THE JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

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(A Peer-Reviewed Journal)

ELT@I

A forum for professional development

To Flip or not to Flip – One-on-One: Interview with Susan Hilyard – Teacher Effectiveness in Teaching English in Tribal Schools – Education Decision Makers' Views on Language Learning and Teacher Development – Storytelling and Folk tales in the ESL Classroom: Interview with Regina Ress – Blended Learning Teritary Level

The Journal of English Language Teaching (India)

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

Periodicity

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

Contributions

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

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

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

The JELT carries a brief note on professional details about each contributor. Please send a short note about yourself. You may give your name as you want it to appear in the Journal.

Articles should be sent only an an email attachment – **AS A WORD DOCUMENT** to

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The views expressed in the articles published in The 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 and

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

We bring out "The Journal of English Language Teaching", a bi-monthly, and it is given free to all the members of the Association. Our Literature Special Interest Group brings our a free online quarterly journal-Journal of Teaching and Research in English Literature.

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

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

Founder Editor:
Padmashree S. Natarajan

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Dear Reader,

"The best part of learning is sharing what you know," says Vaughn K.Lauer. The best part of taking part in a conference is to share our knowledge with others and grow together. Professional conferences facilitate participants to increase their awareness of new trends in their field of interest/specialization and to develop their professional network and thus their professional competence.

The English Language Teachers' Association of India (ELTAI) is organizing its 12ᵗʰ international and 48ᵗʰ annual conference on the theme **English Language Acquisition: Western Theories and Eastern Practices** in June. Of late, the need for developing, experimenting and practising indigenous theories and techniques has been discussed in many forums. Now, the coming together of English language teaching professionals, teachers, researchers and others interested in improving the quality of language teaching is a great opportunity for everyone to explore the theme further and come with some new ideas. I hope we will have many research articles on the theme in the near future.

This issue of the Journal of Language Teaching (India) carries interesting articles on various topics and also carries thought-provoking interviews.

In the flipped classroom model lecture and homework elements of a course are reversed. Learners go through the lessons and watch videos regarding the subject at home before each class session and take part in discussions and carry out projects in the classroom. The model demands the teacher to play the role of a facilitator rather than a mere lecturer in the literal sense. To flip or not to flip? In this article, John Sekar explains the concept of "flipped classroom", pitches for it and states that it is learners' needs that decide the frequency of flipped classroom.

The regular column "One-on-One" features Susan Hillyard who is an expert in drama techniques. Susan Hillyard talks to Albert P'Rayan about her professional journey, importance of CPD, drama education, her books *English through Drama* and *Global Issues*, etc. She shares her experience of teaching many types of thinking skills including analytical, critical and creative thinking skills through drama exercises.

Veerya Nayak in the article "Teacher Effectiveness in Teaching English at the Secondary School Level in Tribal Schools" shares the research he carried out in the secondary schools of urban and tribal areas of Warangal district. The need for in-service training and professional development programs for the teachers teaching in the tribal areas of the district is highlighted.

Vijayapadma Srinivas presents a report on a study conducted by Cambridge English Language Assessment to explore the views of educational decision makers in South Asia on matters related to language learning and teacher development. According to the report, educational decision-makers in the region place high importance on English language skills and they also feel that the language levels of teachers have a great impact on the quality of teaching in schools and colleges.

In the article "Storytelling and Folk tales in the ESL Classroom" Savithri Swaminathan narrates an encounter she had with Regina Ress and gets her views on how storytelling and folktales can be used in the ESL classroom to support the practice of the LSRW skills; teach vocabulary and encourage cross-cultural awareness and personal expression.

Dear readers, it is your journal. As always, I welcome your feedback and comments. You can contact me at editorjelt@gmail.com

<div align="right">**Dr Albert P'Rayan**</div>

To Flip or Not to Flip the English Classroom

John Sekar

Head & Associate Professor, Research Department of English, Dean Academic Policies & Administration, The American College, Madurai

Email: jjohnsekar@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The twenty-first century multi-tasking, tech-savvy, digital natives are smarter than their smart phones, and if English teachers do not change the way they teach and what they teach, they will be no more useful than their smart phones. Lecturing is good if the purpose is to disseminate information so that students can satisfy Bloom's lower order cognitive abilities 'knowing' and 'understanding' information being imparted. However, it does not promote the higher order skills, such as analysing, applying, evaluating, and creating. Flipped classrooms can provide an ideal form for promotion of communication and critical thinking skills through interaction. The concept of flipping is understood as flipping lectures in favour of maximizing student talk/write time, flipping the responsibility of learning from the teacher to the learner, and flipping teacher's stationery position in favour of making it more mobile and dynamic in the class. Methods of flipping can either through replacement of lecture with video or through learners' enquiry to find the answer on their own with or without technological assistance.

Keywords: *Flipped classroom, blended learning, hybrid learning, learner autonomy, digital natives, podcasting, postmodern learning*

Introduction

Expressions like learner autonomy and learner-centred classroom unfortunately sound archaic and cliché without ever having them successfully tried in a sustainable manner in the Indian classroom of English language learning. It is chiefly because of the usurpation of the previous quality class time by the teacher who still culturally and colonially believes in teacher-fronted, -centred, and –dominated classroom 'delivering' lectures non-stop. Teachers continue to surprise learners in every class with learning content and it makes learners passive consumers and not active learners and explorers of new vistas of knowledge. Teachers' use of PowerPoint in the class helps them only to the extent that they can read from the slides instead of their memory. Incidentally, students get a chance to look at something else instead of the teacher's face and personality all the

time. Listening to lectures in language classrooms does not promote speaking, reading, and writing skills in learners. On the other hand, flipped classroom requires students watch pre-recorded short lectures online and shares responsibility for acquiring higher order skills through interaction and engagement in the learning process. It provides a truly paradigm shift to traditional methods of instruction that are not successful. Moreover, teachers experience frustration over their inability to help learners reach their goals. Teachers waste their time in classroom lecturing information which students can find out quickly in a relaxed manner at home. After all, teachers should adopt all means to maximize learners' time to use English rather than listening to lectures in English.

Review of Literature

There is astonishingly very little literature available on flipped classrooms though they have become a widely discussed topic in the Western academia. There is no standardized understanding of the concept, either. It is increasingly tried in STEM. Lutz-Chstian Wolff and Jenny Chan (2015) have successfully attempted in legal education in Hong Kong. They have discussed the pedagogical feasibility of flipped classrooms, stages involved in developing them, and evaluation of the same in the context of legal education. Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams (2012) have documented their personal experiences of evolving flipped classrooms and in fact, they are the fathers of this new teaching method. They are high school chemistry teachers and they created

it out of the concern for those students who missed their classes on account of their representation in sports and cultural activities for the institution.

Research Questions

The following research questions are addressed in this reflective study:

1. What is flipped classroom and how different is it from blended learning?

2. Does flipped classroom as an alternative to traditional lecture method have theoretical support?

3. What are the basic requirements for its implementation in the Indian context and how to overcome formidable limitations?

Theoretical Reflections

Flipped classroom is a postmodern concept that reflects the learning style of the present day students who are known as "digital natives" (Prensky). The rapid expansion of interactive computer-based and smart phones technologies has metamorphosed the way knowledge is created, stored, and disseminated. Technology has not only changed the modern way of life, but also teaching and learning styles. Students of all streams and disciplines grow up surrounded by technology. The extent to which they use laptops, iPads and tablets, smart phones, the internet, the Wi-Fi, YouTube, and social media indicates that technology appears to be a determiner of everything that they do. It has changed their way of learning from just reading prescribed textbooks and listening to compulsory

unsolicited lectures to learning by doing. They often depend on online resources rather than printed materials even for the conduct of research. On the other hand, many of their teachers are different from their students in the sense that they have not experienced 'digitalised socialisation' and that they have not succeeded in noticing learning habits and preferences of their undeclared postmodern students whose brain is differently wired. Flipped classroom can therefore help both English language teachers and learners adapt to the habits of digital natives.

Definitional Problems

There is no unified terminological and conceptual understanding of the term since it overlaps and shares with other models such as blended learning, hybrid learning, online learning, and podcasting. Though there is no single definition of flipped classroom that is acceptable to different theorists and practitioners, they all agree on the inner essence of theory and practice of the learning styles of digital-savvy postmodern learners. At the same time, it should be borne in mind that the term does not carry any technical meaning. It is sometimes referred to as "inverted classroom" (Lemmer: 463). The rationale is that flipped classrooms invert classroom activities with activities that normally take place outside the classroom.

Flipped classroom is similar to blended learning in the sense that both of them use in-class (face-to-face) and at-home (online)

learning. At the same time it differs from blended learning because of its inverted activities. Online explanation through audio and video recordings complements and supplements in-class learning in flipped classrooms through interactive and participatory activities. Hess (2013) argues that flipped classrooms do not replace face-to-face in-class teaching with online instruction. Flipped classroom students acquire content through short video lectures online at home and the subsequent class session focuses on analysis, application, and problem solving in order to deepen their learning. It therefore frees up the in-class time for more interactive activities while online activities in blended learning replace some of the in-class time. Since it is blending e-learning with classroom learning, it can be classified as a branch of blended learning.

Podcasting, on the other hand, does not compete with flipped classroom and blended learning. It is an e-learning tool as an additional learning resource. It is a technology that enables the distribution of digital media files both in audio and video formats for playback on portable media players. It does not replace lectures with online materials. According to Lonn and Teasley (2009), students use podcasts as review materials to prepare for online quizzes and examinations. They also note disagreement on the impact of podcasts on learning. In addition to using them as review materials, there is another finding that podcasts would be useful only if students took notes and listened to podcasts several times.

Genesis of Flipped Classroom

In 2007 two school Chemistry teachers in Colorado were worried about some of their students missing classes on account of their representation in sports, competitions, and other events. With a view to helping them, they recorded their lectures, demonstrations, and slide presentations and posted them on YouTube so that students who missed their classes could access. Since then flipped classroom has evolved to several variations with audio recordings, video recordings and online quizzes that students could take outside the classes, but they carried out pair work and group work since they become familiar with learning inputs at home.

Flipped Language Classroom

English language classrooms can be flipped. 'Flipping' means 'inverting.' Lectures and homework are 'flipped.' First of all, there is a philosophical shift. English language teaching classroom is flipped as English language learning classroom. Students become autonomous learners who first learn basic concepts individually by watching video lectures at home and do tasks collectively in the classroom. Teachers become 'facilitators' of learning in the classroom and lecture outside the classroom on video. Technologies bring instructional teaching home so that teachers can simply provide active learning in the class. Thus teachers and students effectively and willingly change their roles to become facilitators of learning and learners respectively.

Spoken English is the most desired and valued skill among educated and uneducated Indians alike. Sometimes, it becomes a measure of intelligence, efficiency, and capability. Ironically, ESL learners do not acquire this skill for want of classroom opportunities for practising speaking and listening together. Pedagogically it is true that there is no better way to enhance fluency than practising listening that leads to speaking. While students can learn at home all the fundamental concepts on listening and speaking through short video lectures, they can come to class prepared to use them in the class along with fellow learners. No language skill can be acquired either in isolation or with technological gadgets alone. Language is communal and therefore interaction is imperative. Teachers guide them and correct any bad pronunciation or grammar habits that students would have learnt elsewhere. Genre of writing can be learnt at home, but learners write in the class in consultation and interaction with fellow learners guided and corrected by facilitators. For instance, they can spend hours on developing paragraphs, or the body of leave letters, or resumes, note-making, or paraphrasing, or summarizing by virtually writing them and editing them in the class.

Apology for Flipped Classroom

ELT practitioners of the twenty first century cannot afford to ignore flipped classrooms if they agree that the present day learners are tech-savvy and their concentration period is relatively shorter. Flipped

classroom has several advantages over the traditional methods which have not borne the expected fruits of the efforts taken by both teachers and learners of English language communication. It is actively used in ESL classes though it was initially used in STEM branches. The following are some of the prominent theoretically advantages:

1. It provides improved learning experiences. It promotes active learning, increases interaction between teachers & students, improves collaboration among learners, allows flexible learning, fosters critical thinking, and enables learners realize their autonomy for learning.

2. As a flexible learning mode, it suits learning needs of digital natives who can access learning resources anytime anywhere and can study at their own pace leading to greater ownership of their learning.

3. It enhances IT literacy of both learners and facilitators through proper contextualization of acquiring/ facilitating English communication skills.

4. It leads to improved learning outcomes of the course by bridging the gap between the strongest and weakest learners with the weakest getting limitless opportunities to watch the lecture videos or suggested reading list. Every learner can consistently out-perform prior classes. Since time for interaction in class increases with minimal teacher intervention in the learning process, success rates in flipped classrooms are higher than in online courses where learners have to take up the lonely path.

5. Students can view and review learning materials (video lectures) at their own pace, steaming the learners into slow learners and fast learners is cancelled.

6. Teachers can make use of the class time to pay individualized attention to learners whereas it is the main drawback in the previous traditional lecture method that could not cater to the individual learners.

7. Facilitators can provide activities that promote communication skills which they could not introduce previously due to time and curricular constraints

8. Since the primary objective of ESL classroom is to improve and enhance communication efficacy of learners, flipped classroom learners can talk together and work together.

9. Learners' analytical and problem-solving skills can be honed while facilitators can assist learners solve problems. Group work enhances their understanding. Bloom's taxonomy of higher order skills can be improved through collaboration and interaction.

10. Learning theories support flipped classroom as technology enhancement helps to accommodate different learning styles and student-centred learning theories. For instance, adult learners are self-directed and would like to make

their own learning decisions and not to be treated like children. Learning occurs best experientially and learners learn best when they can relate new experience to past experience. Teachers should foster teachable moments of students being ready to learn. Above all, for adult learners, ESL education is problem-centred rather than subject-centred.

Requirements

There is no magic wand to make flipped classroom happen. There are a number of requirements on the part of all stakeholders: teachers as facilitators, students as learners, parents as shapers of their wards' future, and institutions as providers of facilities.

1. Transition from the traditional classroom to flipped classroom needs significant adaptations by learners and facilitators. Facilitators can start with flipping class in a week and gradually increase the frequency in tune with the learners' achieving the goal like increased language communication.

2. Flipping the classroom is not the delivery of a lecture on video. Even when video lectures are prepared for YouTube, they should not come from the internet. The contents of video lectures should be the explanation of fundamental concepts. For instance, they can include irregular verbs, or the major themes of a literary text, or stress rule.

3. Learners' cooperation is absolute and

they should therefore prepare (watching video lecture/reading) for class before they come to class and their preparation is essential to the successful flipped classroom.

4. Initial training sessions for learners should therefore be conducted on how at-home and in-class time would be spent. They should be encouraged for collaboration and raising questions. In other words, they are expected to do a lot of talking + listening and writing + reading. Even the LSRW order is inverted!

5. Teachers as facilitators should plan what to flip and not to flip. It depends on the learning outcomes of the course like enhancing fluency in spoken English, the knowledge, abilities, and skills students are expected to acquire from the course, the kind of activities that would help them achieving the learning goals.

6. As curriculum designers, teachers should redesign their course so that they can plan carefully units or parts of units that are best delivered by video lectures and that are best reserved for in-class activities. They should plan for optimizing the in-class time to enrich the learning experience rather than substituting in-class lectures with online modules. They should also plan in-class time in such a way that they do not teach students additional content.

7. In-class activities should include

teacher-directed questions, individual work, learner-directed small group work, presentations, problem-solving simulations, and brief-lectures.

8. Our-of-class or at-home content may include assigned reading materials that they can be requested to complete while watching video lectures online so that they can reinforce the learning experience.

9. Video lectures are the ones that run for a maximum of 20 minutes. Shorter ones are easier to edit, upload, access, grasp, retain, and recall. Institutions should provide the necessary technological support. Moreover, there can be collaboration between English departments and Computer Science/ Application/Visual Communication departments.

10. Initially, teachers need to prepare a script before recording and practice the lecture with precision and clarity during the recording. They should check the lighting, sound and quality of recording before starting the production. Teachers need training to flip classrooms

Limitations

It is not uncommon for anyone to foresee some limitations when such an imported method is tried in the Indian context that is characterised by certain cultural and economic factors. However, they are not insurmountable. With the cooperation and involvement of the stakeholders, they can be gradually overcome. Some of the limitations that might hold the attempt back are

1. Not many students in the Indian context have access to internet technology in the sense that either service does not reach the rural areas or their economy does not allow them.

2. Necessary equipment or technology may not be available at many institutions. Many government institutions do not have proper basic facilities on campuses and therefore expecting the administration to provide technological assistance may hamper any innovations.

3. Indian culture respects teachers as gurus from whom knowledge flows and expects students to be obedient, passive receivers through listening. Hence, teachers themselves may not give up the position of the teacher in favour of the facilitator.

4. Parents in developing countries have concerns about increasing screen time to be spent by their young adults. They should encourage their wards to learn through video lectures.

5. As young adults, learners are also addicted to the social media and the internet for entertainment purposes, and therefore they should realize the importance of learner autonomy in the sense that they go to flipped classes as well-informed learners.

Conclusion

Class time will be really fun and enjoyable and it will engage learners in tasks that promote communication and critical thinking skills. It is learners' needs that decide the frequency of flipped classroom. They can sometimes learn interpedently; sometimes they may need teacher's intervention; sometimes they may need consultation from fellow-learners. It is not necessary to flip the entire course. Eventually, learners would realize the responsibility of their learning and the importance of learner autonomy. Teachers automatically become facilitators in a learner-centred, learning-directed classroom. English classroom can be flipped and therefore should be flipped!

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One-on-One: Interview with Susan Hillyard

Albert P'Rayan

Professor of English & Head, Higher Education, KCG College of Technology, Chennai

Email: rayanal@yahoo.co.uk

In this series of interviews, called One-on-One, Albert P'Rayan speaks to globally recognized English Language Teaching (ELT) professionals. Those who have been interviewed earlier include Nik Peachey, Stephen Krashen, Scott Thornbury, Nicky Hockly, David Nunan and Alan Malley. For this issue of the Journal of English Language Teaching (India), the interviewer spoke to Susan Hillyard, a well-known ELT professional and expert in drama techniques. Susan Hillyard talks about her professional journey, importance of CPD, drama education, her books *English through Drama* and *Global Issues*, etc.

Susan, you have over four decades of experience in the field of language teaching in seventeen countries across the globe. Besides being a teacher, you have also played many other roles such as teacher trainer, workshop facilitator, researcher, author and on-line tutor. It must have been a great professional journey for you. What keeps you going?

Yes, Albert, I've had a long and varied career so far and I'm now embarking on a new venture, designing, building and moderating on several on-line courses for teachers' professional development needs on a global

scale. I would say that the great professional and personal journey that I've enjoyed, always moving, meeting wonderful teachers and students from more than 32 nationalities in 17 very different countries is what has kept me going and avoided any sense of burnout. Not only the travelling to worlds far apart but the changes in myself I've had to make in order to adapt to such diverse cultures has kept me juggling my habits, mores and values. It was hard, for example, in Singapore to adjust to the incredible mix of Indian, Chinese and Malay life styles and yet keep my own identity intact. All in all, I would say it has fired up a passion to climb on to the never ending spiral of lifelong learning. I feel that, although I should have retired by now, I will never be able to abandon my search for the ever advancing key to the perfect methodology for teaching English across the world.

Is there any perfect methodology for teaching English?

No, I'm sure there's not, as each teacher is different and each student or class is different but I think I've been seeking my perfect personal pedagogy where I could feel certain that my students were actually learning and enjoying that process at the same time. Once you find a flexible methodology that you, personally, can adapt after reflecting on needs then you feel that you are on the exciting journey that you want to be on!

How important is professional development for teachers of English in countries where English is spoken as a second/foreign language?

I believe it is vital for every teacher and, in reality, for every worker as we live in the midst of exponential change in rather troubling times. The only solution is continuing education for all but I believe as teachers of the global language we must update on a routine basis. Professional development opportunities for all teachers of English must be two-pronged and built-in by the authorities not just tagged on as an afterthought or reluctantly dropped in at the beginning of the school year or hosted for a few days in the holidays. I say two-pronged meaning that Continuing Professional Development (CPD) should offer a course on advanced language development for the teacher and also a course on trending issues in ELT which work on transformation and real change inside the classroom. The authorities, themselves, should act as models to teachers by updating their skills as leaders too.

What are the professional development opportunities for teachers of English? In other words, in what ways can teachers develop themselves professionally?

These days the possibilities are endless and this can seem bewildering for many teachers. It used to be the case that teachers could attend face-to-face courses and conferences held in their own institutions or organised outside, often gathering teachers together from many different areas and cities and even countries. It's very complex as not all teachers feel they need to be updated and may feel that their institution is forcing change upon them so they may go in body but not in spirit. In contrast, other teachers may be hungry for PD opportunities but are excluded from face-to-face meetings as they work in rural areas and don't earn enough money to pay to travel or have spare time in their busy lives to do so.

This is now alleviated by the huge proliferation of PD products on offer on the internet, accessible by anyone, anywhere in the world as long as the teacher has an internet device of some kind and a good secure connection. There are MOOCs (Massive Open On-line Courses like Class Central, FutureLearn, Coursera) which come in very well designed instructional packages and are free; there is the free EVO (English Village On-line) conducted by volunteer experts every January and February; there are University on-line

courses, or at distance courses, of various durations and with medium to high costs; there are very short courses on a whole gamut of subjects with low to medium costs on sites like Udemy; there are a whole variety of private companies that are making the best use of LMSs (Learning Management Systems like Moodle, Blackboard, Adobe) to offer all kinds of help; then there are VLEs (Virtual Learning Environments) in which groups can set up their own PLCs (Professional Learning Communities) with their own agenda and finally, in this long list, there exist a myriad of webinars offered freely by publishers, teacher associations, PD companies and individuals.

Do you think each educational institution should set up its own context related CPD plan?

Yes, institutions should set up their own context related CPD plan and that it should take into account what the teachers think they need and what the authorities think they need, be practical, inspiring and innovative bringing about change in the teachers' understanding of good practice. It needs to be implemented with the agreement of the whole body of the school and to be followed up stringently through constant feedback.

Now let us move from CPD to your area of interest and specialization, that is, 'Teaching English through drama'. You have been involved with 'Theatre in Education' troupes. How did you get interested in theatre and drama education?

I think it really began when I was tiny and my mother used to read me poems and stories which we then acted out at home. When I started primary school I was an avid reader and by the time I was eight I was invited by the teachers to tell my own original stories to their classes. My mother also sent me to ballet and tap classes, where I learned to perform on stage, thoroughly enjoying the experience of wearing beautiful costumes, putting on stage make-up and having an audience under my spell.

When I decided to become a teacher I gained a place to read Dramatic Arts at Warwick University and I completed the four-year full-time degree course to start my career in teaching Drama in a secondary school in Coventry, UK. I pioneered a course teaching English through Drama in the remedial section of a huge comprehensive school to students with learning difficulties and found that I could reach these students more effectively with this methodology. Three years later I started my travels around the world teaching English through Drama and Literature in Singapore, Saudi Arabia, Spain and finally settling down in Argentina.

As a teacher trainer and workshop facilitator, do you think drama techniques can be used effectively to teach English as a second and foreign language? Do teachers show interest in drama techniques?

I firmly believe that all teachers of English should learn to teach the language through applying Drama techniques to their work in the classroom. It works at any age and

level, with any ability and with any culture. Teachers react in different ways to this suggestion. Some believe that it is a recipe for chaos and not all their students will participate and maybe that they themselves are not capable of doing it. Those teachers are usually the ones who confuse Theatre with Drama; they think the School Play or the School Concert is Drama. However, those other teachers who study Educational Drama, often because they want to change the dynamics of their classrooms and find a way to reach all their students soon realise the great benefits, not only to their students but to themselves.

More and more teachers around the globe are beginning to see that Drama can transform students' attitudes so that learning English becomes a challenge and a joy.

How can drama transform students' attitudes towards learning English?

It's quite magical! The roles in the classroom change considerably making the students believe that they really matter. Once this is established their self esteem, confidence and worth as learners is raised. This is fundamental to change attitudes and to motivate students to be inspired to come to class, to be engaged fully in the work of the class and to leave the room feeling fulfilled. Paradoxically, in putting on the Drama mask the students can use the language much more effectively and understand who they are as language learners.

Drama techniques may not work with all teachers and learners because all are not

interested in drama and all do not possess the talents/skills for it. In a mixed-ability class, is it wise to use drama techniques?

Speaking from 46 years of experience in five very different countries I can say that everybody has the skills to teach and learn through Drama. It is merely an extension of childhood play which schools tend to kill in children by making them conform to what schools think is good for their learning, namely sitting still in rows, not communicating and not moving about. Drama is actually the perfect learning medium for mixed-ability classes especially those classes which work on inclusion. This is because Drama deals with the whole development of the growing learner in a holistic way.

As a teacher of English, have you been influenced by any teaching methodology?

It was John Dewey's Philosophy of Education, the Montessori Method, Lev Vygotsky's theories, Ivan Illich's Deschooling and Dorothy Heathcote´s Educational Drama that inspired me the most. Even at University, in the late 60s, we were taught that we were "facilitators of learning situations" and that learning by doing was the only way people learn anything; everything has to be experiential and to start with the learner at the centre of the process, not the teacher or the syllabus or the curriculum.

You must be familiar with Scott Thornbury's 'Dogme' method. Have you tried to teach any group of students without published materials (newspaper

articles, textbooks, etc.) What is your take on "Dogme" approach? Is your English through Drama similar to this approach?

Now, Albert, that's a very insightful question. I am familiar with it and, in fact, I have read a lot about it and always felt it was very akin to my take on English through Drama. The main difference is that Drama is far more structured as it has evolved into a discipline in its own right and has embedded in it a very clear philosophy of education which can, like dogme, be interpreted in many ways. I have never been able to use a textbook **only** to teach English; I've always had to supplement it using the students' own experiences, tapping into prior knowledge, using authentic materials, realia and stories. I believe dogme is losing ground while Drama is gaining ground!

You say that you use students' own experiences, authentic materials, realia and stories in the classroom. It means that you are for Dogme approach. Why do you say dogme is losing ground?

No, I'm not convinced of the dogme approach as I believe many good teachers were always supplementing their course books and believing that the thing that mattered most in classrooms was the relationship with students being at the centre. Dogme was a label that Scott and Luke put on it, I believe, to direct teachers away from the "industrial" use of coursebooks/technology which often alienate students and demotivate them. There is much debate surrounding the interpretation of the dogme approach and no real structure for it whereas Drama is

highly disciplined creativity. Of course, I am totally biased in my opinion!

Let's not get into controversy. Let's move on to the online course 'Teaching English through Drama' that you are running. What are the salient features of the course?

The course is designed as a quality professional development experience for teachers who want change in their classrooms, who want to motivate their pupils, inspire in them a love of the language and who want to teach effectively and happily. It lasts for 6 weeks only and comprises reflective questions posted in separate forums for teachers to respond to before downloading the handouts which they study before the live webinar each week. It is a practical course based on sound theory explained in the book. After the live webinar there are videos, articles and readings to support that week's topic and the teachers respond to guiding questions to debate the merits with each other relating their experiences in their own contexts. Each week closes with an evaluation form for the teachers to complete on-line. I answer the teachers' comments in the reflective question forums with a personalised video tutorial to make the whole experience more like a face-to-face course and the teachers really appreciate that.

The topics covered are: Drama as Education; Classroom Management Skills; Breathing, Body and Brain Gym exercises; Pronunciation and Voice Exercises;

Concentration and Relaxation Games; Fluency Exercises. My motto is "Avoid dropout and Burnout!" and I emphasise the speaking skills over all other skills.

How popular is the online course?

So far, I have trained over a hundred teachers from 23 countries in 4 iterations so I would say it's been a huge success. I am doing three iterations per year, one in April, one in August and one in October in order to cater for the different school timetables in the world. The teachers who have been on the course have written rave reviews, saying I have transformed both their professional and their personal lives! Imagine the exciting intercultural exchanges that go on between Serbians, Pakistanis, Cypriots, Italians, Argentines, British, North Americans, Portuguese and Nepalese etc etc! I encourage a free exchange of opinions, ideas, materials, resources and experiences and it is this that sets the course apart from any other.

How popular is the resource book *English through Drama*?

So far, I cannot give you the actual statistics as I will be receiving them this month but I know that most of the participants on the courses have then gone out to buy the book or ordered it on-line. Teachers also buy the book at the exhibitions present at conferences where I deliver talks or workshops and do book signings. That's very gratifying as writing books is a long hard, lonely process!

This is a quote from one of your presentations: "It has become widely understood that effective language learning involves more than the four integrated skills of ELT. The missing link is the fifth dimension ....that of teaching thinking." Does the term "teaching thinking" in the quote imply critical thinking? How do you teach critical thinking through drama?

There are many types of thinking skills which we can teach through drama exercises including analytical, critical and creative thinking skills. In fact, in drama we work with Bloom's HOTS (the Higher Order Thinking Skills) more than with Bloom's LOTS (Lower Order Thinking Skills). We do it by facilitating learning situations where the students are the protagonists in language games, role plays, improvisations and storydrama where they have to make quick decisions, represent attitudes, interpret characters, solve problems and involve themselves in conflict resolution. We work on the emotions to develop empathy alongside tolerance while through relaxation and concentration games we deal with anxiety control. We care about the well being of our students and encourage "noticing" and mindfulness of values, social justice and citizenship.

You are into online tutoring and webinaring. How effective is virtual teaching/learning in comparison with face-to-face classroom teaching/ learning?

I was very sceptical about the effectiveness of on-line teaching and learning when it first

started but after teaching on-line for 12 years I have completely changed my mind. For older teens and adults who have the self discipline to do it regularly and not drop out it can be even better than face-to-face learning. The advantage of working at your own pace, in your own time, having so many options and not wasting time travelling and suffering transport inconveniences can never be matched by face-to-face courses. In addition, shy people can have a voice and respond better in writing than they would in a classroom situation: they have time to think, time to formulate their answers, redraft and really express themselves in a more comfortable way. In my courses there are a certain number of compulsory questions and a number of compulsory comments to be made on other participants' responses so the reflections are very rich and enriched through debate. Very often it is impossible to get that kind of discussion going in a LIVE classroom situation. I believe on-line learning and on-line teaching will become more and more popular in the future as technological tools improve and open more possibilities to make the University of Life a reality. That's not to say that real live teachers will be out of a job, particularly at younger ages.

Could you please share with me about your book *Global Issues* published by OUP?

Global Issues is a Resource Book for Teachers which offers a short introduction of the theory behind teaching global issues in English to foreign or second language learners worldwide. There are more than a hundred classroom activities presented clearly under four headings: Awareness raising, Personal experiences, Major global issues and Using the arts. 21st century skills are stressed so that students learn to think critically, creatively and learn to do research and organise their learning in a more autonomous manner.

My first question to you was on your Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Your professional journey does inspire English language teachers who are familiar with your work. As a professional, what are your tips for an ordinary teacher to become a professional?

The first step is to see our work as noble and responsible and to realise that it is each person's individual duty to be accountable for their work inside the classroom. Then it's important to understand that we work better in groups, sharing and caring for each others' development and to seek out other like-minded teachers. Join a teachers' association; join a Special Interest Group (SIG); join a teachers' Facebook group; take an on-line course; find out about live conferences; start a network of teachers who really want to develop and have a rotating chairperson so the load is shared; subscribe to a teachers' journal; watch out for free webinars; start a "Tips for Teachers" course where each teacher in your school presents a lesson idea that worked well; start a "Teachers as Readers" group where you all read and discuss one methodology book per month; start a "Journal Writing" group

where you write a journal of classroom experiences and share them with each other; do peer observations and talk to each other about your findings; do an interschool debate/festival/exhibition.

There are so many possibilities I hardly know where to start!

Thank you, Susan, for sharing your experience with the readers of the Journal of English Language Teaching (India). I am sure, your experience in the field of English language teaching will inspire those who read the interview and will motivate them to become professionals.

I certainly hope so! I really believe we as teachers can transform education, especially attitudes to language acquisition. We must be the change agents for a better future for all the students in our care. Once the teachers jump on the never ending spiral of lifelong learning they will act as models and inspire their students to love the language and to love learning.

Thank you so much, Albert, for this opportunity and hope you can get a strong professional development plan going with the readers of the Journal of English Language Teaching (India), in your institutions in your area, in your city, in your country or on a global scale!

Teacher Effectiveness in Teaching English at the Secondary level in Tribal Schools

G. Veerya Nayak

PhD (English Language Education) EFL University, Hyderabad

Introduction

English plays a key role in social communications. The ability to use English effectively is considered essential for honorable existence in the globalized world. The inclusion of English medium education in India from class 1 is the best evidence of the importance of the English in current competitive world.

English language teachers play an important role in enabling learners to learn the language effectively. The teaching of English in tribal schools of Warangal district is in panic status. The students are taught six periods in a week for ten years. The students do not know more than thousand words by the time they enter into university education. It means that they barely learn English words at the rate of one word per period.

The present study is an attempt to understand and assess teacher effectiveness in teaching English at the secondary schools of urban and tribal areas of Warangal district. Through the current study, the researcher tries to elicit the views, opinions, and perceptions of secondary learners as well as the teachers of English on teachers' effectiveness.

Literature Review

A few relevant studies carried out in the area of teacher effectiveness support to the present study.

Sharma's (1971) study on teacher effectiveness found that the teaching aptitude of the teachers and the grades secured by the students yield positive student achievement. In this study teacher effectiveness was assessed in terms of the teachers' personality, classroom teaching and the end results of the course. Teacher aptitude was an important predictor of teacher effectiveness.

Chhaya (1974) examined certain psychological features of an effective secondary school teachers. The subjects of the study were 100 ineffective secondary school teachers and 80 effective secondary school teachers. The results of the study concluded that the effective teachers had better adjustment, personality and positive attitude towards their profession. Effective teachers were more interested in teaching than their counterparts. The study also found that effective teachers were emotionally stronger than ineffective teachers.

Christensen (1986) researched to examine the effective teacher characteristics showed by associate teachers of the University of Idaho. The subjects of the study were 35

teachers. The results of the study concluded that securing better scores in a teaching strategies course was not associated with the characteristics of an effective teacher.

Purser (1986) examined the connection between the classifications of teacher efficacy determined by learners' success on a set of teacher variables which incorporate years of teaching experience. The samples of the study were 87 secondary school teachers. The results demonstrated that there was no important connection between the shared set of chosen teacher variables and the efficacy of a teacher.

Noerrlinger (1987) carried out a study to observe the learners' feedback on teacher effectiveness and the factors that may impact learners' feedback. The subjects of the study were 1500 learners, 76 teachers and 19 principals. Results of the study showed that the effective teachers performed better in showing personal interest, presentation of the lessons, managing the class and guiding learners. The learners' feedback on teaching also significantly influenced the teacher effectiveness.

The research conducted by More (1988) found the intelligence of a teacher was a significant personality factor. The results of the study also found that the teacher's personality often influences the classroom instruction.

A study carried out by Prakasham (1988) made comparisons between the teachers working in the urban, semi-urban and industrial area schools. The subjects of the

study were 92 principals and 800 school teachers of 120 government local body schools, private and Christian missionary schools. The findings of the study revealed that teachers working in urban area schools situated in industrial areas exceptionally excelled over teachers working in the semi-urban area schools situated in industrial areas on both teacher competency and teacher effectiveness. There was a positive correlation between teacher competency and teacher effectiveness.

The research conducted by Fecser (1989) examined if highly effective teachers teaching students with severe behavior disorders show better effective teaching behavior than less effective teachers. The findings of the study revealed that there was no important variation between the teaching behavior of highly effective teachers and less effective teachers.

Daly's (1990) study observed if the student perceptions are reliable tool to assess teacher effectiveness. The subjects of the study were 864 students studying in Hanover Park high school in New Jersey. The results of the study concluded that the student perception is one of the reliable tools to evaluate the teacher effectiveness.

A study conducted by Sugiratham and Krishan (1995) examined the relationship between the teacher's medium of instruction and teacher effectiveness. The samples of the study were 295 female teachers teaching in girls' secondary schools. The results of the study found that teacher's medium of instruction and educational qualifications

would have significant impact on teacher effectiveness.

Wilhem's study (1996) examined the perception of students and perception of teachers on teacher effectiveness. Sample of the study were 41 college teachers and 560 students working in a community college. The findings of the study revealed that there were significant differences between the perception of students and teachers towards teacher effectiveness. Teacher effectiveness depended on the teacher's enthusiasm to teach, clarity on what he/she teaches, type of assignments given to the students and evaluation.

A study conducted by Treder (1998) tried to compare the attitude of more effective teachers and less effective teachers towards learners with special needs in a general classroom. The findings of the study indicated that more effective teachers had a greater interaction with learners with special needs and they had more inclusive attitude than the other group of teachers.

A study conducted by Pandey and Maikhuri (1999) examined the attitudes of effective teachers and ineffective teachers towards their teaching profession. The findings of the study showed that experience of a teacher is not the major factor or determiner of teacher effectiveness. The results also found that the attitude of more experienced teachers was significantly positive towards their teaching profession than the attitude of ineffective teachers with less teaching experience.

A research carried out by Quandahl (2001)

examined the teaching practices of more effective, effective and less effective teachers of kindergarten schools in the production of high learner achievement. The sample comprised of 9 teachers from kindergarten schools and 208 students from diverse backgrounds. Findings of the study revealed that more effective teachers had better teaching practices. In addition, students taught by effective teachers attained high academic achievement.

A research carried out by Kagathala (2002) investigated the teacher effectiveness of secondary school teachers working in various secondary schools situated in Gujarat with regard to gender, area of the school, teaching experience, educational qualifications, caste and the personality of the teachers. Creative personality inventory and teacher efficacy scale were given to 1800 teachers of which 510 were female and 1290 were male teachers. The findings of the study revealed that overall teacher effectiveness in secondary schools of Gujarat was average. The urban secondary school teachers were superior to the rural teachers in terms of teacher efficacy. Teacher's gender did not have significant effect on teacher effectiveness. The master degree holders were more effective in teaching than those who hold only bachelor degrees.

Objectives

The present study was carried out with the following objectives.

General Objective

❖ To obtain expressive status of teacher

effectiveness in teaching English at secondary schools of urban and tribal areas of Warangal district

Specific Objectives

❖ To know the teacher effectiveness variations of urban area and tribal area English language teachers

❖ To understand the attitude of the urban and tribal area teachers towards teaching English

❖ To assess the educational background of the teachers and their experience with teaching English

❖ To know students' perception of teacher effectiveness in urban and tribal areas

❖ To assess the infrastructure facilities in school

❖ To know what kind of motivation that the secondary learners get from the language teacher to learn English in the tribal area schools

Hypothesis

To meet the objective of the present study the following hypothesis were formulated:

➢ There would be significant difference in teacher effectiveness among urban and tribal area English teachers at the secondary level schools.

➢ The more effective English teacher of secondary schools will differ significantly from less effective teacher in their attitude towards teaching.

➢ Urban area teachers are more effective in teaching English than tribal area English teachers.

Research Questions

1. What is the difference between the urban and tribal teachers' and learners' perceptions towards teacher effectiveness?

2. What are the indices for language teacher effectiveness in the context of the Tribal learners?

3. What are the implications of the study of teacher effectiveness for language teacher education vis a vis tribal learners?

Subjects of the Study

The target population comprises of 300 secondary school learners from urban ad tribal areas, out of which 150 learners are from tribal schools and the remaining 150 are from urban secondary schools. The sample of teachers consists of 100 teachers, 50 teachers from urban schools and 50 from tribal schools. 20 English classes were observed by the researcher, 10 from urban schools and 10 from tribal area schools. Semi-structured interviews with 20 teachers were done, 10 teachers from each area. The area of study (Warangal District) was demarcated into tribal and urban areas.

Research design

The research is comparative study because the researcher intends to investigate the perception of the teacher effectiveness by the students as well as by the teachers by using

student questionnaire and teacher questionnaire. In the questionnaire the questions include few sections on the teacher's preparation, subject knowledge, motivation, classroom management, teacher characteristics, and use of technology in teaching English. Classrooms observations are also done by the researcher to know to what extent the teachers' and students' responses are matching with the real classroom. The live classroom observation helps the researcher to know the implementations of the teaching strategies and implementation of activities in teaching English.

Findings and discussion

The following are the major findings of the study which would support the researcher's assumptions and hypothesis. The findings of the study are categorized into different aspects as mentioned below.

Teachers' Preparation

• Tribal school teachers do not come to the classroom with preparation and planning of the lessons.

• The teachers of tribal area do not come to the class in time.

• The teachers from tribal schools as well as urban area schools do not carry any lesson plans to make teaching more effective.

• The teachers of tribal area are not aware of the aims and objective of the subjects they teach.

• Tribal area teachers are not familiar with the teaching techniques which would help them make teaching more effective.

Teachers' Knowledge of the Subject Matter

• Through observation it is found that the tribal teachers have less command over the subject matter than the urban school teachers.

• Most of the tribal teachers do not exchange their knowledge and ideas of subject matter with colleagues.

• Tribal teachers do not facilities to update their knowledge.

• The confidence of the tribal teachers is low.

Teaching Strategies

• The teachers of tribal schools do not apply any teaching strategies except lecturing method, whereas urban teachers are found to apply many teaching strategies.

• Tribal teachers have the habit of summarizing lessons at the end of the lesson, while the learners read the paragraphs one by one.

• Most of the tribal area teachers do not bother about the learners' mistakes.

Classroom Management

• Very less number of teachers from tribal area schools motivates their students to learn English than urban school teachers.

- The use of audio visual aids in tribal schools in teaching English is not adequate and does not match the need of the learners.

- None of the tribal teachers takes remedial classes for the slow learners and they do not bother about their students' needs and necessities.

- The implementation of role-play, pair-work and group discussion does not take place in the tribal classroom.

- The maintenance of discipline in the tribal classrooms is very poor according to the observation and it is found that the teachers of tribal schools fail in maintaining minimum discipline in the classroom.

Teacher Characteristics

- The supportive nature of the teachers in tribal schools is less than urban schools.

- The implementation of creative ideas in teaching English does not take place in tribal schools. Through the observation it was found that it was better in urban schools.

- The teachers are not emotionally balanced in tribal areas as they get angry on learners and frighten them for small mistakes.

- The teachers of urban schools and tribal schools do not accept the criticism of other teachers as feedback for improvement in making their teaching more effective.

Use of Technology and TLM

- The use of technology in teaching English in tribal areas is poor as they do not have such facilities in their schools.

- The tribal teachers do not use teaching learning materials in teaching English except blackboard and textbooks, whereas urban teachers do use of some materials like charts and computers.

Implications of the Findings

Based on the findings mentioned above the researcher would like to suggest some implications here for the betterment of teaching English and make teachers more effective in tribal schools of Warangal district.

Implications to the Teachers

- The teachers should plan and prepare the lessons well in advance to make their teaching more effective with regard to English language teaching.

- The maintenance of time should be appropriate for making his/her presentation of lesson more effective.

- Teacher should come to class in time and leave it on time to make his/her teaching fruitful.

- The lesson plan should be prepared by the teacher so that he/she is clear about the objectives of the lesson and the teaching goes according to the needs of the learners.

· The teacher should implement newly updated techniques to make

his/her teaching more effective and useful.

- The teacher should have sound knowledge on the subject matter which he/she teaches.

- Teacher should exchange his/her ideas with other teachers to become more knowledgeable in the concerned subject.

- Attending the in-service training programmes, conferences and orientation programmes would make a teacher more effective and knowledgeable in subject matter.

- Teacher should motivate his/her learners towards learning English.

- Technically skilled teachers would make his/her teaching more effective. So all the teachers should have sound knowledge in using technology in teaching English.

- Teachers should implement role-play, pair-work and group-work in teaching English, which would involve learners in teaching learning process.

- The teacher should have supportive behavior with learners, which develops learners' confidence level in learning new things.

- The teachers should accept criticism as feedback for improving their teaching and making it more effective.

- Teachers should prepare some teaching aids to make their teaching more effective.

Implications to the Teacher Educators

The teacher trainers who produce the future teachers also have some suggestions from the researcher to implement during pre-service training programmes.

- More hands on learning experiences should be provided to trainees to make them more effective teachers.

- Continuous Professional Development programmes, workshops and conferences should be conducted for trainees to become effective in teaching and acquire new knowledge.

- Teacher trainers should focus more on practical aspects to become more practical and effective in dealing with subject.

- Personality development programmes should be offered to the trainees to cope with different conditions in which they work.

- Trainees should be trained to use effective teaching learning materials and aids.

- Teacher trainees should be trained to use advance technology effectively in teaching English.

Suggestions to the Education Department

The education department also has some responsibilities to make teaching learning process meaningful. English language teaching should be given importance. The department should monitor the schools through frequent visits to check the

learners' progress. The department should provide in-service training programmes to the teacher to up-to-date their subject knowledge. The training courses should be innovative and need based. The teachers should be evaluated by the experts and the needed training should be given to the ineffective teachers. The department should provide fully equipped teaching learning materials and teaching aids which would help teachers to make their teaching more effective. The department should ensure that the equipment works properly. The schools should be equipped with the language labs.

Conclusion

According to the findings and discussion of results, we can understand that the urban English teachers and tribal English teachers have variations with regard to the teacher's effectiveness. The uses of teaching methods, authentic materials, teaching learning materials have variation in both areas. The results of the present study support the assumptions of the researcher. Therefore, the suggestion given in this study would help the department of education as well as the government to bring about changes in the education system which, in turn, would help improve tribal education.

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Educational Decision Makers' Views on Language Learning and Teacher Development

Vijayapadma Srinivas

Senior Assessment Services Manager – South Asia, Cambridge English Language Assessment

Email: vijaya@cambridgeenglish.in

Background: Setting the Context

The study described in this paper was conducted by Cambridge English Language Assessment, and explores views of educational decision makers in South Asia on various matters related to language learning and teacher development. Views of educational decision makers are critical as they are the people who would be informing future decisions and policies in the South Asian educational arena.

The data was gathered from the participants of the Cambridge English South Asia partnership summit 2016, hosted by Cambridge English Language Assessment and Cambridge University Press, both departments of the University of Cambridge, along with Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).The aim of the summit, was to bring together key policy makers from different sectors-government, academia and industry, to share knowledge, and through developing partnerships, find ways to transform education.

Sample Population

This data was collected through the administration of questionnaires to all 117 attendees of the summit and interviews with selected participants. Attendees of the summit include:

-strategic stakeholders e.g. national and state government representatives, employers, business and employers' associations such as FICCI, NASSCOM etc... 24 of the participants were of this category

-technical stakeholders e.g. educational institutions, professional bodies, training and training content providers and skills/ employability assessment vendors. 97 of the participants belonged to this category.

Methodology

We wanted to understand a sample of the population's collective views on various aspects related to language learning and teacher development. However, we also wanted to explore the reasoning and thoughts behind these views. In order to get an in-depth understanding of these perspectives, we opted to use mixed methods of research. In order to develop a more complete understanding of the research problem by obtaining different but complementary data, we conducted

convergent parallel mixed method research design, where qualitative and quantitative data were collected simultaneously but the analysis of the two strands of data was conducted independently of each other. The interpretation of the results drew on both strands to build a richer picture and understanding of the findings.

Instruments

Quantitative Data Collection: Questionnaire: The quantitative data was wider in scale than the qualitative data collection. This data was collected through the administration of questionnaires to all the attendees of the summit i.e. 117 participants. The questionnaires consisted of 8 questions, 7 were close-ended and 1 was open-ended. The close ended questions consisted of multiple-choice questions or used a 5-point Likert scale.

Qualitative Data Collection: Interviews: The qualitative data was collected by way of one-on-one interviews lasting 30-60 mins.13 interviews were conducted with a balance of decision makers from higher educational institutions, schools and government organisations. Participants who showed an interest to be part of the research were engaged in an in-depth interview. The instruments included a semi-structured interview guide, described by Hoepfl (1997:52) as 'a list of questions or general topics that the interviewer wants to explore during each interview'.

Both the survey and interview sought stake-holders' perceptions on the investigative points such as:

- Importance of students' English language/ communication skill and who the responsibility to develop this lies with

- Factors affecting the quality of teaching in schools and colleges as well as methods of improving teaching standards

- Challenges to English language/ communication skills development programmes

- Relevance and usefulness of various English language initiatives and best tool to measure progress in such programmes

Data Analysis

The quantitative data i.e. results of the questionnaires were tabulated and analysed. Closed-ended questions were tabulated and subsequently analysed using descriptive statistics. The open-ended questions were studied for possible patterns.

The qualitative data i.e. the interviews were analysed for emerging ideas and varied perspectives. This data was also reviewed for information that supported the conclusions arising from the quantitative data.

Results and Discussions

The results below show the summary and discussions about the perceptions of the respondents.

Perceptions about the role of English language skills in education and employment

56% of the respondents saw language/ communication skills as important factors

contributing towards students' growth and success (further education and employment).Some illustrative comments by educational decision-makers on how language skills affect success in higher education:

We find that the students who are very good in communicating in English get employment easily. Even after getting employment, the speed with which they go up the ladder depends on how good they are in communication. (Dr. Anand A Samuel Vice Chancellor, VIT, Vellore)

Because we are a multi lingual nation therefore the only common language we have is English and therefore English becomes important. (Dr Sunil Rai Vice Chancellor, - The Assam Kaziranga University)

Perceptions about the role of English language skills in education and employment

The results suggest that the primary responsibility of students' English language/ communication skills development lies with primary schools followed by secondary schools. The survey results can be further explained by the comments such as:

Skills can be easily developed at the school level where children can be clearly molded and taught. (Dr Vandana Lulla, Director and Head and Principal Poddar Group of International Schools, Poddar Group of Institutions)

Perceptions about the factors that impact the quality of teaching in schools and colleges

Results clearly show that language/ communication skills were distinctly identified as the factor having the highest impact on the quality of teaching in schools and colleges. Teaching methodology is also seen as having a substantial impact. Analysis of the comments from the interviews show that one of the reasons for this perception was that the message may be lost due to lack of English language and communication skills:

For teachers I am very confident that communication skill is very important because we have seen teachers with very good knowledge but are unable to communicate. They are not able to become successful teachers. But there are mediocre teachers who can communicate much better and can reach the students very well. Ultimately what you know is not as important as what you communicate. (Prof Mahesappa H, Vice Chancellor, Visvesvarya Technological University, Belagavi)

Perceptions about the methods to improve the teaching standards in educational institutions

The results show that peer support and learning is seen as the most effective way to improve teaching standards in an educational institution followed by rigorous recruitment processes.Comments during the interviews show that they strongly felt that continuous support is essential e.g.:

It's definitely the responsibility of the school, once you employ someone, to see how best can you support that teacher, how best can you make sure that she moves on from an

average teacher to a good teacher and then moves on to a very good teacher and then to an outstanding teacher. (Dr Vandana Lulla, Director and Head and Principal Poddar Group of International Schools, Poddar Group of Institutions).

Perceptions about the biggest challenges to English language/communication skills development programs in educational institutions with regards to learners

42% of the respondents felt that learners' lack of understanding about the need for communication skills development programs is the biggest challenge closely followed by 34% of the respondents indicating that it is the lack of motivation and fear of failure. Comments during the interviews further supported this e.g.:

Language learning takes a lot of time and a lot of effort which needs a lot of motivation. (Prof Premendu Prakash Mathur, Vice Chancellor, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology)

Perceptions about the biggest challenges to English language/communication skills development programs in educational institutions with regards to teachers

The results of the questionnaire indicate that teachers' focus on and pressure to complete the curriculum is the biggest challenge closely followed by teaching/training capability. Comments made by educational decision-makers in the interviews further substantiate these results:

Schools are driven by government policies. If it's a part of the syllabus then we are responsible for it. (Mr Amalan S.J, Chief Skill Officer, Visvesvarya Technological Institute)

The biggest challenge that we are facing and will be facing in the days to come is definitely to get the right kind of people. It's about people if you have to make progress. (Dr Vandana Lulla, Director and Head Principal, Poddar Group of International Schools, Poddar Group of Institutions)

Perceptions about the biggest challenges to English language/communication skills development programs in educational institutions with regards to stake-holders (parents and management)

Results shows that the lack of understanding about the need for communication skills development programs as well as the additional effort required to conduct/participate in such programmes are the biggest challenges. Comments made by decision-makers during the interviews further highlighted challenges:

While we would like international standards it's very expensive and I don't think we can insist on it. (Prof Rajiva Wijesinha, Chairman, Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission, Sri Lanka)

They have not yet realised the importance of being good in communication skills. Dr. Anand A Samuel, Vice Chancellor, VIT, Vellore

Perceptions about the relevance and usefulness of various English language initiatives

Table 1 shows that all the options seemed to be somewhat relevant but blended learning, language labs and online interactions seem to be considered most relevant.

Number in order of relevance and usefulness (1 being the most relevant and 5 being the least relevant), the following English language initiatives, in the context of your organisation/institution:

Options	1	2	3	4	5
Massive online open courses (MOOCs)	27%	15%	26%	15%	12%
Blended learning (computer plus face -to-face)	44%	25%	9%	11%	6%
Online/computer self-study resources	21%	26%	29%	12%	8%
Mobile phone learning apps	22%	17%	23%	19%	13%
Online interactions: Webinars, forums, online tutoring	20%	28%	21%	12%	12%
Language labs	32%	24%	16%	9%	11%

Table 1

Responses in the interviews clearly indicated that the role of technology in language learning is seen to be extremely important for its appeal to learners as well as the flexibility it offers:

*Anything that is of interest to the students will definitely help and as of now I think the internet and mobile is something which is trending now. (*Mr Jayakumar Krishnaswamy, Asst. Prof. English Department, Bannari Amman Institute of Technology)

Perceptions about the best tool to measure progress in an English language/communication skill development programme.

Results shows that internationally recognized tests/certificates are the most preferred option followed by group discussion/interviews and finally written assignments and tests set by the teacher.

Comments made by educational decision-makers in their interviews also recognized the impact of assessing all 4 skills at an international standard:

A combination of the right tools, which can assess and which can be compared and internationally acceptable, should include writing and speaking assessments. (Prof Mohan De Silva, - Chairman, University Grants Commission, Sri Lanka)

Conclusion

The findings of this research demonstrate that educational decision-makers in the region place high importance on English language skill and they also feel that the language levels of teachers have a great

impact on the quality of teaching in schools and colleges. However, while the requirement for English language skills is acknowledged, there are a number of challenges in developing these English language skills - from pressure on teachers to complete the curriculum to their own teaching capabilities and from parents and management the lack of understanding of the need for language development skills to lack of student motivation and the additional effort required to implement such programs. While peer learning is considered to be the most effective way to improve teaching standards, blended learning, language labs and online interactions seem to be considered most relevant for student language development in initiatives.

Internationally recognized tests/certificates are considered the best tool to measure progress.

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Dear member,

Have you used any of the following digital platforms (or any other also), for promoting online discussions among your students?

Course Management systems

Moodle, Edmodo, Collaborize classroom

Social networking/Discussion sites

Ning, Facebook, Google+, Google groups and Yahoo groups.

Online Discussion Apps.

Collaborize classroom and Subtext

 If yes, please send your paper, giving an account of your experiences in using them . and also with what effect, to <eltai_india@yahoo.co.in> cc to

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Storytelling and Folk Tales in the ESL Classroom

Interview with *Regina Ress* - Author Storyteller and Actor

Savithri Swaminathan

Deputy Dean (Academics) at the Guru Nanak College, Chennai

Email: savithree66@gmail.com

Would you be surprised to hear that storytelling is one of the oldest and purest art forms in the history of humankind? In all probability, you may not! If you would, that indeed would be a surprise!

Storytelling represents the most direct communication one can think of between a teller and a listener, or a whole audience! There is the ever enchanting story, the engaging teller, the almost mesmerized audience and the interplay between them. Would you ever forget the kind of stories your grandma glued you to and before you knew, the bowl of spinach you hated to eat had disapperaed into your mouth! Storytelling does entertain, challenge, teach and, indeed, transform.

And… as you would vouchsafe for, storytelling (and of course *storylistening*) is lots of fun!

Storytelling and English Language Learners

Based in the oral tradition, storytelling is uniquely suited for the language classroom. Language acquisition begins with listening and speaking. Story, too, begins orally/ aurally. Traditional storytelling often has repetition and rhythm, along with audience participation such as "call and response" and predictions. Storytelling enhances the practice of the "four skills," teaches vocabulary, functions and grammar while encouraging cross cultural awareness and personal expression. Reading and writing, brought in as extensions, can then lead back to more storytelling.

Storytelling has long been recognized as an effective medium for teaching/learning ESL (English as a Second Language). A story workshop focuses on telling stories and weaving creative, communicative classroom activities with them. Folktales, the content of storytelling, could be ably used to support the practice of the LSRW (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) skills; teach vocabulary, functions and grammar, while encouraging cross-cultural awareness and personal expression. Let the goal be teaching a subject or finding ways to relate to and engage the children, we may well explore educational and enjoyable activities using story and storytelling.

It is in this wonderful world of storytelling that **Regina Ress** (Regina), the protaganist of this piece of writing, lives. She has led workshops at The NY Open Center, Omega Institute, The National Storytelling

Conference, National TESOL Conference, at Bedford Hills Women's Correctional Facility, as well as for international storytelling festivals in Rio de Janeiro and Madrid. She has taught school residencies and professional development workshops through Arts Horizons and Young Audiences NY. She teaches English and presentation skills for foreign students at Santa Fe University of Art and Design, graduate courses on Storytelling in the Classroom for New York University's Program in Educational Theatre and Program in Multilingual/Multicultural Studies and for the US State Department's International Visitor's Program.

Regina holds a certificate in TESOL from the New School University and taught English at Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation for 10 years and summer intensives for foreign students at Santa Fe University of Art and Design. She has presented workshops for the Literacy Assistance Center of NY and for the US State Department's International Visitor Program for English teachers from abroad. She teaches a workshop on storytelling in the ESOL classroom for the Multilingual-Multicultural Program at New York.

Who would be better to telling stories about storytelling than Regina, who offers workshops for parents, teachers, after school staff and other child care-givers in using story as a way to explore with children the world and themselves? As I have personally found in one of her workshops, storytelling could be highly informative, incredibly participatory and awesomely funny.

On being informed that there would be a workshop on 'Storytelling in the Language

Classroom' on 3rd February, 2017 between 6:00 and 7:30 pm at the Andhra Mahila Sabha, 109, Luz Church Road, Mylapore, Chennai, India, I was more than curious to put my hypothesis that storytelling is a worthwhile medium in the language classroom to test. I always believed that storytelling dynamically engages students in the act of language learning. It is appropriate for all ages and accessible to all levels. In this very hands-on workshop, participants engage in a wide variety of activities which support a creative, communicative language classroom. We will create stories, tell stories, sing stories, analyze stories, and have lots of fun while learning.

I did attend the workshop and the experience was highly enriching, and that motivated me to request the master storyteller for an interview, which she gracioulsy accepted. The excerpts of which are what this article is all about.

SHE WAS NOT AFRAID: Stories of Brave, Fascinating and Funny Females-Human and Divine

New York City (NYC) based storyteller, Regina Ress, weaves classic myth, ancient legend, and her own personal stories that celebrate the openhearted yet, powerful; feisty yet compassionate Feminine. Her stories take us on a journey through time and space, from ancient Egypt's Goddesses to modern NYC's homeless, with stops in Borneo, Hawaii, and other fascinating corners of the world.

Excerpts from the interview with Regina Russ.

In the classrooms, particularly in the language classrooms, people are talking about storytelling as a methodology to impart language skills. First, what exactly is storytelling?

When you narrate an incident in a dramatic manner either (a real or imaginary story) then it becomes story telling. You use language to tell a story. You listen to someone telling a story or someone listens to your story telling. Though they may narrate the same story there is a difference in the way it is narrated. It is told from their perspective. Then it becomes authentic material. Story telling helps with both listening and speaking skills. In order to be a good story teller, you have to be a good listener too.

Can storytelling be seen as an art? Or is it a science? For example, if we say it could appeal to the cognitive structures of students, perhaps, one could suggest that there is something of a neuro or related study that lurks in storytelling, then storytelling gets the dimension of a scientific outlook?

Scientists are busy studying what storytellers do. When a person tells a story or listens to a story, some part of the brain lights up in both the speaker and the audience and this brings in an element of empathy .

If it's an art, for example, how grandma stories engage us so much that we at times forget our physical pain or change our attitude towards spinach, etc., can this be a viable method for the classroom? What I am trying to convey is that all teachers can't be effective storytellers.

Human beings are hardwired storytellers and, in fact, communicate with each other through storytelling. Not everyone can stand in front of an audience and tell a story but every one can tell a story. You don't have to be dramatic. You can tell a story in a calm manner and get your message across. It is more like theatre where there is no right or wrong way of doing things unless it happens to be a literary story, then there are elements which need to be adhered too.

Can storytelling be taught? That is, if it is considered an effective way to engage learners, teachers should be good storytellers. And, if they are to be effective storytellers, they have to be trained in storytelling? I am just asking about the feasibility or viablity of training the teachers in storytelling.

Yes. It is possible to train teachers. You can teach the craft and art. You can teach them how to use the voice, sensory details and how to exactly work the craft. If the story teller can relate to the audience, then it becomes a successful performance. In the traditional method of story telling, there is audience participation. It connects the speaker and the listener. It is experiential. It takes place in the mind and heart. It can be quite engaging. If you can hold the audience's attention through your performance, you are a successful story teller.

It is possible to begin with short and simple vocabulary like what is seen in Panchatantra. The narrative doesn't insult the intelligence of the listener. Both children and adults get the meaning on very different levels. When some one uses the exact same word that you

used to tell a story, appreciate it. If they are a little apprehensive, you could ask them to draw a simple picture and explain it. Once they are involved in the narrative, they will get over their stage fear.

Given the current trends in the growth of ICT, and the emerging generation of learners who are more into visuals, how effective could storytelling be in the classrooms?

Children are willing listeners and participants in any story telling session. But their participation would be more when you choose the right kind of story to tell.

Is there any study on the impact of storytelling on learners?

There have been case studies on the effectiveness of story telling to improve the students' vocabulary, impact in the ESL/EFL classrooms to mention a few. Story telling is taken quite seriously in the west. Stanford, Duke University to mention a few are offering courses in Narrative and story telling telling. There is a Masters' Degree being offered in Narrative Medicine in Columbia University.

From your experience, can you tell me at what level of learners, storytelling will be more or less suitable or effective? Or is it that irrespective of learner levels, storytelling could be suitable and effective?

If the correct kind of stories are chosen then you would have an authentic use of language. There is no particular level to be succesful.

Please suggest a few ways and means to implement storytelling as a methodology in the language classrooms.

Start by doing. Start telling stories. You don't need a lot of fancy equipment. You only need to have a good repertoire and a very creative imagination.

How effective could storytelling be in subject content classrooms as opposed to language classrooms? Or, more pointedly, is there any way of using storytelling in science classrooms?

You start of by showing a picture of the rings in the tree trunks, videos or clipping of various kinds of trees in various zones like tropical, temperate etc. You can present a story from the point of view of the tree .You can talk about what kind of animals inhabit where - habitat (monkey and the alligator) why animals have certain characteristics etc. Stork and the fox story and so on. Geography can be taught using a map and telling stories about how people travelled from one place to another. How they made it safely across seas or encountered problems. You can tell the story of the five little ducks that went out to swim and only four came back. Thus, you can teach maths at the primary level.

It appears that the effectiveness of storytelling depends largely on the imaginative and creative as well as communicative capability of teachers. If you agree with this, then, will it be too much to ask the teachers to use storytelling in their classrooms, assuming that other environmental factors such as class schedules, the usual timetables, etc., are taken care of?

One could use story telling as a tool. For eg one could use irregular verbs- finish telling the story then explain the rule.

One could begin with telling folktales and move onto grandma's tales. Repeat the story half a dozen times, then write it down. As you go along , you can keep adding one more detail. You can work with a partner. You can tell the same story to four different people and ask them to repeat it. You can ask students to act out dialogues. You could use role play for producing authentic language. One person could tell the story from one character's point of view. Another could do the same thing from a different point of view.

Even differently abled children can be encouraged to use language through story telling and role playing. Music and songs can be used as part of story telling .

Thanks a lot, Regina, for your time!

That is the end of the story!

Blended Learning at Tertiary Level

S. Barathi

Assistant Professor, Department of English, SRC, SASTRA University, Kumbakonam

Email: barathi0723@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Blended learning is a process through which online or e-learning is combined with traditional teaching method in the classroom to create a new, hybrid teaching methodology. It is more relevant in the present context as it brings a lot of new techniques instead of just using computers to lecture in the classrooms. It is a most needed basic change in the method by which teachers and students interact with each other. It has already produced an offshoot – the flipped classroom – that has quickly become a distinct approach of its own. There is no reliable definition for blended learning till date and also there is no universal agreement on the term itself. Many use terms like the hybrid, mixed, or integrative to describe the same trend. But the trend is significant. The aim of the paper is to highlight the latest techniques that could be used in teaching the learners.

Keywords: *Blended Learning, Flipped Classroom, Hybrid, Virtual Learning Environment, Self-assessment*

Introduction:

Many methods were evolved by ELT experts to teach English at various levels. Blended learning is one such method which allows the learners to learn at their own pace by a combination of techniques such as face-to-face and online teaching methods. The point of blended learning is to mix traditional and digital technologies in a way that helps learners learn more productively, complementing each other, doing what each does best. Digital technologies could be used inside the class, or beyond the classroom, to enhance learning by offering specific types of benefit that are more difficult with traditional methods. Educators need to figure out how to help the learners to learn from their iPads because they are not in a position to do it for themselves. Hence it is worthwhile to look at some specific examples of how blended learning has supported learners in different ways, beginning with the issue of flexibility. There already exists a lot about digital technology as offering to learn anywhere and anytime. What is more important is that technologies really did transform education and the way people learn.

Reasons for Using Blended Learning Approach:

The VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) allows the teachers to investigate any online media, things like a video, etc. It allows them to create online quizzes like multiple choice or short answers and also allows them to create spaces for online submission of assessment, to create online discussion spaces and forums, to upload any other type of file or resource that may be used in a class. It offers a larger toolkit to engage the learners. Another advantage is the engagement in between classes and a gradual increase of online activities by asking students to log on probably to perform a simple task, a quiz, perhaps update an assignment or a brief in between times. The major advantage is learners can progress more quickly through a course.

Creating a Blended Learning Model:

For the present study, The Blended Learning Toolkit prepared by the University of Central Florida is used. It is an open educational resource that could be used for teaching the learners. There is a general accord among education innovators that blended learning has three primary components:

1. In-person room activities expedited by trained professionals.

2. Online learning materials, with already recorded lectures given by the same teacher.

3. Structured freelance study time target-hunting by the fabric within the lectures

and skills developed throughout the room expertise.

A course for tertiary level learners could be created through blended learning model based on online activities that benefit the learners through direct interaction whereas traditional teaching, (especially at the faculty level) tends to position a stress on delivering material through lecture method. But in a blended learning model lectures are videotaped prior to the time of teaching and therefore the learners will watch on their own time. The room time is an additional possible method that could be used for structured exercises that emphasize the application of syllabus to unravel issues or work tasks.

In the present study, the researcher has used four methods of blending technology with classroom practice to use the learners' time in an effective way.

1. Video sessions bring the workplace into their home and they learn at their convenience

2. A recap of the video in class using their mobile, tab, etc.

3. The teacher's mobile shows them the key points about the skills they are learning.

4. Evaluation of the learners by the teacher.

Duration of Learning:

To upgrade the learners through blended learning, a duration of six months, i.e., an individual semester may emphasize classroom time at the beginning, then

gradually increase the amount of work that students do online or during independent study. Many argue that class discussion boards, for example, are far more useful if the participants have met face-to-face first.

Flipped Classroom:

The "flipped" room is a modern coinage that refers to categories that are structured virtually completely around a reversal of expectations for lectures and class work. Students are expected to observe lectures on-line reception and complete it a day before they begin it for discussion in the classroom. Learners are expected to prepare in advance by watching a video of the practical technique and then use the time in class for guided practice. This is often called "flipped learning," theory at home, practice in class. The main focus is to make the learners active at every stage. Teachers should design flipped learning model carefully as learning beyond the classroom should not just mean watching videos. There is more to it than that. They do a quiz or an assignment and come to class much better prepared. That way, they use the class time more productively and so progress more quickly. ("Crib Sheet: Flipped Teaching")

Blended Learning Redefining Teaching Roles:

In certain situation, the move towards blended learning has inspired educators to redefine traditional roles. The word "facilitator": has been used as an alternate for "teacher," with a slightly different focus on the role of a teacher. The facilitator focuses on empowering the learners with the skills and information needed to make the most of the online material and independent study time, guiding students toward the most meaningful experience possible.

For this, the facilitators need to concentrate on four key areas:

1. Development of on-line and offline course content.

2. Facilitation of communication with and among students, together with the pedagogy of act content on-line while not the discourse clues students would get personally.

3. Guiding the training expertise of individual students, and customizing material where doable to strengthen the training expertise.

4. Assessment and grading, not like the expectations for lecturers at intervals the normal framework. ("blended.online. ucf.edu")

By putting an emphasis on learning through supervised activities, blended learning has proven to be a very adaptable technique for teaching language at the advanced level. Here, the teachers could shift their focus from the delivery of knowledge to its application, and therefore there is no need for additional training for the learners. Part of the course is delivered through a blended learning approach. At the end of the last session, the teacher may ask the learners to watch a video in their own time. They could watch it as many times as they want and then they should read the lesson. The teacher begins the lesson with a quick recap,

ask some questions to establish the learner's understanding of the video and then they were to get straight on and recreate the look that we had seen using the techniques that they had picked up from the video. This cuts down the lesson time the teacher needs to demonstrate.

Using Flashcards with lecture method enhance the understanding of the students. The learners can use and they can study at their own time. Blended learning is a win-win for everybody, in the fact that the learners could learn at their own pace within their own time and also for the tutor when you are in the session. There is only one educator who may have around twenty learners that all need his/her attention. So if the teacher asks the learners to get out the phone in the session, recap using that, learners will probably think it is wonderful using it as a learning tool. One of the challenges being faced across the whole vocational education sector now is less time for training. This could be solved by using blended techniques.

Free Tools for Blended Learning:

There is a range of free survey tools (or tools with free versions) that is available for the learners. But the difficulty is it may not produce quizzes and polls for the learners.

Typeform:

Typeform is one in all these – a free version lacks a number of the tool's advanced functions. Typeform does not need user expertise and is relatively simple to access the quiz. For instance, it is simple to include

pictures and videos into the welcome screen or quiz queries, and the teacher can customize the background image and the type of fonts. It is just like the other tools, provides a web link to the poll or quiz to send by email to learners or infix in a VLE (such as Moodle). The results are shared with learners as charts and downloaded as a computer program. It additionally permits the user to trace a variety of participants together with the sort of device they use. The major difference between type form and other tools is that it provides a video tour of the tool, FAQs and a two minute tutorial in addition to a video summary.

Advantages of using Type form over other Online Tools:

The advantage of Typeform over other tools like Survey Monkey and Google forms is that it could be used with learners collaborating via their mobile phones, tablets or laptops. For instance, a poll to survey initial responses to a matter is required to begin a discussion. This is especially helpful in conducting research where the learners need to use questionnaires.

Wiksate:

Access to technology and the internet provides ample opportunity to innovate and transform learner experience. Wiksate is an online platform that can be used anytime anywhere for the interaction of learners with educators and other learners. In this, the teachers are free to create a learning group with specific goals. Wikisate is yet another free version which has advanced tools for online teaching. It is designed for a specific

group such as for learners, educators, recruiters, etc.

Advantages of using Wiksate:

Formal learning is structured and scheduled delivery of the content. However, students are compelled to learn so much during a stipulated period of time and hence most of the learning and experiences are lost in the due course. According to Wiksate: "It is now recognized that 70% of learning is experiential, 20% through relationships and 10% via formal education" (www.wikstate.com). Wiksate integrates the formal, social and experiential in the learning process.

Wiksate for Individual Learners:

In this era, there is an increase in informal learners, where learn through interactions, experiences and surfing through numerous links and content on the Internet. WikGlo provides a platform for the learners to connect and learn from others, share their experiences and picks from the Internet to increase our knowledge network and visibility to add a unique dimension to their profile.

Besides it is used to create Learning groups where they can ask questions, share something interesting, interact, curate and build Knowledge and also connect with experts and others. ("www.wiksate.com")

Wiksate for Educational Institutions:

College administrators and faculty are increasingly challenged to engage students and get learning outcomes. These have a direct impact on Institute accreditation, student employability, and placements. Wiksate Education is a hybrid technology that offers a solution to the issues faced by educational institutions through various enhanced digital applications.

Advantages:

1. It creates an Institutional Knowledge Network by providing a virtual network for students, alumni, faculty, and expert to interact on campus and off campus.

2. Improvement of Institutional Visibility by promoting active engaged learning. Showcase analytics to accreditation agencies. Wiksate helps to score 200+ NBA Points.

3. Increases Employability and Visibility of Students through showcase skills of the students to the prospective employers through the Wiksate Public Profile Page.

4. Increases Industry and Alumni Interaction by Promoting informal learning by engaging industry experts and alumni through Wiksate.

5. Improves Faculty Efficiency through Automation by creating, collating and reporting results through learning groups, real-time quizzes, and assignments.

6. Gamify and Engage Staff & Students with Wikcoins and badges. Recognize, reward and promote informal learning.

Padlets:

Padlet is extremely straightforward to use

and easy directions are found here. Several video tutorials created by educators are obtainable, together with videos by the homogenized Learning necessities team. Unlike several other forms of the wiki, it permits for multiple users to edit at the same time. There at multiple settings to permit users to switch the Padlet wall, by adding totally different 'wallpapers', setting privacy and permissions and customizing the wall's weblink whereas the default format is free-form, different formats (list or grid) might give a neater viewing expertise if an over-sized range of posts is anticipated. The classic version of the tool is free; however, the premium versions provide a lot of privacy, security, branding, user management, and observance, together with a version specifically for educators, Padlet Backpack.

Learning and Teaching through Padlet:

Padlet is accustomed to increase learner interaction in a wide range of techniques. In class, a link to a Padlet wall is shared with learners (for example, as a QR code that learners will scan with their sensible phones or tablets). The convenience with padlet is convenient to use and encourages learner engagement, and also the results could be shared instantly with different learners. Padlet is coupled to or embedded inside a VLE like Moodle, and learners will read or share resources with one another related to their subject. Learners are made to compile a style proof wall of quotes, articles or pictures to explore a problem, imaginary being or debate and learners work in a group brainstorming for ideas inside the classroom as well as in the Virtual Learning Environment.

Sharing Evidence of Learner Practice:

Language learners compile articles or images to explore an issue, fictional character or debate; Learners' brainstorming ideas within and beyond the classroom; also use the Crib Sheet created prepared by the teachers, where the teachers or trainers share images, websites, and videos. Learners curate a collection of web-based resources for project work individually or in groups e.g. a wall of types of sentences or nouns, pronouns, etc.

Using Padlet for Teaching a Large Classroom:

The teacher or trainer creates three Padlet walls dedicated to the following groups: Gifted learners/ advanced learners, Average learners and slow learners. In pairs, learners are directed to search the web for 20 minutes to find examples of the grammatical items in all the three groups. For each target group, pairs post links to images, videos or web pages that provide an exemplary of grammatical items aimed at one of the three groups on the relevant Padlet wall. Pairs add their names to the post and provide at least one reason for their selection. The teacher later will share the Padlet walls with the whole group via the Smart Board or projection screen and invite the learners to justify their choices. Thus the students will be engaged as well as involved in doing such activities. ("ugc.futurelearn.com")

Google Classroom:

It is a VLE that can be used as a tool for teaching language as well as to interact with learners and specialists in the subject area. This is extremely useful in teaching languages. The first step here is to create a Gmail id. Teachers, as well as the learners, must have a valid Google Mail id to use this learning platform. The following are the various Google apps used for collaborative learning.

Google Site

It is used to create and manage personal Google Webpages. It could be used by both learners as well as the teachers. Learners create sites to showcase their works and teachers use curriculum portal through which they upload lesson plans, resources, etc.

Google Groups

In this, the students are asked to follow the teacher who initiates the discussion on discussion board. Further, parent groups are created for easy communication.

Google Plus:

It is a social platform where people with a valid g mail id can interact. This could be used by the teachers to share the lessons, question papers, quizzes with the students.

Hangouts:

It is primarily used for chatting and could also be powerful learning experience as interaction with hard to manage student is easier and also shy students would be relatively bold to ask questions without disrupting the flow.

Video Chat

It can be used to deliver a Guest Lecture, Making a Grandparent (or any native speaker) read a story and also to offer the learners online help. Further, it is an efficient tool to share Photos, Links and events.

Result and Discussion:

The benefits of blended learning rely on its flexibility, active learning, individualisation, learner control, feedback. Google classroom and Wiksate provides plenty of opportunity for learner interaction thereby enhancing the quality of learning experience. The various tools mentioned in combination with face-to-face teaching will benefit the learners thereby developing their skills at all levels.

Scope for Further Research:

This research is limited to the teaching of English to advanced learners and further research can be conducted for teaching language or any other subject to all level of learners.

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4. It is easy to enroll members at seminars/workshops/conferences organized by any institution.

5. For any clarification eltai-india@yahoo.co.in may be contacted.

6. Guidelines for Our Contributors

7. Articles on ELT are welcome. Share your ideas, innovations, experiences, teaching tips, material reviews and web matters with your fellow professionals. Please see pages 46-47 for detailed guidelines.

8. REQUIREMENTS: A4, Font size: Times New Roman 12, Double Spaced, Margin of 1 inch on all four sides. Title of the article should be in Caps, bold, centered.

10. Full paper should not be in more than 2000 words.

11. Articles should be sent only as AN EMAIL ATTACHMENT – AS A WORD DOCUMENT to eltai_india@yahoo.co.in with a copy to ramanipn@gmail.com(CDsand Hard copies will not be accepted.)

12. A photo of the author should also be sent in the .jpg file format as an email attachment along with the article.

13. Preference will be given to the publication of articles submitted by our members.

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READING ACTIVITY-1
READING TECHNICAL TEXTS* (Previewing*)
Dr. K. Elango, National Secretary, ELTAI &
(Formerly) Professor of English, Anna University, elangoela@rediffmail.com

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Objective	:	Enabling readers to preview and deal with jargons to comprehend the technical text faster and easier
Participation	:	Individual
Material:		Any technical text (a brochure)
Preparation	:	Previewing to be the first step to enter into texts and engaging with texts from their chosen field as often as possible with a special focus on the technical vocabulary and other discourse features.

Procedure:

- Take any technical text and start with surveying whatever that stands out of pages such as title, subtitles, highlighted parts, summaries, bulleted points, tables, graphs, pictures and any other visual material to get a feel of the entire text. This has to be done as quickly as possible. While running against time this exercise itself can familiarize one with all the vital details.

- Quickly read through the note on the author, introduction, foreword, contents page, index and blurbs/teasers which would highlight certain significant details. Previewing tend to ignore these parts.

- Focus on jargons as the comprehension of a technical text largely depends on them. In case of any doubt, one has to get them clarified by any means before proceeding further as comprehension would become murkier without their comprehension.

- Now, move through the text as fast as possible as previewing would have made the key ideas clear and it also facilitates the process of getting them reinforced. A final quick re-viewing (glance) of the whole text generates a mind map to retain the ideas longer.

Learning outcomes:

1) Learners understand that reading is not mechanically consuming meaning but creating meaning through their interaction and transaction with a text.

2) Learners recognize that previewing is an effective strategy for dealing with technical texts as they usually contain visual materials.

Further activity: Reading every possible technical texts belonging to their field as frequently as possible with previewing as a strategy.

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***Technical texts:** A technical text is one that imparts technical knowledge to a specified audience with an expertise in the field. There are different kinds of technical texts ranging from as simple as a recipe to as complex as computer circuit making. These texts are often filled with jargons and written from an objective point of view.

Technical texts are often accompanied by charts, diagrams, illustrations, and other visual elements that support the texts and provide additional information about the subject. There is a total avoidance of humour, vague terms, literary language and interrogative and imperative sentences.

***Previewing:** It's a reading strategy to preview a text by surveying the title, section/chapter headings, subheadings and all available visuals to get a sense of content and structure of the reading material. This can pique readers' interest, thereby motivating them to read and to stay focused on key information.

READING EXPOSITORY TEXTS* (Structure)

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

Objective	:	Enabling readers to identify and analyze text structures in expository texts leading to better comprehension and retention
Participation	:	Individual
Material:		An expository text (any science book as they often explain)
Preparation	:	Reading focused not merely on comprehending the content but also the way the content is organized, viz. structure

Procedure:

• Reading an expository text as against the other three common modes of texts such as narrative, descriptive or argumentative text and comprehending it thoroughly

• Focusing on the way the text is structured by attempting to locate the signal or cue words

Expository texts commonly follow any one of the five structures – comparison and contrast, cause and effect, definition and example, problem and solution and proposition and support. At times combination of two or more structures are also found. Each structure has its own cue words and becoming familiar with them could enable readers to understand the texts better.

An example: Feature and documentary films

Feature films and documentaries share certain common features <u>but</u> at the same time they differ vastly. A significant difference between them is feature films are mostly fictional, <u>whereas</u> documentaries are non-fictional, dealing with real issues, persons, places or things. Another difference is that feature films are made essentially to entertain the audience or to enable them to escape into the world of fantasy. <u>On the other hand</u> documentaries are informative, meant to engage and captivate the audience. Further, to make one feature film millions is spent, <u>while</u> documentaries are usually less expensive. Besides several differences, there are also certain similarities and one of them is <u>similar to</u> feature films documentaries also have controlled plot and selection of details for portraying characters.

(The underlined words/expressions are indicators of the textual pattern.)

• Texts of other structures of expository are to be read with emphasis on the signal words which signpost the pattern.

Learning outcomes:

1. Readers realize that by identifying the underlying structure of a text their comprehension and appreciation of the text is heightened.
2. Readers are able to get under the skin of the writer and recognize the way the author's mind worked while composing the text. This would enable them to become better writers.

Further activity: Reading any expository text with a conscious focus on identifying and analyzing text structures.

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*Expository texts: Any text that attempts to inform, instruct, explain, describe or define a subject, method, idea or an issue is called expository text. They are of different kinds which include history, science, sports, biographies, manuals, textbooks and newspapers. They are fact-based and written in a clear and logical order.

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