogical tools and practices that can be used in the EFL classroom to facilitate such a study.*

**Key words:** Cultural awareness in language learning; intercultural communication; multiculturalism; socio-cultural sensitivity.

## 1. Introduction

Culture has always been an integral part of the literature classroom. Literary texts have been scrutinized based on their cultural coding from the time of Plato. When Plato emphasized the impact of literary works on the mind of the readers, and questioned its desirability, he was acknowledging the influence of literary texts on human behaviour. Critical thinkers who examine

the nature of language and literature also concur with the idea that language and literature can impact behaviour. In fact, the point of departure for theorists who study language as a unit of discourse and the linguists is that while traditional linguists focus on the form, structure and patterns undergirding language, discourse analysts treat language as existing beyond the “sentence boundary” and having implied



functions and embedded connotations. Language does not exist in a sociologically and psychologically neutral space. Any utterance carries embedded within it genetic markers that flag its origin and location of production. Even the study of linguistics incorporates this aspect as is evidenced by the so-called “critical linguistics” (van Dijk, 1984; Fowler, 1986; Halliday, 2009). They argue that discursive structures or linguistic usage encodes ideological patterns that reflect different ideologies. For instance, Pierre Bourdieu observes that through education one not only acquires language but also “socially constituted attitudes towards language” (Dillon, 1994).

**1.1** Marxist thinkers such as Louis Althusser, Michel Pecheux, and Fredric Jameson have studied discourse as a tool for exerting power, the manner in which language is used to perpetuate and legitimize oppression. Feminist thinkers have also deconstructed language to expose embedded misogyny and the devaluation of the feminine. Critical thinkers, other than Marxist and Feminist thinkers, have pointed out the biases inherent in the manner in which language is used. For instance, postcolonial theorists have attempted to unpack the cultural associations that have accrued to words connected with non-white races. However, while uncovering ideological underpinnings of a language is a legitimate endeavour, thinkers like Foucault have also consistently warned against the silencing and controlling aspect of hegemonic discourses that threatens, silences and challenges deviant discourses.

**2.** Analysing discourse might not come under the purview of language studies in an EFL setting but if one needs to sensitise the learner regarding the ideological implications embedded in a discourse and the writer’s choice of words, one needs to explore the role of culture. If one accepts the basic premise that language emerges from a group of people and as such is culturally coded, one cannot but become aware of the insidious manner in which language perpetrates belief and value systems. Given this fact, a teacher of a language has an important role to play. One can even claim that a language teacher is in an enviable position: she can use the opportunity of teaching a language to explore questions of culture, challenge deeply ingrained prejudices and create an opportunity to promote multiculturalism.

**2.1** The link between language and culture was recognized in the early half of the twentieth century. Edward Sapir claimed in the 1920’s that language and the culture of its speakers cannot be analysed in isolation. Researches into L2 curriculum not only explored the possibility of including cultural components in language teaching (Sysoyev & Donelson, 2002) but also examined the possibility of using L2 as a means to encourage acculturation and assimilation among the migrant communities (Kramsch, 1996). Lado, the linguist, highlighted the advantages inherent in comparing the cultural systems in the native language with those of the target language. In his influential book (1957), he states: “in the comparison between native and foreign

language lies the key to ease or difficulty in foreign language learning.” The book outlines methods for comparing two systems of sound, grammar, vocabulary, writing, and significantly, culture.

**2.2** However, with increasing emphasis placed on the communicative aspect of language, the cultural aspect has been effectively marginalized. After years of focus on conversational skills, language teachers have become increasingly dissatisfied with the importance placed on the functional uses of language. The recognition that language embodies culture brought about a rethink on the manner in which language is approached. When one uses literary texts or authentic materials to teach a language, one is also teaching the cultural values inherent in the target language. The only option they realize is to do it consciously.

**2.3** The impetus to include “culture” in the EFL classroom in the west is the desire to promote acculturation among the immigrants to the new culture as pointed out by Kramsch. In Asia, Africa and Latin America, the motivating factor to encourage multicultural competence is to package it as part of skill enhancement in a world where business interest and travel inevitably lead to cross-cultural encounters. The fact that it might encourage tolerance for diversity within home communities appears to be a collateral advantage.

**2.4** Given the fact that learning a new language exposes one to the culture of the speakers of that particular language, one can safely assume that the EFL classroom

can facilitate multiculturalism. However, teaching “culture” and “cultural awareness” is phenomenally difficult. The difficulty begins with our understanding of the word “culture.” “Culture” denotes different things to different people. To a social scientist, it can denote the customs, beliefs and traditions of a group of people; to a cultural anthropologist, it denotes the norms and values that govern societies; and to a teacher of literature in the culture studies department, it can refer to different and suppressed streams of cultures that lie beneath a monolithic façade called *culture*.

**3.** In the second language classroom, culture is more often than not treated in a reductionist manner. “Over the years, the many explicit and implicit definitions of culture in second language pedagogy have led to what Schollan calls ‘miniaturization of the concept of culture so that researchers study and write about the culture of the school or even the culture of the classroom,’” observes Hinkel (1991). In fact, in most classrooms where there is an attempt to introduce culture as part of language learning, culture is reduced to the four “f’s” – food, fairs, folklore, and (statistical) facts, remarks Kramsch (1991: 218).

**3.1** To counter such a stereotypical approach, it is necessary to begin with a questioning mind. A good starting point appears to be inculcating an awareness of one’s own cultural heritage. Because of the pervasive familiarity of the members to a particular culture, their assumptions may appear self-evident and axiomatic. Therefore, a starting point would be to define



*culture* as including two aspects – products and processes. Discussing products created by a culture gives one an easy point of entry to initiate discussion about culture. They include food, clothes, artefacts, folklore, myths, etc. The difficulty is more pronounced when we come to ideas and beliefs. Hence, it might be more suited to the upper-intermediate or advanced, as the challenge would be in terms of both vocabulary and conceptual understanding. The task will become even more difficult when one moves from an examination of culture associated with L1 to an alien culture that the learner is being exposed to through L2.

**3.2** The instructor in L2 should recognize that culture has a significant role to play in the learning of a language. Moreover, it will sensitize the student about appropriate modes of usage and behaviour. For instance, when a person learns a language but is ignorant of the cultural practices of the people who speak that language, the possibility of him/her displaying inappropriate language behaviour is very high. This can have significant implications. Many scholars have observed that non-native speakers often display inappropriate language behaviour. They appear to be unaware of what is acceptable or not. This problem can be addressed to a considerable extent in the EFL classroom and the students can become much more socio-culturally sensitive.

**3.3** It is, therefore, desirable that the practising language teachers should develop a pedagogy to realize this. Then the language

classroom becomes truly multicultural and the students are able to break the shackles of narrow parochialism and resist xenophobia. In a world that is increasingly becoming polarised along nationalistic ideologies, such an endeavour will go a long way in creating a more inclusive and tolerant society. The language teacher can exploit the different cultural backgrounds of her students to initiate a discussion about commonalities and differences between cultures and to expose students to the concept of acceptance of differences and multiculturalism.

**4.** My EFL classroom provided an ideal situation to explore the question of multiculturalism because there were students from more than 20 nationalities. The class consisted of a group of adult learners who were in India as part of the International Training Programme at The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad. Learning about multiculturalism and tolerance can begin only with oneself. A good starting point to integrate multicultural competence is to ask students to identify two products and two processes from their own culture. Once they wrote down two products and processes from their culture they were asked to note down a process that they liked and one that they disliked. This proved challenging because there were a few students who were uncomfortable with identifying processes from their country that they dislike. These students appeared to feel that criticising their country in front of other nationalities was tantamount to betraying their country

and culture. So I initiated the discussion by identifying a process that I liked in India and one that I did not like. Then the students too shared with the class processes that they approved and disapproved. This was followed by a group discussion because many of the processes needed elaboration because of their unfamiliarity. If it is an advanced group, this could be followed by a written activity wherein the students are asked to justify/give reasons for their choice. Allied activities like learning vocabulary and presentation can also be integrated into this module.

**4.1** Food can be used to sensitize students about prejudices. Kramsch describes food as one of the most commonly used starting points to initiate a discussion about multiculturalism. A lot of prejudices and reactions are centred on food. One way to make students aware of inherent prejudices is to expose them to different eating habits. In my EFL classroom, I put up a slideshow of different birds and animals – chickens, geese, peacocks, dogs, horses, pigs, cows, snakes, locusts, grubs and beetles. Then I ask the students whether they recognize any common factor. The common factor is that they are all eaten by human beings in different parts of the world. The initial reaction is disbelief, sometimes disgust. I follow it up with a general discussion explaining that, what one group considers disgusting can be looked at very differently by another group and what dictates our taste is actually the culture we grow up in.

## 5. Conclusion

The L2 classroom has a unique advantage.

It can facilitate intercultural communication and become a meeting point between two cultures: one represented by L1 and the other represented by L2. In such a setting, students will be more receptive to examine ideas that they have taken for granted because it is part of their culture. When correctly explored, exposure to multiculturalism will encourage teachers and students to examine the shared and the unique aspects on the one hand, and, on the other, the affinities and the reactionary aspects of the cultural spaces they occupy. This will give them an opportunity to identify and comprehend the central and the marginal, the relatively stable and the volatile, the cohesive and the subversive elements in those spaces. The exposure to other cultures can encourage tolerance and appreciation of diversity among the students. This appears to be the need of the hour.

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# The Mobile English Classroom

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## ABSTRACT

*An aspirational India wants to learn English primarily for achieving literacy in English, for acquiring basic proficiency in English, and for improving the language skills that will help them move up the ladder of social success. English is not the language of transaction in rural areas and teachers labour hard to master the language which they do not use regularly outside their classes. The English language skills of the teachers in rural India are woefully inadequate and when such teachers teach English, the students' learning of the language suffers. How can we upgrade the language skills of these teachers so that ultimately the students would be able to gain proficiency in English? Can technology be effectively leveraged to help rural school teachers attain a reasonable degree of proficiency in English? Can we tap the huge potential of educated Indians who are willing to help in the mission to upgrade the language skills of rural teachers? This article tries to explore these issues.*

**Keywords:** Mobile learning; English proficiency of rural teachers; Technology for language learning.

## Introduction

English has come to represent a symbol of people's aspirations across India and proficiency in the language helps them to participate in various spheres of activity. In a country that is rich in diversity like India, English is seen as a binding force. Students from non-English-speaking backgrounds, especially from the rural and semi-urban areas of India, struggle to learn the language due to a variety of reasons. Though they are very good in other subjects academically, their lack of skills in English leaves them behind, especially when they migrate to

cities for purposes of higher education or to seek employment. Competitive exams call for English as a medium of examination. This is a major area where rural students lag behind and here is where the divide becomes more prominent.

## The Harsh Reality

English is not the language of transaction in rural areas and the teachers labour hard to master the language which they do not use regularly outside their classes. Teachers use it out of compulsion and students learn it only to pass the examination. Teachers' capabilities must be continuously built and



they must be encouraged to master the language if they have to teach the students effectively. In-service trainings are hardly conducted in these schools and even if they are, these trainings do not target all the teachers, as resources and infrastructure are limited. Spoken English classes are held in cities and big towns by trainers and the prohibitive cost of these courses makes them out of reach of these rural teachers.

How then do we bridge this gulf? How can we upgrade the language skills of these teachers so that ultimately their students benefit? Can technology be effectively used to help rural school teachers attain a reasonable degree of proficiency in English? Can we tap the huge potential of educated Indians who are willing to help in the mission to upgrade the English language skills of rural teachers?

### **Non-availability of Opportunities for Training**

Writing in her blog, Zazulak (2015) estimates that close to 22 million students benefit from learning online and that it is only set to grow as more and more programmes are offered as Massive Open Online Courses (or MOOCs). Attending a virtual classroom is beneficial as it is not only convenient but also offers a better flexibility in terms of time, distance and content delivery. But is this an option for the rural teachers in our country?

Many institutions of repute have been conducting English language courses targeting teachers but these have not reached the majority of rural schools. Online

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courses are conducted regularly but these have eluded the rural pockets of India. Erratic net connectivity and reluctance to use, or non-availability of, computers dissuade them from joining online courses.

### **An Experiment**

This is where 'The Mobile English Classroom' plays a great role in ensuring that teachers attain minimum proficiency in the English language. It works on the principle of '*Each One Teach One*', and is motivated by the moral and social responsibility that each educated person in this country can shoulder. In a vast country like India, it is very difficult to achieve success in any programme by relying only on government initiatives. In reality, many such programmes initiated by policymakers remain only on paper. Rather than blaming government initiatives and institutions, it is far more effective if volunteer-driven efforts are organized at micro levels. Innovative programmes using volunteers who are willing to go the extra mile by committing their time and energy can be very effective in achieving the English language proficiency goals of such teachers. We can create socially-aware groups who are sufficiently motivated to help those disadvantaged in the area of English language proficiency. The word 'Mobile' here refers to both the mobility of the classroom and the mobile phone.

### **How does the Mobile English Classroom function?**

1. Select a school in the rural/semi-urban area that evinces interest.

2. Enroll teachers who are interested in improving their English language proficiency.
3. Enlist volunteers who will mentor the teachers.
4. Prepare well-designed lessons focusing on all the skills: LSRW.
5. Roll out the programme in the school.

### **The Classroom Content**

The programme is conducted at three levels: Basic, Intermediate and Advanced. Teachers can start at the basic level and move up the ladder by completing the lessons at their own comfortable pace as the aim is to build their foundation in English and not mere completion of the course. Each level has thirty lessons and it is hoped that by the end of the advanced course they would have completed ninety lessons. During this period, teachers have the opportunity not only to learn the skills on a one-on-one basis with the designated trainer/mentor but also immerse themselves in an English-speaking environment, which is not available otherwise to these teachers. Each lesson focuses adequately on each of the skills, namely LSRW, with teachers learning at their own pace.

### **Who can conduct the Mobile English Classroom programme?**

- Service-minded organizations with a proven record of carrying out service initiatives in the field of education;
- Corporates as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives;

- Elite schools which can extend a helping hand and serve as a 'buddy school' to a less fortunate school and its teachers; and
- Residential Community clusters.

### **Who can volunteer to become trainers by being a part of this initiative?**

College students with good English language skills, retired teachers from schools and colleges, retired professionals, working professionals, and home makers who are educated and are on a sabbatical or have quit their jobs and hence have some free time at their disposal.

### **How are the trainers chosen?**

The trainers chosen for this programme should have a passion to serve the community, the patience and a capacity to motivate adult learners, and be willing to engage with teachers from rural areas. They should be willing to commit 20 minutes of their time three times a week for this programme. Moreover, they should have a reasonably good proficiency in the English language as well as in the local language.

### **Why should they volunteer?**

The volunteers, it is believed, are interested in giving back to society what they can. Fuelled by the spirit of altruism, they would find this a good opportunity to use their knowledge and skills while serving the less privileged. They also come to realize that it is a self-rewarding service and that there is real happiness in this.

Besides, trainers can be anywhere in the world, as long as they are proficient in English and the local language of the teachers undergoing the training programme; the trainee-teachers also need not move out of their homes to learn the language.

### **When can the mobile English classes be conducted?**

Some schools allot twenty minutes a day, three days a week during the school hours as the management understands the importance of the English course for the teachers. This depends on the availability of the trainers, too. But in most cases, phone calls take place during evenings at a mutually convenient time for both the trainer and the teacher. Working professionals prefer the late evening hour to place the calls.

### **How are the lessons made available to the teachers?**

The lessons, which cover all the four skills of the language, are sent via WhatsApp and teachers take a copy or the school provides a printed copy of the daily lessons. Teachers have these lessons before them when the trainer places the call and together they cover each section. A small audio clip in good English is sent to the teacher to improve their listening skill. Passages for reading are provided in the lessons. The trainer engages the teacher in conversation and finally gives a few exercises to enable the teacher to develop their writing skills.

### **Research and Feedback**

The Mobile English Classroom is also known  
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as 'Phone your Friend', as the trainer is a mentor and friend who guides by handholding the teacher virtually to help her/him learn the nuances of the English language.

As an experiment in the field of ELT, this programme is being conducted in a few sample schools. Do the teachers converse in English with their students and attempt to speak in English with their colleagues in the staff room after the intervention? This is a practical yardstick to measure the improvement in the English language skills of the teacher. Teachers and trainers also give their feedback continuously and this helps in keeping the experiment dynamic.

### **A Case Study**

ABC is a huge apartment complex in the heart of a tech park in the city of Bengaluru. The techies and their families decided to help a village school nearby. The management and the teachers requested for help in improving their English language skills, as that would help the school attract more students and also help the teachers to impart quality education almost on par with a few elite schools in the vicinity. Children of domestic helpers, drivers and cleaners who work in the apartment complex study in this village school. The Mobile English Classroom is a boon to the teachers of this school and the programme is being conducted by competent volunteers from the apartment complex.

### **Advantages to the teachers**

Among other benefits, this programme helps

the teachers to shed their inhibitions and gain confidence as they are less conscious of what others think of them because the virtual classroom provides a cloak of invisibility. They learn to speak better in English and get opportunities to correct their mistakes while conversing with the trainers.

As adult learners, teachers are almost always shy and hesitant in a face-to-face language class, which is not the case in the mobile classroom as classes are conducted using mobile phones. Thus, there is a great deal of reduction in learner anxiety.

### **Can such an initiative benefit the society?**

A school which has teachers who speak reasonably good English will certainly see an improvement in student enrolment as word spreads in the local community about the presence of such teachers in a particular school. Improved English language skills help the teachers and students to engage with people from other places as language serves as a window to the world. Students are able to access many avenues and they can become innovators in their chosen fields, which can definitely bring great benefits to the society. Communication channels open up to those whose English language skills are good.

### **Critique**

The idea itself may sound idealistic and bold but deep-rooted problems in society require out-of-the-box, innovative solutions. The New Education Policy has dealt with teacher

training and development at great length and says that if the country has to produce well-educated students of merit, quality teaching should be provided. Rather than expect miracles to happen and wait endlessly to upgrade existing systems, it would be prudent to give a chance to offbeat solutions if they can solve the problems in our education system.

Can volunteers' enthusiasm be sustained? The motivation for the volunteers is intrinsic as they see their trainees doing well and become proficient in English. Organisers can constantly motivate them and paint the larger picture that they are playing an important part in nation building as they are helping countless teachers and, through them, students from the rural areas. If the country has won freedom by galvanizing its citizens in the last century, it can also create a selfless posse of people who would like to pass on the benefits they have received through quality education to their less fortunate counterparts in the remote corners of the country. After all, it is the right of every child to receive education on par with others. Just because a child is born in a rural part of this country, it need not be deprived of English language education.

Is it possible to reach out to the teachers using mobile phones? MOOC is an idea that has come to stay and all universities are hailing it as a wonderful tool to reach out to the entire country. The Mobile English Classroom is an experiment born out of years of my travel across the rural areas of our country as part of a team imparting training to the teachers. I have seen



teachers struggling to read or speak in English though ostensibly they had been teaching English as a subject to the students. This is the reality that cannot be ignored in our country. This experiment has certainly touched the lives of a few teachers though it is too early to measure its success.

## Conclusion

The Mobile English Classroom is a bold and innovative experiment which can fulfil the need of empowering rural teachers by developing their English language skills. It is very effective for adult learners who have neither the means nor the avenues for attending regular English courses. The mobile revolution has come as a great boon in this country and this is effectively leveraged to provide large scale training to these disadvantaged sections of the society. As Patel (2013:117) states, “The application of technology has considerably changed

English teaching methods. It provides so many alternatives in making teaching interesting and more productive in terms of advancement.”

The success of such an out-of-the-box experiment has the potential to prove that one good idea has the power to change the world – the world of the less fortunate.

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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.

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

# Implementing a Learner Software for the Enhancement of Vocabulary Acquisition among Degree Level Students

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## ABSTRACT

*The vocabulary of an individual is commonly defined as “all the words known and used by a particular person.” It can be also called ‘the granary of words.’ It is related to a set of familiar units within a person’s language. Acquiring the nuances within the language learning conditions can be achieved only with the help of an adequate quantum of words and their use. Comprehending and enriching one’s vocabulary is significant for the second language learner. The research reported here was aimed at directing the learners towards a tension-free use of new words and language items in real life situations. The learners who were involved in this study did not have enough knowledge about vocabulary learning techniques and most of them had difficulty in dealing with this problem themselves. For the present study, the researcher selected students from various degree colleges in Kerala as the sample and the study was successfully carried out with the preparation of the new software. The study was carried out as a Minor Research Project funded by the University Grants Commission, New Delhi, India.*

**Key words:** Vocabulary Acquisition; Learner Software; ICT for vocabulary development.

## Introduction

Acquiring new words and their usage and thereby enriching one’s own vocabulary is regarded by most language teachers as one of the most important aspects of second language learning. Students learning English as a second language usually start learning the language through classroom work. Both learners and researchers see vocabulary as an integral component in language learning. Along with the strong

backing of a learner-centered approach in the field, efforts have been taken by researchers as well as academicians to resolve the issues in language learning. Hence it becomes vital for learners to be aware of the possible strategies that they can adopt consciously during their language learning process. After a period of lull in vocabulary learning research, there is a renewed interest in lexical acquisition. Lexis is now recognized as central to any language

acquisition process, native or non-native. The acquisition of vocabulary has gained an important status as a fundamental dimension of language development. The central role of vocabulary in second language learning is being emphasized. Researchers have held that the lexical level is the most important one, as it makes basic communication possible.

The dream world of words cannot be always stored as discrete items of language in our rote memory, but could be analyzed and identified into vivified stores of identifiable units. That is why applied linguists usually agree with the fact that understanding and comprehending units in foreign language is much more than just making correspondences between form and meaning to simply pile up for later use. The following ideas seem to be fundamental to the understanding and analysis of lexis:

1. Spoken and written forms,
2. Word-structure,
3. Referential meaning,
4. Affective meaning,
5. Pragmatic meaning,
6. Lexical relations of a word with other words, and
7. Common collocations.

### **Significance of the study**

- a. Knowing a word is regarded as a complex and dynamic process and a complete mastery of a word consists of a number

of types of word knowledge.

- b. These varieties cannot be completely or simultaneously acquired.
- c. In SLA situation the learner fails at times, for the knowledge of the word proves to be mostly partial.
- d. Moreover in real life situations, each aspect of knowledge attributed along with a word is transcended to higher or lower degrees at any point of time.

### **Objectives of the study**

- i. To develop a software for improving vocabulary acquisition among degree level learners;
- ii. To develop the right attitude among the degree level students towards learning new words and their usage;
- iii. To enrich the knowledge level of the language learners in the contemporary context of real-world competition;
- iv. To enable the learners to understand the value of words and give them an exposure to some of the world-famous literary artists and their contributions through word play.

### **Methodology**

Making learners learn and acquire vocabulary in second language education has always been one of the main challenges for researchers and language teachers. For me, it seems important for students these days to have an extensive range of vocabulary in curriculum transactions and

other real life situations. Besides adopting new methods in second language teaching and learning, teachers should enable their learners to manage their own vocabulary learning outside the classroom situation. Rote memory or learning of difficult words continually does not prove to be the best method for students to be able to experience the world of letters. Comprehending and enriching vocabulary is of importance for the second language learner.

The experimental method was used for the present study. The researcher selected students from various degree colleges in Kollam, Alappuzha and Pathanamthitta districts in Kerala as the sample and the study was carried out with the preparation of the software. A sample of 400 to 600 students had been selected for the experimental course.

This study examined the attitude of the students towards and their ability for comprehending new words, phrases and sentences in their hunt for knowledge. The qualitative data collection method was used and a questionnaire was designed for the purpose.

Through this vocabulary learning software, the researcher created a platform for learning and getting exposed to words which are helpful for the students in their real life. An extensive list of about 2500 words can be maintained with the help of this software. For each word, we can provide a maximum of three illustrative sentences. In addition to this, if necessary, an image for the new word can be added along with the word. The

software will be managed and also monitored by the admin user (who created the first set-up), and the rest of the users or members can use the software tool. No one can change the setup, for the email provided in the configuration file pertains to the the admin user.

The software was developed in **Java Swing** with **Postgresql** as backend server. The **JDK 8-131** would support the programme. The project was carried out using the Postgresql database. A brief leaflet was sent for proper understanding of the features. This document gave a brief introduction about how to create a Postgresql database and create tables and columns. It was divided into categories such as the following:

#### **a. COMMON WORDS OF USE**

#### **b. COMMON PHRASES OF USE**

#### **c. COMMON USAGES**

- i. Ten Ways to Ask How Someone Is
- ii. Ten Ways to Say How You Are
- iii. Ten Ways to Say "Thank You"
- iv. Ten Ways to Respond to "Thank You"
- v. Five Phrases for Apology
- vi. Five Ways to Respond to an Apology

#### **d. PLEASANT WORDS OF USE**

#### **e. FAMOUS QUOTES OF USE**

#### **Steps to install the software**

1. Check your computer configuration and choose appropriate JDK 1.8 java software.



2. My computer → Properties will give your system configuration like 32 bit or 64 bit.
3. After successful installation of JDK software, install postgresql (Pg Admin) database. Like JDK, select appropriate version 32 bit/ 64 bit.
4. Once the above steps are completed, create database, scheme and tables for running the software. The steps for performing STEP 4 are briefly explained in Postgresql.pdf.
5. The vocabulary store folder contains-SQL folder-SQL queries to create table and dat setup. INIT\_data.sql should run first before executing other queries.
6. Exam kit folder also contains similar folder setup. Execute the queries in SQL folder for creating tables.
7. Open software and create user ID to proceed.

**Note:** Please do remember the password of postgresql database while installing the software. Otherwise, we need to install the software once again.

- Easy Exam is an objective-exam conducting simulator.
- The Student and Staff are the users in Easy Exam examination system.
- The Student can login to the system using their hall ticket number and password; the staff can login using their username and password.

## Findings

It was found from the study that a

significant focus on context-based learning and written exams along with learning and comprehending adequate vocabulary is vital for students as well as for the teaching community. The traditional methods that have been used in the classrooms should be done away with in the contemporary context for vocabulary enhancement. The societal and adjustment patterns of the learner concerned should also be taken into consideration so as to make his/her learning productive and effective in real life situations. Considerable optimism, vigour and interest should be shown on the part of the teacher so as to make this new life situation an inspiring one for the students.

Following are the findings of the study:

1. The students who have undergone pedagogical instruction along with the aid of the Vocabulary software (Experimental group) were found to be more successful in comprehending the words and ideas in a systematic manner than the students who were taught in the traditional manner (Control group).
2. The introduction of the vocabulary software was productive enough for the learners to comprehend new words and their usage. Because of the methods adopted in the software, even a novice himself could find it easy to understand and apply the once-unfamiliar words, phrases and sentences for daily use and reference.
3. The experimental group was more interested and thereby more motivated to find out the words and phrases for

reference. Both the students and the teachers agreed that focus should be placed on more varied vocabulary and the students expressed the need for more context-based learning.

4. It was also interesting to find that, the students preferred non-contextual testing methods.
5. The results of the study showed that the experiment was productive for the teachers who had already been working with degree level learners as well as 'teachers-to-be.'
6. The study could provide some guidance as to how students comprehend novel experiences in vocabulary learning. The knowledge of a new word creates pleasure as well as interest among the learners. However, the focus should be more on the impact of the words that the teacher selects for the students.
7. Some students were interested to find out the most difficult words in English language but some were more interested in acquiring words of compassion and desire. Some were too much interested in technical words but some were more interested in sweet-sounding words.
8. It should be the duty of the teacher to choose the apt vocabulary for the students to cater for their teenage interests.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

From the study it may be concluded that students' vocabulary can be enriched with

the help of software, as the present software helped in making the learning and understanding of new words, phrases and sentences for the students more systematic and fruitful.

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the present study:

1. Since the use of the vocabulary software facilitated learning better than the traditional method of rote learning, this can be followed up according to the needs of the students, in various educational institutions in our country.
2. Teacher can bring freshness into the second language classrooms by finding new learning and teaching software, which is necessary in the contemporary context of learner-oriented, global education.
3. Teaching and learning techniques should be available to individuals in the present-day academic environment. The technology-savvy attitude of the learners should be fruitfully exploited by contemporary educators.
4. In the future, studies can be carried out among students of different socio-economic status with regard to vocabulary acquisition.
5. Similar studies can be carried out among students at secondary and higher secondary levels provided that the selection of the material is made according to their level.
6. The impact of software can be analysed

and developed further according to the learners' needs among gifted students, advanced learners, slow learners, and so on.

7. The practical difficulties in implementing the vocabulary software or similar software among students from the socially and economically disadvantaged sections of society should be studied and solutions should be found to overcome those obstacles.
8. A mobile app may be developed to incorporate vocabulary learning software in mobile phones where vocabulary learning materials can be accessed and used by the mobile-savvy students of the present age.

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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.

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# Globalization of English

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### ABSTRACT

*This article analyses the causes for the spread of English all over the world. Globalization of language is a recent phenomenon that has revolutionized the cultures, traditions, technologies and lifestyles of people across the globe. In this context, it is fascinating to dwell upon the causes of the rise of a language such as English into the most accepted or most adopted language worldwide. It is essential to understand the factors that shaped modern English. The article outlines the causes of the spread of the English language and its essence in order to appreciate the importance of this ever changing language in the teaching and learning process.*

**Key Words:** Global English; Globalization of English; Factors in globalizing English.

### What is a ‘Global Language’

The expression ‘Global Language’ may give a wide range of meanings and interpretations. If the real sense of the term ‘global language’ is not defined properly, it may be used in a confusing manner. It is certainly not as most people think of the expression: a language spoken all over the world; a language recognized as an official language by all the nations of the world; and so on. All such notions are generally interpreted by linguists, but it is not what the expression ‘global language’ stands for in its true sense. The most appropriate

meaning of the term is that it is a language that enjoys a special status and plays a significant role in every country, rather in most countries of the world. To gain a special status in a country does not mean that the language must be a spoken as a first or a second or a foreign language, but it should be the language primarily used as a mode of communication in most parts of the country. This is one of the significant characteristics of a global language.

David Crystal elucidates the characteristics of a global language as follows: “If there is one predictable consequence of a language



becoming a global language, it is that nobody owns it any more. Or rather, everyone who has learned it now owns it – ‘has a share in it’ might be more accurate – and has a right to use it in the way they want.” (Crystal, 2003:2)

The fact about ‘English as a global language’ is its rapid movement spreading its wings like no other language has ever done.

The following are the four main reasons for the globalization of English.

### **1. Industrialization**

The transition in production of goods from manual processes to mechanical ones took place in England during the period between 1760 and 1840. Most of the inventions during the period affected various aspects of society including religion, literacy, economy, language and life style of people at large. For instance, William Caxton’s initiative as a (merchant, writer, diplomat, publisher, printer and) book publisher paved the way to the literary revolution in England. Subsequently, the English script was available in the form of books (first printed book: Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye) from the year 1473. Before the introduction of the printing press in England, there used to be religious scriptures accessible only for priests. However, the effects of industrialization (here. *press*) brought significant changes in English language and society at large. The other inventions including telegraph, phonograph, telephone, and television are responsible for new forms, styles and varieties of language that never existed before these inventions. For

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instance, with the invention of the printing press, news formats like report writing, sports column, editorial, features, etc. evolved. Similarly, telegraph has changed the way of drafting for a specific purpose; it incorporated precision in written communication. In addition, with the advent of the telephone, people started new conversational styles (opening the dialogue by saying ‘Hello’). Expressions like ‘you are not audible’, ‘there is lot of static on the line’, ‘May I place your call on hold?’, ‘how may I help you?’ and so on weren’t used before in the typical sense of telephone communication. Further, new varieties of communication such as sports commentary, news casting, interviews, live telecasts, and interview formats have evolved with the invention of television.

### **2. Multiculturalism**

The harmony among diverse cultures, races, religions, ethnic groups, values, traditions, ideas, systems and languages in society is termed as multiculturalism. In such a society, ideally, people would value and accept one another in all aspects. It became a prominent force in American society during the period between 1970s and 1980s. As a result of the multicultural society, new collocations of words have been added to the existing English words. The list includes words like cross-culturalism, ethnic groups, pluralism, cultural diversity, racism, acculturation, achievement gap, ageism, American Indian Movement (AIM), Amerasian, apartheid, baby boomers, bicultural, barrio, bigotry, bilingual, colorblind, cultural ally, ethnocentrism,

equal employment opportunity (EEO), fresh off the boat (FOB) and illegal alien, and inter-cultural communities. Each of these expressions has its own unique meaning and application; for instance, expressions like *acculturation* (the process of learning and incorporating the language, values, beliefs, and behaviours that make up a distinct culture). The concept is not to be confused with the expression 'assimilation' where an individual, family, or group may give up certain aspects of its culture in order to adapt to that of their new host country. The term 'achievement gap' has two significant connotations: the first one is a trend in the US educational system where white students' academic performance is greater than that of blacks. It could apply between girls and boys as well. And expressions like *baby boomers* (a term used to describe the generation born during the two decades following World War II, from the 1940's through the '60's, when the United States experienced a significant rise in birth rates), *cultural ally* (an individual who actively supports others who experience racism and/or discrimination), and *glass ceiling* (a term used to describe the "unseen" barrier that prevents women and people of colour from being hired or promoted beyond a certain level of responsibility, prestige, or seniority in the workplace) are all the result of multiculturalism. In this way the new and diverse experiences of people in a multicultural world give rise to an inevitable volume of expressions all over the globe.

### 3. Modernization

A progressive transition of a traditional society

to modern society is termed as modernization. The process of modernization affects many domains including economy, education, life style and languages. World English speakers use the language predominantly in various domains such as business, politics, internet, media, education and culture. As a result of modernization English language is widely used all over the world.

### 4. The Internet

Education, entertainment, enlightenment, news, business, politics, culture, music, languages, sports and games, tourism, fashion, technology and many other spheres – if there is any platform that facilitates all these domains, the answer is certainly the Internet, an outstanding contribution of modern science. With the advent of the internet, the vast world is seen through a small window with a click of a mouse connecting people of different parts of the world. And the chief language used in internet communication is English. There are many apprehensions that the Internet is rapidly changing English language with new vocabulary, abbreviations and styles.

In the words of Crystal (2003:8), "... as the internet comes increasingly to be viewed from a social perspective, so the role of language becomes central. Indeed, notwithstanding the remarkable technological achievements and the visual panache of screen presentation, what is immediately obvious when engaging in any of the Internet's functions is its linguistic character. If the internet is a revolution, it is likely to be a linguistic revolution."

In the modern linguistic revolution, expressions like Netspeak, Cyberspeak, 'Msg' (for Message), BRB (for 'be right back'), F2T (for 'free to talk'), PCM (for 'please call me'), MMYT (for 'mail me your thoughts'), RUOK (for 'Are you ok?'), HHOJ (for 'Ha ha, only Joking'), TXT, weblish (for 'web English'), etc. Another novel usage in *weblish* is that the symbol '@' acts as a universal link between sender and receiver and the trend has entered in various business organizations replacing the letter 'a' with the symbol '@' such @pex instead of 'apex', @tractions instead of 'attractions', and so on. Other symbols such as :-) for happiness, :-( for sadness, ;-( for crying, :-[ for sarcasm, and other symbols convey different emotions. On the global scene, web language is certainly emerging as a new domain and one should be updated with the current trends and varieties of web language to avoid "%-(“ (confusion).

## Conclusion

It is essential to update oneself about the ever changing English language, for it is dynamic in nature. In the context of the teaching and learning process, comprehending the nuisances of the global language will keep us abreast of new trends of learning and teaching English as a language. When a language teacher is not aware of the various facets and the causes of these global changes in usage, it would set the teacher in a conventional mode. However, a teacher of a dynamic language ought to be dynamic in nature. Hence, there is a need to understand the effervescent

nature of 'Globalized English' in the teaching and learning process.

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## Grammar Guru 3

### V Saraswathi

Be Indian, Buy Indian. But beware of speaking Indian English! A friend of mine recently asked an Englishman, “What is your good name, please?” With a puzzled look, the Briton asked, “Do Indians have a good name and a bad name? We don’t. We only have a Christian name and a surname!” The literal translation of the culture-specific Hindi idiom “Aap ka shubh naam kya hai?” led to this disaster.

In India, we have developed our own brand of English – Indian English – with its idiosyncrasies of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. This is perfectly intelligible all over India, but in the context of globalization we often find ourselves misunderstood or not understood at all. We have hundreds of kinship terms in our mother tongue. However, they sound rather strange to native English ears when translated into English. We are very close to our ‘co-sisters’ and ‘co-brothers’, but there is only one term *brother-in-law* in English, whether it be your wife’s brother or husband’s brother or wife’s sister’s husband or husband’s sister’s husband! English seems to be a much simpler language, doesn’t it?

Indian English has developed its own grammar, which violates the rules of Standard English. Most often even good speakers of Indian English are not aware of such aberrations. We have a universal tag question for all our sentences: *You are tired,*

*isn’t it? Manish looks haughty, isn’t it? We don’t like this, isn’t it?* This *isn’t it?* is a literal translation of our Tamil ‘*illaya?*’ or ‘*Hai, naa?*’ in Hindi, but the English would prefer different tags for different structures: *You are tired, aren’t you? Manish looks haughty, doesn’t he? We don’t like this, do we?*, and so on. Their rules for tags are quite simple:

- i. If the statement is in the affirmative, the tag is negative.
- ii. The auxiliary is shifted to the end of the sentence.
- iii. If there is no auxiliary, shift the main verb.
- iv. The subject of the main sentence is replaced by the appropriate pronoun.
- v. This pronoun is placed after the verb.

The rules are quite clear, aren’t they?

We also have a great fondness for using the Present Progressive tense anywhere and everywhere. Nissim Ezekiel highlights this in his ‘Very Indian poem in Indian English’:

*I am standing for peace and non-violence.*

*Why world is fighting, fighting*

*Why all people of world*

*Are not allowing Mahatma Gandhi*

*I am simply not understanding.*

Here are some Indian sentences in Indian

English. How would a native English speaker have uttered them?

1. You bought this gift, isn't it?
2. Are you loving her?
3. How old is your cousin brother?
4. What for do you earn money?
5. We enjoyed during the holidays.

**The revised versions are given below.**

1. You bought this gift, didn't you?
2. Do you love her?

3. How old is your cousin?

4. Why do you earn money?

5. We enjoyed the holidays. [**OR** "We enjoyed ourselves during the holidays."]

**[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.]**

#### **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 46-47.]

# Motivation: A Necessity to Teach English Language

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Motivation is a force of energy to stimulate any person to get things done. It can also be called a driving force to activate dormant spirits. As such, it is a positive energy for a human being to do anything with ease and enthusiasm. Khera (2002:111) is of the view, "Motivation is a drive that encourages action or feeling. To motivate means to encourage and inspire. Motivation can also mean igniting the spark for action." Motivation is of two kinds: internal and external. Internal motivation means having an innate desire to learn things. Of course, one may say it is a natural life force which helps us to do any deed creatively. External motivation connotes an external force in any form providing a prop to venture to exercise anything. The objective of this article is to evaluate how motivation enables a teacher to teach the target language to students to learn with precision.

The upsurge of IT sector and multinational marketing coupled with science and technology have brought about a sea change in thinking and attitude towards language. English language as a medium of communication has received an impetus and generated curiosity and interest to learn the language. At the same time, the word 'motivation' has become a catchword in every sphere of activity, especially in mastering the language to confront challenges in one's career path. Al Kaboody (2013:45), in his article, quotes Dornyei:

"Motivation provides the primary impetus for learning the second language and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process."

In learning a language, it appears to be important, especially for non-native speakers, to learn the target language well. Of course, there are many plausible reasons to attribute. It may be because of mother tongue influence or a sign of apprehension to capture the spirit of a foreign language. Yet another reason seems to be that most of the students hail from a rural background deprived of much exposure to the language. However, motivation will turn out to be efficacious to impact the learning of the target language.

In classroom situation, though a few students may have internal motivation, even they badly need external motivation, which is considered to be essential. While teaching the target language, for motivational purposes, fact sheets or a trigger, a newspaper, just-a-minute, brainstorming, debates, storytelling, and elocution competition are preferable along with ICT to tap the latent desire or interest in students to improve their communication skills.

As a part of motivational activities, a fact sheet or a trigger is displayed to drive home the theme of the lesson to highlight the



designated outcomes to the students. Students are expected to respond to the display to the level of comprehension in a way it enables the student to understand the lesson to be taught in the classroom.

Another inspiring motivational tool is the newspaper. It serves many purposes. It induces the learners to learn vocabulary, sentence formation, etc. and helps them to make out a variety of news items with much interest. It allures them to read the newspaper as a habit to promote reading ability with which they can improve their language. In addition to that, it provides an opportunity to refer to the dictionary to add to the fund of vocabulary and communication. Implicitly, students endeavour to speak on their own without any inhibition. Besides, it is a source to garner idioms and phrases, quotations, speeches of great personalities which would boost up their courage and confidence to express their feelings without any inhibition.

Following newspapers, brainstorming is regarded as an apt exercise to promote thinking ability among the students. It is another technique used in the class to motivate the students to express their ideas on a given topic. Their understanding ability, speaking ability and thinking ability can be promoted to ensure clarity of expression in using the language.

Debates play a prominent role in encouraging the students' ability to express their ideas in response to the other participants. It gives an opportunity to argue convincingly, positively or negatively

according to the thinking of the students involved. It serves as a source of exposure to the language to enrich their personality. It disciplines their way of thinking and scholarly learning on any topic that is initiated. Besides, it enhances leadership qualities.

Significantly and interestingly, storytelling also provides an opportunity to strengthen their speaking ability and listening skill, which are felt to be necessary to acquire knowledge. Earlier, most of the legends (epics) were compiled in the form of books only by listening to their mentors in time immemorial. Subsequently, as age advanced, books, narrating certain stories to inculcate moral behaviour among the students came into existence. Hence, teachers can take the opportunity to motivate the students to read story books during story time which serves as a way of improving their students' language skills. Books like *Chandamama* (English version), Comics, *Magic Pot*, and *Champak* may be recommended to the pupils for reading.

Besides storytelling, elocution competitions in the classroom encourage the students to present their ideas on any topic given. As a result, students make an effort to compose their thoughts systematically and to express them freely in job interviews in later life.

In the process of teaching through motivation as a part of ICT, PowerPoint presentations can be used in the classroom. Students will show interest in learning the language. The internet also serves as a source of teaching language by stimulating

the students to surf the net to learn the different aspects of the language and to understand different topics. The Language Lab can also be put to optimum use to motivate the students to get acquainted with online examinations to cope with the competitive modern world confidently. As the internet resources relating to LSRW are easily accessible, stakeholders can benefit by utilizing the facility in a proper manner. For instance, through YouTube, learners can visualize and listen to know about the speeches of great personalities to widen their knowledge in English. According to Hariharan et al. (2010:77), “A good motivational speaker is a pleasure to listen to and can inspire us to keep pushing when things go wrong.”

Thus, motivation is a potent aid to teach

English language to all levels to make the students master the language easily. Though the term implies a psychological aspect, it is necessary in the modern world to get complex things solved easily and effectively.

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### Some useful web tools for speaking skills

**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.

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# Learner Autonomy through Digitalized Instruction

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## ABSTRACT

*Teachers need to acquire digital literacy in order to prepare their students for autonomous learning. In other words, they need to have working knowledge in using digital tools to facilitate self-learning even beyond the four walls of a classroom. In a national workshop conducted recently on 'Using Digital Tools for Developing Learner Autonomy', organized by ELTAI, teachers were given hands-on experience in using various digital tools for developing the four language skills among students. In this article, the authors would elaborately discuss the effectiveness of such training and also the extent to which it had paved the way for promoting teachers' professional development.*

**Key Words:** Digital Literacy; Teacher Education; Teacher Literacy; Learner Autonomy; Digital Tools.

## Introduction

Learner autonomy has been a key theme in the field of teaching English as a second and foreign language for more than 30 years. In terms of its rationale (Camilleri-Grima, 2007; Cotterall, 1995; Palfreyman, 2003), claims have been made that it improves the quality of language learning, promotes democratic societies, prepares individuals for life-long learning, is a human right, and allows learners to make the best use of learning opportunities in and out of the classroom.

Needless to mention, it helps learners

prepare themselves to communicate in a second or foreign language. Learner autonomy is a pedagogical ideal and so teachers need to encourage its practice even in a traditional classroom situation. In order to do it, they need to equip themselves with autonomous teaching skills that encourage them to train their students in taking responsibility for their own learning. New teachers have to be trained to possess various competences such as content knowledge, flexibility in thinking, positive and self-directed learning, leadership skills, team work, and so on. Smith (2001:5) offers a comprehensive set of six characteristics

of teacher autonomy as follows:

- Self-directed professional action
- Capacity for self-directed professional action
- Freedom from control over professional action
- Self-directed professional development
- Capacity for self-directed professional development
- Freedom from control over professional development

The ultimate goal of education is to bring change in the behaviour of an individual. Behaviour can be changed when the barriers between learning and living are transcended. Receiving knowledge without applying it in real life is meaningless. Gardener (1993; as cited in Little, 1995) has distinguished three types of learners: “the intuitive learner, the traditional student and the disciplinary expert” (p. 175). A disciplinary expert, according to Gardner, “is an individual of any age who has mastered the concept and skills of a discipline or domain and can apply such knowledge appropriately in new situations” (ibid) and an autonomous learner is considered a disciplinary expert. It must be stated that learner autonomy cannot be facilitated without teachers’ intervention in the early stages, as teaching and learning are intertwined. Vieira (2001:24) doubts that “our efforts to promote pedagogy for autonomy in school will have any sustainable effects unless we put teachers

centre-stage.” She has indicated four major assumptions about the need for teacher autonomy:

- Pedagogy for autonomy is an ideological choice and a realistic activity.
- Teacher and learner autonomy are interconnected.
- Teachers are constrained agents of change.
- Teacher development needs to be self-directed, inquiry-oriented, experience-based, collaborative, and locally relevant.

It is believed that the subject of learner autonomy has to be included in teacher education courses for teachers to understand the importance of encouraging learners to be autonomous. Considering this, ELTAI conducted a national workshop for teachers in using digital tools as a teacher development activity.

### **Impact of Social Learning Theory on Teacher Development**

Teacher development is facilitated through teacher education programmes and new teaching practices. In this regard, workshops on using digital technology (as stated above) offer scope for new learning. Watson (2013:2) presents the perspective of Social Learning Theory (SLT) and states that “teachers choose and construct behaviours as influenced by the extent to which they believe they will be successful with a course of action in a particular context. This self-regulatory process within SLT is referred to as self efficacy.” Applying SLT to the effect

of this workshop as a teacher development activity, it could be said that the introduction of various digital tools and the hands-on experience provided to the participants made them observe and, as Watson stated, ‘form individual knowledge’ (Bandura, 1977) of using digital tools in their classrooms.

## Methodology

The purpose of conducting the workshop, which was funded by Hornby Trust, UK, was to educate and train teachers in using digital tools effectively in a language classroom. The objectives of the workshop were:

- to highlight the importance of preparing students for autonomous learning;
- to provide hands-on experience in preparing self-instructional material to promote learner autonomy; and
- to introduce digital tools like Nearpod, Tricider, Padlet, Trello, Google docs and Grammarly to list a few, to the participants, who were practising teachers.

It is observed that teachers at a traditional classroom in Indian institutions most often require training in using technological tools. It is believed that once they are given adequate exposure to learner autonomy and using various digital tools, they will be able to design tasks and activities that would make students use those digital tools for learning. Considering this and in order to provide a wider reach to teachers across the nation, 17 chapter heads of ELTAI from

various locations were enrolled as participants for this workshop. The sessions were designed in such a way that the participants were first exposed to the concept of learner autonomy and then the importance of making students take responsibility for their learning was reiterated. In addition to this, the trainers demonstrated the way the four language skills could be taught to students through self-instructional strategies and finally hands-on training in using various technological tools was provided. The initial discussion on learner autonomy highlighted the need for teachers taking up the role of facilitators and encouraging students to be active participants of learning in a large classroom.

As mentioned earlier, the exposure to various strategies of learning pertaining to the four skills in general, and listening and speaking in particular, was given to orient the teacher participants to encourage their students to choose appropriate strategies to master the language skills. The demonstration sessions in preparing self-instructional materials and the hands-on experience to use digital production tools like **Nearpod, Tricider, Padlet, Trello, Google docs** and **Grammarly**, to list a few, were aimed at motivating teachers to use those tools while teaching and enhancing their students’ performance in writing. They were also introduced to website resources such as **Visuwords, Vocagrbber, Lexical lab** and **Lingro**, to list a few, for developing students’ knowledge of vocabulary. It was believed that this exposure would help

teachers integrate them in their self-instructional training to students and make them autonomous learners.

### **Data Collection and Discussion**

The success of a teacher development programme is determined by the positive feedback of its participants and in this workshop, the teacher participants' feedback was collected in order to review the extent to which they could develop their efficiency. The teachers were asked to present their views in response to these two questions:

1. What lessons have you learned from this workshop?
2. What three things are you going to do differently as a teacher after attending this workshop?

In response to the first question, the participants said that they had learned:

- to cater to the demands of the GenZ learners in different and innovative ways.
- to use digital tools to enhance Learner Autonomy and make them understand how they would help in promoting collaborative learning.
- the need to adopt the idea of self-directed learning and how it could/should be implemented to make learners more independent.
- the elements involved in self-access learning.
- the way of preparing a lesson plan for

tasks that would promote learner autonomy.

- how to integrate and incorporate digital tools like NearPod, Tricider and Padlet in teacher training programmes and workshops.

In response to the second question on what they would do differently after the workshop back in their own teaching contexts, most of the participants said that they would provide a variety of learning experiences, particularly offer technology-oriented training to their students. It was evident that the hands-on experience given during the workshop had made the participants understand the possibility of using technological tools to give such learning experiences to their students. In addition, they said that they decided to promote self-direction and autonomy among their students. Further, they said that they would prepare self-instructional materials and lesson plans considering their learners' needs.

The participants were introduced to a few classroom practices, highlighting learners' and teachers' roles while implementing learner autonomy in an institution. As a result, they expressed their interest in implementing student-centred learning and promoting peer evaluation among students besides using language applications and websites within and beyond their classrooms.

The participants further mentioned their plan for developing their students' reading skills to achieve communicative competence



and that indicated the effectiveness of exposure given during the workshop to aspects of reading and the reading process. The sample tasks that participants prepared as self-instructional materials during the workshop sessions indicated their preparedness for changing the learning scenario for their students.

### Conclusion

Thus, it is clear that the workshop has opened new avenues for teaching language skills in a traditional classroom. It is further evident from the participants' interest to share their learning with their colleagues and their confidence in encouraging collaborative learning with the use of applications like Padlet and Google Docs (besides integrating the use of digital applications) that the workshop had prepared them at least in respect of their attitude towards promoting learner autonomy in their classrooms.

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## The Story of English 3: Christianity Lands, so do the Vikings

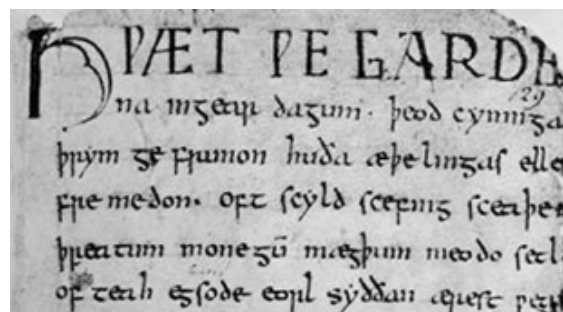
**Lal C A**

Professor of English, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram

In the city of Canterbury, not far from the renowned Cathedral, stands a small church named St Martins. This happens to be the very first church in England, a building constructed during the Roman times, and renovated by the Anglo Saxon king Ethelbert for his Christian wife Bertha. This ancient structure is every inch a history book, starting with the old Roman bricks used on its walls, and services are still held here, even after nearly two millennia of its existence. Ethelbert was the first English king to become a Christian, converted by Augustine, who arrived with the Pope's commission of Christianising the island. Already softened towards the new creed because of his wife, Ethelbert had little difficulty in accepting Augustine's proposal. Better known as Augustine of Canterbury, the Pope's emissary was allowed to use St Martin as his initial base, before he founded a monastery which grew to become the massive St Augustine's Abbey. All these adumbrated the systematic Christianisation of England, with Canterbury as its base, and Augustine as the first Archbishop of Canterbury. The time was late sixth century AD.

The events described so far led to a fresh wave of Latin influence on the fast developing language of the Anglo Saxons, English. The language of the Romans was

already in England when the English tribes arrived first on the island, but this time it was different. Latin slowly and systematically became the language of the church and of scholarship. The Anglo Saxons developed the script for their native language from the Latin alphabet, and this led to several thousand documents to be written down in Old English. The image shows the initial lines of *Beowulf*, as they



occur in the early eleventh century manuscript (the poem itself was composed some five centuries earlier). The letters used are largely of Latin origin, though a few 'runes' that the Anglo Saxons brought to the island centuries back can also be noted. Runes are rather rudimentary written symbols which were used by various Germanic people before the adoption of the Latin alphabet. Over the next few centuries, English emerged as a strong language with a lot of flexibility, and with a good fund of written literature. Much of these was preserved in the monasteries of the time. It

only needed a person like King Alfred for English to emerge as the most developed vernacular in the whole of Europe at that time.

King Alfred's services to English cannot be overstressed. In the period between the landing of Augustine and Alfred's kingship, there had been repeated inroads of Scandinavian tribes from the cold Northern Europe. Known in popular culture as the Vikings or the Danes, these invaders were also Germanic tribes and distant relatives of the Anglo Saxons themselves. By mid-ninth century their presence on the island was ominously large. The English people, along with their language, was threatened by the fate that befell the Celts, the total takeover and near obliteration by an invading hoard of relatives! The Vikings, also called Norsemen (people from the North) and notorious for their plunderous raids, ravaged the English lands, in the course of which they looted and burned several monasteries, destroying many of the documents meticulously written down and preserved by the monks over centuries. King Alfred, however, narrowly succeeded in putting an end to this rampage through tough guerrilla tactics tempered with common sense and diplomacy. The province of Danelaw was eventually allowed for the Danish invaders who went on to settle down, and begin a process of linguistic and cultural amalgamation with the Anglo Saxons. The present-day Yorkshire and several other parts of the UK have the cultural and

linguistic reminders of the Vikings. The city of York, the name itself of Norse origin, has rich archaeological evidence of the various settlers of England from the Roman times, including those related to the Vikings.

English names ending with '-son' reflect the Norse practice of deriving the name of a man by adding '-son' to his father's name, examples being Dickinson, Benson, Carlson and Jameson. Place names with '-by' ending, as in Whitby, Darby, Rugby and Grimsby, bear the Norse meaning of farm or village (*Darby* is literally a village with deer in it). The Vikings continued to be major players for power in the country for more years to come, and there were even periods when Danish kings ruled England, King Canute being the most famous of them. By eleventh century, however, the Anglo Saxons and Vikings more or less blended and settled down as one people. The influence of Latin via the church and the strong Scandinavian influence through the exchanges with the Vikings strengthened English language, and by 1050 AD, the language had undergone considerable changes since its beginnings in the fifth century. In the next part of this series we will have a glance at certain features of Old English which marked definitive stages in the evolution of English.

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

## **ELT@I Golden Jubilee Annual & 14<sup>th</sup> International Conference**

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##### ***Right to English:***

- Myth or Reality
- A political tool, or an economic advantage?
- Linguistic jingoism
- Promise of equity and inclusiveness?
- English haves and have-nots
- English for empowerment

##### ***Indian English:***

- Indian English in the global community
- Development of Indian English through the ages
- Global acceptance of Indian English
- Indianness of Indian English: Ethnography; Morphology & Syntax; Phonetics & Phonology
- Indian literature in English
- National corpus and national lexicon
- The role of mass media
- Language policy, planning and delivery

##### ***English as a global language:***

- Language wars around the world
- Global language but local perspectives
- Death of languages – sad stories
- Is there an epicenter?
- A growing monopoly?
- Colonizing minds?
- Native and non-native varieties and speakers

##### ***The teaching of English:***

- Precept to practice in ELT
- ELT and critical pedagogy
- Addressing heterogeneity in the language classroom
- Addressing varied learning styles
- Language Vs literature debate
- Language teaching: Materials; Methods; Assessment; Evaluation
- English for Specific Purposes
- Use of technology for language teaching and learning

⇒ The Abstracts will be published in the Conference Souvenir.

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

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

### **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. **Please see the front inner cover for details of the establishment and objectives of the association.**

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

#### **CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING SUBMISSIONS**

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

The article should:

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

making it easy to read.

- Be edited for language and style.

***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 these **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.

7. Only sources cited in the article should be listed as references at the end of the article.
8. The article should use the author-date format for citations and references (e.g., Anderson 1997; Anderson 1997, p.17). *See the Chicago Manual of Style (15<sup>th</sup> edn.) for more details and examples.*
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. Reference to the relevant table or figure should be made in the text.
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?



## READING ACTIVITY

### Reviewing\*

**Dr. K. Elango**

National Secretary, ELTAI & (Formerly) Professor of English, Anna University. elangoela@rediffmail.com

- Objective** : To enable readers to engage with a text with a clear focus on reviewing it considering aspects, such as content, form and style of an author as against the usual practice of mechanically reading and subscribing to the viewpoints expressed.
- Participation** : Individual
- Material** : Any text  
Example: *The Argumentative Indian - Writings on Indian Culture, History and Identity*, by Amartya Sen.
- Preparation** : Reading consciously to review a book focusing on key ideas and formulating one's own views on them.

#### Procedure:

- Read the book to be reviewed carefully, taking down notes. Amartya Sen in his book, *The Argumentative Indian*, states many significant ideas and one of those is this: 'while there is skepticism now against Indians' capacity for the culture of arguments and counterarguments, he clarifies right at the beginning the ancient Indian argumentative tradition, quoting the debate between Arjuna and Krishna in the war scene of *The Mahabharata*. Ideas such as these are worth summing up in a review. *As summary is a vital part of a review, all the key ideas have to be included*, which should render a sense to the reader of having gone through the book oneself.
- *A review should also focus on the format of the book and comment on the way the different sections are arranged.* As this book is a collection of sixteen essays under four headings – Voice and Heterodoxy; Culture and Communication; Politics and Protest; and Reason and Identity – which have 4 essays each, written over a period of a decade, the reviewer should deal with Sen's views on these topics and express his views on the arrangement.
- *The style of the writer is often commented upon elaborately in a review.* The reviewer generally considers aspects, such as whether the style is appropriate to the content dealt with, whether the ideas are logically developed, whether the language is clear and convincing to readers, whether the writer achieves the intended purpose and so on. For instance, a reviewer states, "With incisive wit and logic, Sen also combats the crude, insecure, and bellicose idea of a Hindu India promoted by the Hindutva movement. He derides their pathetic attempts at rewriting history and inventing a glorified Hindu past that never was."
- *Yet another significant component is the reviewer's own opinions.* There are reviews which complain against the repetitious nature of the book and the writer's constant reference only to the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. One reviewer goes to the extent of comparing this book with Jawaharlal Nehru's *The Discovery of India*, which also deals with the same aspects and concludes noting that Sen's book is "disappointingly shallow". A review should emphasize both the merits and the demerits of the book, and not highlight any one aspect. Depending on the review, there are readers who decide whether to read the book or not. So, a reviewer has to be objective in his analysis and not bring in his own prejudices and biases, which may mar the reputation/sale of the book in the market.

#### Learning outcomes:

- 1) Learners recognize that reviewing demands a far more serious reading than a casual one as it has to look critically at different aspects of a text.
- 2) Learners realize that reviewing requires some amount of familiarity with the area, though not necessarily to the extent that the writer knows it, to comment upon the book authoritatively.

#### Further reading:

Reading any text with an explicit focus on reviewing, including textbooks, by students.

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**\*Reviewing:** Reviewing is a critical evaluation of a book, film, play, an essay, and so on. 'Critical' does not mean pointing out the flaws of someone or something. A review of a book, for example, has two broad aims: a) a summary of the book, highlighting the key ideas, in the words of the reviewer although quotes can appear sparingly; and b) a reviewer's (critical) opinions on the book and its contents. A well-written review gives the impression that the reviewer has gone through the book personally.



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