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COSMOS IMPACT FACTOR

Founder Editor and Publisher:
Padmasree S. Natarajan

Dear Reader

I am very happy to be in touch with you again.

This issue of the *Journal of English Language Teaching* (JELT) carries an interview with Robert Bellarmine, former English Studies Officer, British Council (BC). Bellarmine answers a wide range of questions and shares his experience as BC's Manager of English Studies programmes, his association with Alan Maley and N.S.Prabhu, and his passion for teaching English to the disadvantaged (TED), his thoughts on what ails English Language Teaching in India and his views on the changing role of teachers in the twenty-first century.

Stephen Krashen, whose interview appeared in our journal about two years ago, has written many articles on the "power of reading". Recently, when I contacted Krashen asking him to comment on whether e-reading can help learners acquire the target language and whether visual media / social media be used to help learners acquire the target language, he wrote a commentary on the issue of e-book reading, co-authored with Jeff McQuillan, exclusively for JELT. In the commentary titled "Should we encourage e-reading?" the authors state that "Self-selected voluntary e-reading appears to result in language acquisition, but promoting e-reading may not close the achievement gap unless steps are taken to make e-books and e-book readers more affordable".

In this issue of the journal we have introduced a new feature "Key Terms and Concepts in English Language Teaching and Learning" by P. N. Ramani. It will be a regular feature. The first piece is on Applied Linguistics.

Besides the above mentioned articles, we have regular features such as book review and reading activity and research papers.

Simon G Bernabas in the article "Teaching-Learning Theories, Classroom Practices and Learning Outcomes: The Case of English Teaching in India" raises the issues such as whether the main cause of the decline of English teaching in India rest on poor teaching-learning methodology and whether it is important to focus entirely on the teaching of skills or to consider English as a means for students' empowerment.

In the paper "Acquisition of the Perfect Progressive Construction in English by Management Students: A Study in Error Analysis", Leena Jadhav and Tripti Karekatti state that the findings of the research indicate that the Marathi speakers of English selected for the study have not mastered the perfect progressive construction in English and stress the need for drastic pedagogical changes and intensive remedial language teaching.

In the paper titled "Does Anxiety Affect Written Communication?: A Study of Engineering Students in Indian Context" Sunanda Mahesh Shinde discusses how anxiety affects students' written communication.

V Saraswathi who has reviewed the book *The World as a Stage: Shakespearean Transformations* by K. Chellappan concludes the review with the statement "Here is a multi-faceted, insightful, scintillating treasure trove of Shakespearean criticism that should delight any lover of Shakespeare" in a way tempting us to read the book.

Your suggestions and feedback are welcome. If you have any comments on the articles published, do write to me at jeltindia@gmail.com.

Wish you all a professionally rewarding new year!

Dr Albert P'Rayan

Teaching-Learning Theories, Classroom Practices and Learning Outcomes: The Case of English Teaching in India

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ABSTRACT

India was 'fortunate' enough to introduce English teaching almost at the same time as the language began to be taught in England. Since then, our country has never lagged behind in importing the teaching-learning theories developed abroad. While the argument for and against the introduction and teaching of English is still raging, India has consistently produced, for nearly two centuries, a very large number of English-literate people with highly-varying degrees of proficiency in the language. The vast differences in proficiency is really alarming, according to serious educationists, researchers, academics and surveys. It appears that for most centers of education in our country, the teaching of this language has become a ritual. This is not to underestimate the commendable progress that some educational institutions, far away from metropolitan areas, are making in imparting the four basic skills of English, especially through a judicious use of multimedia technology, to the students. Some of the issues that the present paper raises are: Does the main cause of the decline of English teaching in India rest on poor teaching-learning methodology? Why do we find vast differences in the classroom practices of teaching English? Do we need to blame the teaching-learning theories adopted in our country from time to time or do we have to blame the shifting language planning processes that clearly suggest political inclinations and partisanship? And, lastly, should we focus entirely on the teaching of skills or should we also consider English as a means for students' empowerment?

Introduction

The subject of English teaching in India has always been mired in controversies. Broadly speaking, there have been two factions continuously engaging in debates concerning the teaching of English in India.

Thus the first group of scholars has favoured the teaching of literature for its own sake or for cultural empowerment. This group has consistently challenged the efforts of the second group of academics and researchers who have advocated a more language-

oriented theory, known as the language through literature theory. This conflict of ideas does not seem to have affected a large number of students in India; for them, what is being taught is of primary importance.

The current argument about learning English has been that the privileged have always used English effectively for their own advantage while a very large number of students, even after studying the language for 10-15 years, gain neither linguistic proficiency nor cultural empowerment. One question is likely to arise here: Haven't they become more conscious of their rights and spaces on the campus? The answer is that that awareness is mostly an outcome of the interventions of media and their correspondents and, to some extent, of political parties rather than the result of teaching English texts. Let me also add that other disciplines like Sociology, History and Political Science also aim at empowerment.

Beneficiaries of English

While a privileged minority uses English as a weapon for wielding power and grabbing employment opportunities, a majority, in spite of a university degree, is not employable. One of the impacts of globalization is the job opportunities it brought for graduates in the IT-BPO sector. Because of the opportunities available in the service sector many countries across the world insist that their school leavers' proficiency in English should be gradable at B1 on the Common European Frame of Reference. Candidates with this grade can make themselves understood in everyday

situations but will make mistakes which sometimes cause misunderstanding. A typical BPO company will accept such a candidate but Indian school leavers lack this proficiency. David Graddol argues: "Achieving this in India will be a challenge, since compulsory schooling is completed by age 14 [or 15]."Ten years of study in schools and 5 years study in colleges do not provide enough knowledge of English to rural students to take up jobs in the service sector. Consequently, there is a talent pool crisis in India.

There are at least two reasons for this crisis: one, a fast-growing economy like India needs larger number of skilled workforce with greater skills. To meet this need the education system should help upgrade the skills levels of its students. The second reason is based on the question whether schools and colleges should train people for specific jobs or for a broad spectrum of jobs. Either way, the means and methods of teaching English should undergo serious adaptations.

Adoption of foreign methods:

This raises yet another question: Have we ever been reluctant to adopt new methods of teaching in India? According to some, the teaching methodology, techniques and approaches we have adopted in our country from time to time have had colonial origins. For instance, Alok Mukherjee, in his monumental work *The Gift of English*, argues that only "marginal changes have occurred in the curriculum and teaching of undergraduate English in a few places...."

Let us also recall here Meenakshi Mukherjee's essay "Macaulay's Imperishable Empire" in which she argues that "the system of education conducted upon English models obscured the models by which the students might relate themselves to their actual environmental and cultural contexts." (35)

Legacy of the Structural Approach

In a book-length historical essay, entitled *50 Years of English Studies at the EFL University: An Essay in Understanding*, the renowned ELT expert ML Tickoo states that there was colonial interference in adopting one of the earliest and long-lasting approaches adopted in Independent India, the Structural Approach, at the then Central Institute of English (CIE) way back in the 1960s: "This applied linguistic approach had originated in the form of the audio-lingual method in the USA ... and was brought into this country by a group of enthusiastic U.K.-trained practitioners most of whom, as committed 'middle men' representatives of the British Council, forcefully and with considerable success promoted it as the revealed truth." (18) The first Director of the CIE, Dr. VK Gokak, was more than happy to accept the Structural Approach now that the traditional approaches in his view were a failure. Tickoo continues: "From his earliest days at the CIE, Gokak ... had welcomed the introduction of the structural syllabus and praised the work done on it, including the 'good work ... done in this direction by the English Language Teaching Institute at Allahabad.' " (Ibid 25)

The Communicative Approach

What we saw in the succeeding years, too, was a continuation of Gokak's stance, i.e., accepting the methods developed and implemented in countries of native speakers of English. Thus the 1990s saw the slow but widespread adoption of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in India. The blind acceptance of methods, are often criticized by experts. Juup Stelma, for instance, argues: ". . . CLT is something clearly defined with a fixed set of techniques. This means that when the fixed techniques of CLT are 'exported' to non-Western contexts they simply will not 'fit'. On this view it would indeed be inadvisable to use CLT in anything else than Western contexts." (57) He endorses Sandra McKay's view that because of its Western peculiarities, CLT "fails to respond to local teachers and students' needs and backgrounds" and adds that "an uncritical adoption of CLT in non-Western contexts may . . . be inappropriate." (57).

A concrete instance to substantiate these ideas may be cited here. In the early 1990s, the then Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) undertook, jointly with the British Council, India, and the CBSE, a curriculum implementation study in order to evaluate the CBSE English syllabus in schools. Regarding the methods and materials used for the compilation of the syllabus, ML Tickoo says: "I believe, however, that a lot more would have been gained if the materials had come not from an institute in the UK and the purely monolingual approach they advocated, but

from the CIEFL itself which had by then gained enough expertise in the field of materials development and also in what a communicative course suited to Indian teaching-learning environments should attempt and produce." (93) The implication is clear: we need to indigenize foreign methods and materials according to the situations of each academic environment. This, unfortunately, is not being done. If at all attempts at indigenization are being made they are not popularized or acknowledged. Much of the ELT research done at Language Institutes and Universities is hardly tried or tested.

Learner-centeredness, teacher talk and form-focused teaching

Considering the reality that a majority of our students have very poor proficiency in English even when they enter the tertiary level, we need to think whether we can really underplay the vital importance of teacher talk at that stage. For learning any language exposure to the target language is a must. If learner-centeredness is emphasized in a class with extremely diverse language proficiency, then the outcome of such an approach can be frustrating. It is in this context that we need to look back to the positive aspects of the Structural Approach. Let me state it emphatically that I am not making a plea for the reintroduction of the Approach. My point is that the Approach has given due emphasis on the selection, gradation and reinforcement of language items/forms and the teacher's direct interventions while introducing them. I would also not like to deny the fact that

complementing teacher talk with ICT-based teaching would reinforce students' understanding and practice of language skills.

A question may be raised here: Haven't we done away with language-focused instruction and moved on to the Communicative Approach? Yes, we have. But let us also not forget that there are arguments in favour of the former kind of instruction as well. Consider, for example, these words of Paul Nation, spoken in relation to the teaching of vocabulary:

> Language-focused instruction occurs when learners direct their attention to language items not for producing or comprehending a particular message, but for gaining knowledge about the item as a part of the language system. . . . it can raise learners' consciousness or awareness of particular items so that they are then more readily noticed when they occur in meaning-focused input. (270-71)

Gaining knowledge about language, thus, has significance for the learners and the teacher's role in providing that cannot be overlooked.

The dangers of policy shifts

One last point needs to be noted, although that might give a sad note to the closing of this paper. The fact that stares at our face is the unjust practices that have seeped through the heart of our education system. Government policies regarding learning gets periodically changed according to the whims

of a party or coalition that comes to power. Maintaining standards of education does not always seem to be its primary concern. This is evident from the no detention policy practised till class VIII or so. The policy, I feel, has at least two or three disturbing implications: one, it tampers with learners' attainment of basic skills and knowledge during the formative years of their lives; secondly, assessing learning outcomes and students' levels of language proficiency through strict evaluation procedures becomes less important; thirdly, the seriousness of teaching gets affected and, finally, promoting a student till class VIII and then failing her after that stage becomes unjust. There are also undesirable institutional practices, like appointing ill-qualified teachers overruling merit, failing to provide proper infrastructure or learning environment, or discouraging the use of effective language teaching methodology and techniques applicable to specific classroom situations. If we are serious about producing employable youths through English teaching, then we need to be honest about the existence of such evils and work together with determination to provide quality education to a large number of underprivileged learners in our country.

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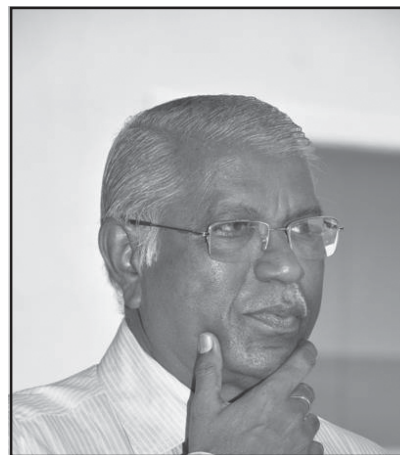# One-on-One: Interview with Robert Bellarmine

Albert P'Rayan

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Robert Bellarmine, an ELT expert, teacher educator, corporate trainer and author, is a well known and respected person in the ELT circle in India. In this interview with **Albert P'Rayan**, Mr Bellarmine shares his experience as British Council's Manager of English Studies programmes, his association with Alan Maley, former Regional Director, British Council, and his passion for teaching English to the disadvantaged, his thoughts on what ails English Language Teaching in India and his views on the changing role of teachers in the twenty-first century.

Mr Bellarmine, many thanks for accepting my request to be interviewed for the *Journal of English Language Teaching*. During the past four decades, you have served as a teacher, corporate trainer, teacher educator, editor of textbook series, English Studies Officer, and Cambridge examiner and have captured the hearts and minds of many ELTians. Now, when you look back at your career, do you have a sense of satisfaction that you have achieved what you wanted to achieve?

As a member of the staff of the CIEFL (now EFLU), and as ESO at the British Council Division, Chennai, between 1979 and 1997, I had spread the developments in the Communicative Language movement fairly widely in South India. I'm particularly proud of the fact that when Dr N S Prabhu was diffusing the information about his supremely innovative idea of the Procedural Syllabus, especially the verification of his proposal in typical classrooms, I was able to support that innovation strongly. Inside CIEFL, surprisingly, there was strong opposition to his CTP (Communicational Teaching Project) from the first generation ELT specialists of India.

Another role I played at which I look back with a deep sense of satisfaction is the role I played as one of the managers of the CBSE's English Curriculum Renewal project. This satisfaction arises mainly out of the assistance I provided in identifying and selecting teachers in CBSE schools who had the specialists' potential to become syllabus writers, materials producers,

designers of testing and evaluation instruments, and teacher trainers.

Further, when a serious professional disagreement arose between the British specialists of the project and the Indian specialists in the CBSE Headquarters, regarding the need to include high literature for the learners in higher classes, I strongly supported the Indian standpoint. Although the ESOs were treated in this project only as project managers, and not as English Studies specialists, I stuck my neck out in this matter. Ultimately, the Indian standpoint in support of Literature in Language Teaching won.

Another achievement I recall is this. After Mr Alan Maley, the English Language Officer for India at that time, got the financial support of Britain's Overseas Development Administration (now Department for International Development or DFID) for ELT projects in South India, I had to ensure that the projects achieved their objectives and became sustainable. These projects involved writing new, communicative syllabuses, writing teaching and testing materials, training the teachers and finally the launching of the new curricula. The hosts of these projects were Anna University, Kerala University, Padmavathy Women's University, Tirupathy, Technical Teachers Training Institute, Chennai, Indian Institute of Science, and Osmania University.

I am pleased to record here that the project at Anna University achieved its objectives fully and was sustained for about twenty years. Besides, more than twenty local ELT specialists from the project institutions were trained in the UK on short as well as long term courses in Applied Linguistics. Equally important, a reputable Indian publisher, Orient Longman (now Orient Blackswan) with Usha Aroor as its ELT Editor, did the excellent job of helping the teacher-turned-textbook writers to write ELT textbooks for Anna University and Padmavathy Women's University.

As an individual ELT specialist, I have authored a five book series titled *Millennium Grammar and Composition* for BPI Educational, Mumbai/Delhi, edited a twenty-two book series called *Hello English* targeted at English medium schools for Orient Blackswan, and co-edited *Teaching Literature in Indian Universities* for the British Council.

You are one among those who promoted Plain English in India. What was the need for a Plain English Movement in India? How successful were you in promoting it?

As for my achievements while at the BC, I recall with a great sense of pride what I did for Plain English. In that period of time, even the British Applied Linguists did not embrace it as something with serious implications for Applied Linguistics, Communication Studies and Good Governance. As a result, the English Studies policy of the British Council did not recognize Plain English experts in the UK as experts to be invited to host countries like India.

However, my own analysis of the English language used in India showed clearly that there was an urgent need for a Plain English

Movement in the country. So with great temerity, I proposed to the Specialist Tours Department of the British Council Headquarters, London, for their support for workshops in Plain English in South India. As one of India's widely acknowledged journalists and the founder of the Clear English India Movement, Jyoti Sanyal, later confirmed in his book **Indlish**, my hunch about this need was correct. And the programme I planned with Martin Cutts as the leader of workshops in Plain English was warmly embraced by famous institutions such as the LIC and the National Law School, Bangalore.

A couple of months ago, I interviewed Alan Maley (Director of the British Council in South India, 1984-1988) for the _Journal of English Language Teaching_. When I asked him what he had gained personally from his stay in India, he said, "...I was lucky to be able to recruit Robert Bellarmine from CIEFL (as was), ...(He was) inestimable value to me in making decisions about the British Council's possible contributions to the English teaching community..." How important was your association with Alan Maley?

My association with Alan Maley is something which I really treasure. It brought about important changes in my career, and introduced into my personal life an extra-ordinarily warm-hearted person. I'm particularly proud of my association with Alan, as he is the most prolific and globally acknowledged author and editor of ELT books for the learner.

Within a year after I joined the BC, he helped me learn the peculiarities the business communication required by the Council. For instance, one of the secrets of achieving brevity, as he taught me, is to keep certain things for the letters and the others that involve strengthening relationship for official dinners and face-to-face meetings.

By the way, many of the British Council (BC) contacts I know from not only English Studies but also other disciplines such as Cultural Affairs and Science and Technology still remember Alan as the most hospitable of the BC Directors for South India. Another sterling quality of Alan is his love and appreciation for, both English Literature and the English Language.

Could you please share with us about your contributions, as English Studies Officer, to the English teaching community in India?

To turn to my own contributions as ESO at Chennai, my job was to organize lectures and workshops by specialist literature teachers, creative writers, and critics from the UK, on the one hand, and ELT specialists on the other.

The most warmly appreciated of my services was the organization of the visit of the Nobel Laureate, Sir William Golding, to the region. Thanks to the great teachers of English Literature such as Prof. C. D. Narasimhaiah, Golding had been widely read by the teachers, their students and adult readers outside the academia. One of the things which I vividly recall in this connection happened when I accompanied Golding to Dharwad, Karnataka, for his reading sessions at Dharwad University. To see him

face to face and to attend his programme, a group of young men had travelled in a bullock cart from a village more than twenty-five kilometres from Dharwad. What gave me most satisfaction on this programme was Golding's own appreciation of the deep and wide knowledge of his works among the South Indian audiences, the sharp and perceptive critical observation of the teachers of his novels, and the personal admiration they all showed in seeing him at close quarters.

As for the ELT programmes, the leaders and promoters of the Communicative Language Teaching from Britain such as Henry Widdowson and Christopher Brumfit, and the Father of Modern English Language Testing, Prof Alan Davies, were brought to South India, as the local ELT experts and classroom practitioners were keen to interact with them.

One of the noteworthy outcomes of the local ELT experts' interaction with the British experts visiting the region, and their training in the UK universities was the formation of Teacher Development Groups (TDGs) in South India. The most active of them, highly appreciated by the British specialists, was the TDG called ELT Community based in Bangalore led by Dr Esther Ramani and ably supported by Dr Barbara Naidu, Dr Jaya Gowri, and Dr C L N Prakash.

Outside ODA projects referred to above, I was able to send about seventy-five local ELT teachers and teacher trainers from this region for one year long courses in ELT and Applied Linguistics to world famous universities such as University of

Edinburgh, University of Lancaster, University of Reading and University of London.

In the same interview, Alan Maley said that he was "singularly fortunate to have had NS Prabhu as a colleague and to see his Bangalore Project at first hand. His departure from a linguistically-structured syllabus to a procedural syllabus based on a series of carefully staged tasks was a critical moment in the development of our current conceptions of ELT." You have known NS Prabhu for many years and you have also discussed his work in many forums. Though Prabhu is well known outside India for his task-based approach, his contributions are not much recognized in India. Have we failed to honour our own hero?

True, we in India have miserably failed to honour our greatest thinker and practitioner in ELT. But this failure cannot be simply brushed aside with the biblical "this-Jesus-son-of-Joseph-the-carpenter" aside.

It is extremely important for the nation and individual professionals to perceive what this failure exposes. They are the fundamental fault lines in our profession's practice, especially at the research and teacher training levels, in institutions such as the EFLU (English & Foreign Languages University), Regional Institutes of English, English Language Institutes, and ELT departments in our Universities, overall, in our ELT academic culture.

For example, for lack of the academic culture of "Publish or Perish", important primary

sources on Dr Prabhu's concepts and the conduct of the five year long classroom implementation of his Communicational Teaching Practice (CTP) in the real classrooms in Bangalore, Madras and Cudalore, such as his book *Second Language Pedagogy* (1984) and secondary sources of great quality by ELT thinkers in the UK, Canada, and USA, have not been studied, discussed and critiqued, as much as they are outside India. How many seminars on his contributions do you think have been conducted at EFLU, since his Bangalore Project began in 1979? How many teacher trainers and research guides in India have spread messages, in fact, superlative praise, like the following?

"It starts from a 'strong' interpretation of the communicative approach which means ...that children follow a communication syllabus, not a language one. Bangalore has set the context for one of the most interesting arguments of the eighties." (***My emphasis***) (Antony Howatt 1984)

"One of the earliest curricular applications of TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching) to appear in the literature was the Bangalore project." (**Emphasis mine**) (David Nunan 2004)

Secondly, most of the senior, first generation ELT experts in India based at CIEFL, RIEs, and ELTIs did not even understand the fact that Prabhu actually adopted the *purpose* of their Structural Approach (SA), namely constructing in the learners' mind the grammatical structures of the target language. He rejected only the graded structural *syllabus* and the non-

communicative *method* SA deployed for this purpose.

Thirdly, in India, the State governments that claimed to incorporate the Procedural Syllabus in their ELT practice merely used the term "task" or "activities" in their syllabuses and textbooks.

Finally, the seminars and conferences based in Indian universities and tertiary institutions have not drawn participants' attention to the Bangalore Project by setting up (a) any in-depth quiz on Prabhu's book and the newsletters of RIE, Bangalore, that contain rich materials on the whole project, (b) competitions to bring out local ELT scholars' knowledge of the project and its stellar outcomes, and (c) activities like mock debates among experts to explicate the ideas in Prabhu's and his critics' publications.

The recently concluded ELTAI international conference at Kochi had the theme "English Language Acquisition: Western Theories and Eastern Practices". The need for Indianising English language teaching was stressed by some speakers. Does it make sense to you? What is your take on "Indianising ELT"?

I do not understand what the users of the phrase "Indianising ELT" meant when they used it at the Cochin conference or when my contemporaries used it on earlier occasions.

Suppose they meant "localising" or "contextualising" the thought content of their lessons or "situationalising" the structures and vocabulary items in their language classrooms. Then, this is what

good language teachers do all over the world. So what is "Indian" about it?

Suppose they imply a kind of (a) long term patronage or practice as in "Indian mysticism", (b) original discovery or invention as in "Indian medicine", (c) preponderant use of distinct characteristics, as in "Indian English", "Indian dance", "Indian music", "Indian architecture" or "Indian culture". Then Indian ELT as practised in our schools and colleges, in my considered opinion, does not really qualify for this sort of "parochial" or "sectarian" GI (Geographical Identification).

You were trained by Professor Alan Davies, known as the Father of Language Testing, and you, in turn, have trained over a hundred English language examiners for British Council. What do you think are the characteristics of an effective English language examiner?

There are three sets of characteristics essential to an effective English language examiner. In fact, any examiner! The first is the professional set. "Validity" and "reliability" being the most fundamental of them, an examiner's marking has to be always "valid" and "reliable".

The second set of characteristics is managerial. For example, as for their availability for exam work, an effective examiner must be dependable. Their time management in conducting, say an interview for a spoken English test, as in IELTS or BEC, should be efficient and strictly according to test specifications.

The third set is ethical and moral. Ethical is "objective" in that (a) these are imposed by the testing body and test administrators, and (b) examiners are supposed to follow these requirements as a group. Moral, on the contrary, is "subjective" in that it is followed in the personal sphere.

Do you think that there is a changing role of teachers in the twenty-first century?

Education in general has been influenced remarkably by the versatility of technology since the sixties of the twentieth century. As one of the presenters of a TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) talk recently pointed out, pupils prefer a video lesson in their homes to the same teacher and the same lesson in the classroom. Therefore, in thousands of classrooms, the lessons on the computer, until recently taught in the classroom without the computer, are now assigned for viewing and re-viewing at home. In contrast, the traditional homework tasks are worked out in the classroom, with the help of the teachers and fellow learners.

Also, old Educational concepts such as "mastery learning" are reasserting themselves now, radically changing even the formation of learner groups according to the criterion of age.

Hopefully, the Global Education Commission of UNESCO headed by the former PM of Britain, Dr. Gordon Brown, as it has already revolutionised education in countries like Vietnam and Tunisia, will throw more light on the role of teachers of the twenty first century by 2030, the deadline for the Commission.

I was fortunate to attend a few of your presentations. Once you used the terms *Happiness Habits, Self Development and Success Skills* and said that these skills should be incorporated into the curricula. Can you elaborate on these terms and the need for incorporating them into the curricula?

As you know, one of the peculiarities of Language Teaching (LT) is that its thought content has often been chosen randomly. In the remote past, when Grammar Translation was in vogue, religious and literary writings were the thought content. Recently, Prabhu chose arithmeti1c and rational thought content. Many teachers teaching French and English as second languages in Canada have been using academic subjects e.g. geography, history, and science, as thought content. Most recently, the teachers who have contributed chapters of activities and ideas to that great book "Integrating global issues in the creative English language classroom: With reference to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals" edited by Alan Maley and Nik Peachey, and published by the British Council, have been using ideas of poverty alleviation, gender justice, world peace, and the like.

In the same way, thanks to the impact of self-development books on me, I occasionally used extracts from these books, and activities such as the ones involving time-lines. Happiness being the universal human aspiration, books dealing with concepts of happiness and activities promoting happiness have also attracted my attention. In my corporate training, after I left the

British Council in 1997, I was using these thought contents in reading and writing activities, and in activities such as the ones included as tasks in books for TBLT (Task Based Language Teaching).

But this use of the techniques or texts dealing with Success Skills and Happiness Habits was infrequent, and limited to the periphery of my practice.

"Teaching English to the disadvantaged" has been your passion for many years. You and Fr Peter Francis were involved in projects relating to this. How successful were these projects?

My interest in TED (Teaching English to the Disadvantaged) arose very late in my professional life: a little more than three years before I left the BC. Earlier, I had realized that Prabhu's innovation, which had been developed in schools where the largest majority of the socially, geographically and educationally disadvantaged children were concentrated, was essentially a kind of TED. But my aspiration was to make it fit the disadvantaged better, by re-orienting its thought content and "tasks" to Success Skills, i.e. to the needs of the disadvantaged.

With this aspiration, I conducted three seminars on TED, hoping that I could identify ELT workers (a) who had already tried out some ideas and techniques that could be amalgamated with Prabhu's approach, and (b) who could form a team to carry out a TED project in a school. Stalwarts such as Dr Prabhu, Dr. K.C. Chellappan, Dr Webber from UK, Prof. Jacob Tharu, Dr Peter Francis S.J., and Dr.

Manmatha Kundu, participated in them. But the ideas and reports on their work presented in those seminars were not good enough, in my estimate, to enter into the design of TED as Fr. Peter Francis or I envisaged it.

As for Fr. Peter's and my attempts in Olcott Memorial School in Beasant Nagar, Chennai, for two years, guiding the teachers of the lower elementary classes there, I must frankly say the following. For several reasons, our effort at making the project plan as a project plan, syllabus writing, lesson planning, and their introduction to the teachers was not adequate and therefore unsuccessful. We faced certain serious hurdles of academic freedom. For example, the school did not allow us to record the classroom interactions. In the second year, the new principal required the teachers to use the Structural Approach. At the personal level, for health and financial reasons, I was compelled to devote a lot of my time to teacher training and IELTS work.

In conclusion, the need, the scope and moral support for TED do exist in our country, in some parts of South America and in Australia, where Education for the Disadvantaged has been tried out in a few schools for the aborigines and ethnic minorities.

What ails English language teaching in India? In your opinion, what measures should be taken to improve the teaching of English?

In the ocean of Indian Education, I see the effective learning of English in about 20% of the private, English medium schools as a beautiful coral island. In contrast, the learning of English in state-administered and state-aided mother tongue medium schools is a huge iceberg.

In my analysis, what ails ELT in India is the following set of factors. It is important to realize that while some factors are educational, some others are ethical, political, managerial and economic. Firstly, as pointed out by a Focus Group of the NCERT, requiring primary school teachers, whose proficiency in English is almost zero, to teach the language to children as early as in lower primary classes, is a serious problem.

Secondly, ELT trainers and researchers in institutions such as the EFLU and RIEs have failed in the last forty years by becoming passive spectators, by ceasing to be policy advisers, syllabus constructors, textbook writers and teacher trainers, though required by the laws of their societies framed at the time of their creation.

Thirdly, the government textbook societies, their materials writers, syllabus designers and producers of testing and evaluation tools, do not give sufficient time, guidance and specifications to fellow professionals as well as to themselves. This is mainly a managerial problem.

Fourthly, the production and sale of textbooks for government schools has become such an unethical business that good private publishers are totally denied the opportunity to write books for government schools. Even NCERT's own books, like their recently published history and social sciences books which are

excellent have been denied the opportunity to compete with the State Governments' textbooks.

Fifthly, India's budget for education, consequently the budget for ELT, is woefully small –often less than 2% of our GDP, as observed most recently by Bill Gates. This is most unfortunate. For, as pointed out by the former Education Minister of Tunisia, countries like Vietnam and Tunisia, whose budget allocations for Education increased to 20%, have improved the quality of their education, presumably including ELT, surpassing the quality of Education in the US and the UK.

Sixthly, perhaps most importantly, the tests and examinations deployed in State Government schools, colleges and technical institutions such as the Engineering colleges, are unforgivably mal-administrated. For example, in one State I know personally, in the exams for Class X, copying the question papers for English is being awarded 30% of the total marks allocated. The examiners I spoke to revealed that this is a long standing practice that arose from the oral instruction of an Education Minister.

Lastly, the media occasionally bring out articles critical of the failure of ELT in non-English medium schools. However, investigative journalism in India has not exposed the width and breadth of the unethical practices in Indian ELT or the damage this has done to the country's economic and social development.

You are proud of saying that you had a humble background and you studied in a Tamil-medium school. Though your first degree was in Chemistry, you are an effective communicator in English and you were able to become a very successful English language teacher, trainer and consultant. You also rose to the highest position an Indian in the British Council can aspire for. What is the secret of your success?

First and foremost, God, rationalists may say Nature, blessed me with a good aptitude for language and learning. Second, I owe my success in learning English, to excellent teachers such as Mr. Bruno Villava Rayer of my high school. Third, with their sweat and sacrifice, my parents and my wife Jessie, enabled me to get my first degree and my PG qualifications in ELT from CIEFL and Edinburgh University, respectively. Fourth, poverty motivated me intensely (a) to migrate from my village, and (b) to develop myself linguistically, educationally, and intellectually. Fifth, for the success in my career, Dr. Nadkarni and Dr. Tickoo of the CIEFL, and Mr. Alan Maley and Dr N S Prabhu of the British Council, were chiefly responsible. Finally, to use a cliché, "last but not least", Lady Luck has been a factor I can't ignore.

Thank you. That's very interesting and inspiring too.

The Acquisition of the Perfect Progressive Construction in English by Management Students: A Study in Error Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Error analysis has been one of the most significant concepts in ESL studies and has stimulated curiosity of researchers hitherto as it provides an empirical evidence to the study undertaken. The present study aims to study the acquisition of the English perfect progressive construction by the first year management students whose first language is Marathi. The data for the present research is based on a grammaticality judgment test. The result of data received from the test is calculated using the SPSS software. The tool of error analysis has been used to analyze the linguistic behaviour of the participants in the present paper. An effort is made to trace the interlingual errors made by the second language learners in the light of the comparative study of the first language (i.e. Marathi) and the second language (i.e. English).

Keywords: *Error analysis, interlingual errors, intralingual errors, language acquisition,*

Introduction

Error analysis is one of the most prominent approaches to the acquisition of a second language. It functions as a tool in analysing the errors made by the second language learnersand provides an insight into the possible causes of the errors. Furthermore, it also provides an empirical evidence to the study undertaken.

The present paper aims to study the acquisition of the English perfect progressive construction by the first year management students located in Pune. The tool of error analysis has been used to analyze the linguistic behaviour of the participants in the paper. An attempt is made to analyze the interlingual errors made by students while using the perfect progressive construction in English.

Literature Review

Corder (1967) in his seminal paper entitled "The Significance of Learners' Errors", proposed the linguists to focus on L2 learners' errors as sources of insight into

the learning process and not as 'bad habits' to be eradicated. Saville-Troike(2006:38), refers to errors as windows to the language learners' mind. According to Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991:61),

"From an EA perspective, the learner is no longer seen to be a passive recipient of TL input, but rather plays an active role, processing input, generating hypotheses, testing them and refining them."

Corder (1967) views errors as valuable information for three beneficiaries, namely, teachers, researchers and students. It gives teachers clues on the progress of the students. The researchers get an insight into how the language is acquired or learned. Furthermore, it gives learners resources in order to learn.Error analysis, as an approach to second language acquisition, has stimulated curiosity of many linguists and ESL experts hitherto. Gass and Selinker (2008: 103) state that there are two main sources of errors within the error analysis framework, namely, interlingual errors and intralingual errors.

- Interlingual Errors –The interlingual or interference errors are the errors due to learners' first language. They involve cross-linguistic comparisons. These errors refer to negative interlingual transfer.

- Intralingual Errors - The intralingual errors result from the language being learnt. They are due to partial or faulty learning of the target language.

Richards (1984) distinguishes the intralingual errors made by the learners into the following categories

a. Over-generalization

b. Ignorance of rule restrictions

c. Incomplete application of rules

d. False concepts hypothesized

Ellis (1994) gives the following procedure to be followed in Error analysis.

- Collection of Samples of learner language

- Identification of Errors

- Description/Classification of Errors

- Explanation of Errors

- Error Evaluation

Research Methodology

Objectives

- To compare and contrast the formal and functional properties of the perfect progressive construction in English and Marathi

- To deduce the points of convergence and divergence in the perfect progressive construction in English and Marathi

- To analyze the interlingual errors made by the participants while using the English perfect progressive construction in the grammaticality judgment test based on the relationship between the two languages

A Grammar of Contemporary English (1972) by Quirk et al has been used as the model for English Grammar in this research. The book entitled *Marathi* (1997) by R. Pandharipande has been used as the standard Marathi Grammar. Both these theoretical grammars used in the study are descriptive corpus-based reference grammars in the respective languages. The areas of interference deduced from the comparative study of the syntactic and semantic properties of the perfect progressive construction in English and Marathi have been used to analyse the interlingual errors made by the participants.

Data Collection Procedure

The data for the present paper was based on a grammaticality judgment test. Hundred MBA students belonging to ten different management institutes in Pune were selected for the elicitation of data. The students are pursuing a professional degree in management and are expected to have higher level of proficiency in English language. The increasing number of MNCs in the fast globalizing Indian corporate sector assumes effective English communication skills an indispensable quality in any successful manager's life.The hundred participantswere selected based on the following parameters.

a. Class: First Year MBA students from the management institutes located in Pune

b. First Language: Marathi

c. Medium of instruction in school: Marathi

d. Marks in Graduation: 50% - 70%

e. Gender: 50% Male and 50% Female, i.e., 50 male students and 50 female students

The data for the present research is based on a grammaticality judgment test. The test consisted of eight meticulously designed questions aiming to judge the use of the verb phrasein English by the first year MBA students. A higher degree of uniformity in the preparation of the grammaticality judgment test could be achieved as the items were targeted at subjects who shared the same mother tongue, i.e., Marathi.

The questionnaire and the grammaticality judgement test were administered to 100 MBA students belonging to different management institutes in Pune. The researcher made the students understand that it was not an examination and that the responses given by them would be used to improve their teaching modules and materials. The test consisted of both the closed ended and open ended questions. The test consisted of eight questions based on the use of the verb phrase in English. The eight questions in the test were arranged as per the relative order of difficulty. They are as follow.

Question 1

Select the correct answer from the given alternatives and fill in the blanks.

This was a multiple choice question where the students were asked to select one of the four options of the verb form in the given sentence. This question aimed to examine the learners' ability to select the proper form of the verb as per the requirement of the

given sentence. The advantage of the multiple choice test is that it requires the participants to discriminate among alternatives which need a level of mastery that a free response item might not be able to detect.

Question 2

Use the appropriate forms of the verbs in the brackets and fill in the blanks.

In this question, the students were expected to use the correct form of the verb given in the bracket based on the meaning of the sentence.

This question aimed to examine the students' ability to use tense and aspectual forms at the intra-sentential level. It did not require any other context to determine the selection of the appropriate verb form.

Question 3

Underline the correct option in the following sentences.

This was a multiple choice question where the students were asked to select one of the three options, namely, since, from and for. It aimed to examine the students' ability to use the right preposition of time.

Question 4

State whether the following sentences are grammatically correct or incorrect. If the sentences are incorrect, correct them and rewrite them.

This was a correction exercise where the students' knowledge of the verb forms and their functions was judged. They were expected to understand the mistake in the verb form used in the given sentence and correct it. This question attempted to examine the linguistic competence of the subjects in the given area.

Question 5

How do you express the following meanings in English?

This was a translation exercise where the students were given Marathi sentences and were asked to give English counterparts of the meanings conveyed in the Marathi sentences. This question aimed to examine whether students operate through compound bilingualism or co-ordinate bilingualism.

Question 6

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate forms of the verbs given in the bracket and complete the following dialogues.

This was a dialogue completion exercise. This question was designed to judge the students' ability to use the correct verb forms at inter-sentential level. Here the context determined the selection of the appropriate form of the verb as any form of tense was based on the other sentences.

Question 7

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate forms of the verbs given in the bracket and complete the following passage.

This was a cloze exercise where the students were given a paragraph and they were asked

to fill in the blanks using the appropriate forms of the verbs given in the bracket. This question also examinedthe students' ability to use the correct verb forms at inter-sentential level. Here, the contextual knowledge was necessary for the selection of the appropriate forms of the verbs.

Question 8

Write an essay on the following topic using the points given below.

My Favourite Sport

This was a guided composition exercise where the students were asked to write an essay on their favourite sport using the points provided in the question. This was an open ended exercise. It aimed to examine the students' ability to form their own sentences and move from one point to the other.

Data Analysis

The data received from the results of the test was evaluated. It consisted of both correct answers and wrong answers. The errors made by the students were analysed in the light of the comparative study of the structural and semantic features of the verb phrase in English and Marathi. A simple descriptive statistical method was used where the data was first converted into a percentage of errors which were further compared and systematically analyzed to identify the extent to which the first language interferes with the second language while acquiring the verb phrase in English. The result of the data received from the test was calculated using the SPSS

software. The tool of error analysis by Corder (1967) was used to differentiate the responses given by the participants into the following four categories

1. Correct Responses

   The first objective of the paper is to understand the proficiency of the subjects as far as the use of the verb phrase in English is concerned. Hence, the number of correct responses is very important to get the complete picture of the linguistic competence of the learners.

2. Interlingual Errors

   The researcher attempts to understand the errors the subjects make due to the influence of their first language, i.e. Marathi.

3. Intralingual Errors

   The intralingual errors are also recorded as they also form a crucial part in understanding the overall proficiency of the subjects.

4. Unattempted Questions

   The number of questions which are not answered by the participants is also recorded.

Thus, the primary objective of the current paper is to understand and analyse the interlingual errors made by the MBA students while using the perfect progressive construction in English. Thus, the responses given the questions related to the use of the perfect progressive construction in the test are used in this paper. The tool

of error analysis was used for the same. These results were further analyzed in order to understand the role of Marathi in the acquisition of the perfect progressive construction in English.Of course, the first language interference is not the only reason of the errors made by students, others being transfer of training, overgeneralization etc. However, reference is made to these errors wherever it is found necessary. The detailed analysis and discussion on the intralingual errors made by the students lies outside the scope of this paper.

Findings

The perfect progressive is used for a persistent situation in English, whereas in Marathi, this use is less frequent. In fact, the progressive aspect is usually used along with an appropriate postpositional phrase to express the meaning of a persistent situation in Marathi. If we apply the principle of Markedness Differential Hypothesis (MDH) by Eckman (1977), the progressive aspect is less marked as compared to the perfect progressive

construction and hence this first language habit is transferred to English. That is the reason why most of the Marathi speakers of English tend to use the present progressive and an appropriate prepositional phrase to denote an activity started in the past and continuing up to the later point of time. This point of language transfer deduced from the comparative study of the verb phrase in English and Marathi was verified in the test given to the students.

The students' ability to use the perfect progressive construction appropriately was examined throughout all eight questions given to the students. The perfect progressive is used for a persistent situation in English. It was appropriately used in 19.9% responses. On the other hand, 48.6% gave interference induced responses, that is, the progressive construction was used instead of the perfect progressive. The intralingual errors comprised of the 28.2% of the total responses whereas 3.3% questions were not attempted by the respondents.

Perfect Progressive

3.30%
19.90%
28.20%
48.60%

≡ Correct
ıı Interlingual Errors
∷ Intralingual Errors
⊕ Unattempted Questions
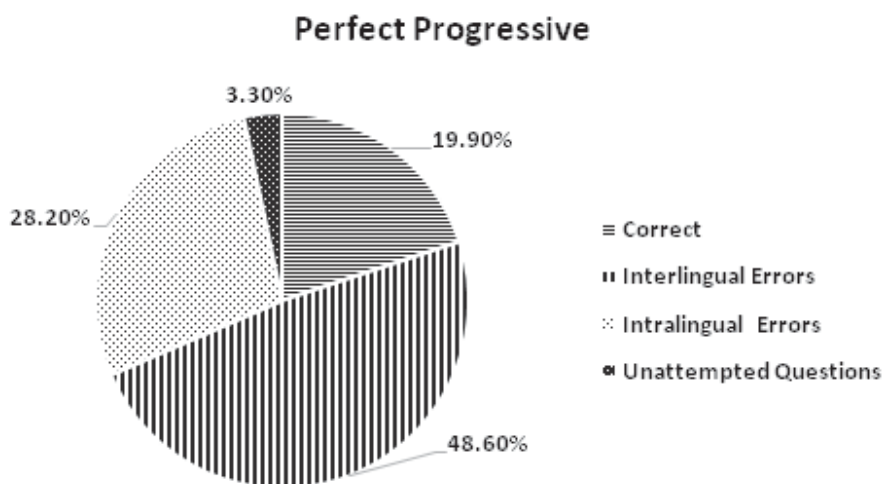
This result proves that the participants have not learnt the use of the perfect progressive construction. The progressive construction is typologically less marked as compared to the perfect progressive construction and hence this first language habit is transferred to English. That is the reason why most of the Marathi speakers of English tend to use the present progressive and an appropriate prepositional phrase to denote an activity started in the past and continuing up to some later point of time. This point of language transfer deduced from the comparative study of the verb phrase in English and Marathi was verified in the test given to the students.For example,

Q.2.1 You _____ (sit) in the room since morning. You need a break so go out and get some fresh air.

Here, only 14% students gave correct answer, i.e. 'have been sitting' whereas 45% students used the present progressive, i.e. 'are sitting.'

The question-wise performance of the students in the perfect progressive construction is given below

No	Correct (Perfect Progressive)	Interlingual Errors (Progressive)	Intralingual Errors	Unattempted Questions	Total
Q.1	29.60%	56.40%	14%	-	100%
Q.2	10%	33.70%	54.30%	2%	100%
Q.4	14.50%	66%	10%	10%	100%
Q.5	14.50%	54%	25%	6.50%	100%
Q.6	20%	54%	25%	1%	100%
Q.7	13%	11%	69%	7%	100%
Q.8	42.20%	31.10%	26.70%	-	100%

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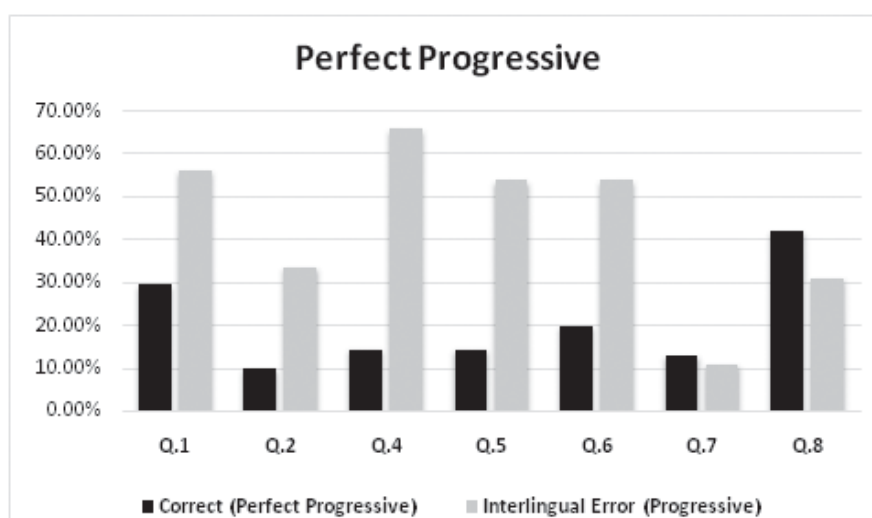
This seems to be a pan-Indian feature. In British English, there is an element of redundancy as both the perfect progressive and the prepositional phrase express the meaning of a persistent situation. Gokhale (2003:49) opines that 'in IE simplification is achieved by eliminating this redundancy. In IE the verb phrase in the progressive form conveys durativity and the prepositional phrase expresses the meaning of a persistent situation.'

The difference between the prepositions 'since', 'from' and 'for' is also quite confusing for Marathi speakers of English. For example,

Q.3.1 They have lived in that house (since/from/for) five years.

The correct answer, i.e. 'for' was opted by 51% students whereas the preposition 'since' was used by 33% participants and 15% students selected the alternative 'from.'

Q.3.2 She has been in Paris (since/from/for) Monday.

The responses to this question comprised of 34% correct answer, i.e. 'since' whereas 57% students gave interference induced response 'from.'

Thus, difference in the use of prepositions 'since', 'from' and 'for' creates a problem for Marathi learners. The results of the test indicate that 56.10% students gave interference induced responses. The reason for this kind of linguistic behaviour could be found in the differences in the structures of English and Marathi. The perfect for a

persistent situation in English involves the use of the preposition 'since' before an adverbial indicating the starting point of time and the preposition 'for' before an adverbial of duration. But in Marathi, the postposition 'pâsûn' (Meaning: since / from) is used for both. That is the reason why many Marathi speakers of English cannot maintain the distinction between 'since' and 'for' and use the preposition 'since/from' for both as it is a translation of the postposition 'pâsûn' in Marathi. Furthermore, the preposition 'since' occurs in perfect aspect whereas the preposition 'from' occurs in other tenses. The performance of the participants in the test indicates that Marathi speakers of English find it difficult to understand this difference and use 'from' instead of 'since' in the perfect aspect.

Conclusion

The findings of the research indicate that the Marathi speakers of English selected for the study, i.e., the first year MBA students from Pune district have not mastered the perfect progressive construction in English. They tend to operate through compound bilingualism. They first think in Marathi and then translate it in English. The progressive construction is used in Marathi for a persistent situation whereas English requires the perfect progressive construction to communicate the same meaning. The progressive construction is typologically less marked as compared to the perfect progressive construction and hence gets transferred to the target language. The results of the data analysis prove that

Marathi speakers show a tendency to use the progressive aspect for a persistent situation in English.

Thus, the study identifies the importance of the learner's knowledge of the syntactic structures of the first language, which cause difficulty in acquiring a second language. The results obtained from the error analysis provide substantial empirical evidence to the research undertaken. It proves that the management students have not mastered the use of the perfect progressive construction in English.The poor performance of the students in using the verb phrase after almost ten years of language learning calls for drastic pedagogical changes and intensive remedial language teaching.

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Should We Encourage E-Reading?

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ABSTRACT

So far, research confirms that "e-reading" can be helpful for the acquisition of language and literacy. Because of the high cost of e-readers and e-books, however, those living in poverty are unable to take advantage of e-reading. A push toward increasing e-book offerings in libraries will have the effect of making the gap between the rich and poor wider than it is now, unless the cost of e-readers is dramatically reduced or the availability of e-readers is dramatically increased.

It is firmly established that self-selected pleasure reading is tremendous help to language development, perhaps the best way to help acquirers progress from beginning stages to the most advanced stages. The research, until recently, has been confined to reading paper print. There is, however, reason to suspect that self-selected e-reading can have a similar impact.

Pratheeba and Krashen (2013) reported a substantial correlation (r = .78) for advanced speakers of English as a second language (25 students of engineering at a university in India) between self-reported reading and a vocabulary test consisting of words taken from Graduate Record Examination preparation books, designed for native speakers of English.

Their 20-item questionnaire included four items dealing with reading from the computer, but only one of these dealt specifically with pleasure reading: the correlation between vocabulary scores and pleasure reading on the internet was modest, but it was positive and significant (r = .35, p = .044). Other forms of reading using the computer (reading about current affairs, reading for academic purposes, reading online journals) were not significantly correlated with vocabulary scores, confirming the power of self-selected reading (Lee, 2007).

Wang and Lee (2015) asked university students of EFLin Taiwan to engage in web-surfing in English for 20 minutes at a time at least once a week for one academic year. Surfers made better gains ontests of knowledge of infrequently occurring words (those appearing once every 10,000 words in texts) and academic words and also did better than comparisons on a cloze test. Their reading was clearly self-selected and

related to their own interests. One subject told Wang and Lee: "I think I can really pick what I like and disregard my dislikes. Then, I'll choose what I really want for sure. I definitely won't choose something I'm not interested in."

The Barrier

E-book reading in the US is far more frequent among those with higher incomes (table 1), most likely due to the cost of e-book reading devices and e-books themselves.

Table 1: Percentage who have read a print or e-book in the last 12 months.

income	print book	e-book
below 30,000	69	19
30,000 - 49,999	68	26
50,000 - 74,999	69	33
above 75,000	73	40

N = 1520 adults, March, 2016
From: Pew Research Center, 2016

Table 2 shows that those earning under $30,000 per year in 2015 were less likely to own e-book reading devices and computers.

Table 2: Percentage of adults with E-Book-Readers, tablets, computers, smartphones:

	Computers	Smartphone	E-Readers	Tablets
Below 30	50	52	14	28
30-49,999	80	69	16	44
50-74,999	90	76	22	51
75 & more	91	87	27	67

Pew Research Center, 2015.
n = 959 adults, interview during March/April 2015.

The official 2017 household income poverty line in the US was $20,600 for a family of four: If one of two wage earners in the family earns anywhere close to $30,000, this means that the "below $30,000" category includes families that are well above the poverty line. E-book use and ownership of e-reading devices among those living in poverty is probably much lower than the figures given in tables 1 and 2.

The Price of E-Book Readers

Most new e-book readers cost at least $80 US. But the good news is that e-books can now be read on other devices such as computers, smartphones and tablets. Because of this, sales of dedicated e-book readers, such as Kindles and Nooks, have declined (Haines, 2016). But computers, smartphones and tablets are not inexpensive, and as presented in table 2 fewer low-income adults own these devices.

E-Book Prices

Four of the five best-selling adult fiction books in the United States, as listed in the New York Times in January, 2017, sold for $14.99 and one sold for $10.99 on Amazon, sometimes less than the paperback versions and sometimes more.

These prices do not take into consideration the fact that e-books generally cannot be shared. Amazon allows some, but not all sharing of kindle books with friends for 14 days, but this can only be done once per book, and customers can't read the book while their friend has it.

Also, there is no used book possibility for e-books. Donations of used print books by individuals through organizations such as book swap groups can make significantly more books available in public and school libraries (Krashen, 2014).

Are Libraries the Solution?

While many public libraries in the United States include e-books, they make up on the average only 12% of the entire collection, and account for only 3% of public library circulation (Romano, 2015a). Most (69%) of the e-books in public libraries are aimed at adults. Similarly, only 2% of school library collections are e-books and account for only 3% of total circulation (Romano, 2015b).

Public libraries in the United States provide a modest amount of help for those without e-book readers or computers at home: 38% of public libraries have e-book readers that patrons can take home (Romano, 2015a). Rideout and Katz (2016) reported that 36% of adults living below the poverty line said they used computers at libraries, compared to 23% of those living above the poverty line. Twenty-four percent of school libraries provide e-book reading devices for students (Romano, 2015b).

Lack of access to books and other reading material is the major reason those living in poverty have lower levels of literacy (McQuillan, 1998; Krashen, 2004): Young people living in poverty have fewer books in the home, in local libraries, and in their schools.Pushing e-reading by increasing library e-book offerings will not solve this problem

Because of the high price of e-books and e-book readers, those living in poverty have little or no chance to engage in e-reading. In fact, promoting e-reading could make the situation worse: an increase is e-book offerings in libraries, without a substantial decrease in the cost of e-book readers or a plan to make e-readers universally available, will increase the gap between the rich and the poor. E-books will be available to the

more privileged but not to those without access to e-readers of some kind.

This has already happened: Those surveyed in Romano (2015b) were asked an open-ended question about interest, or lack of interest, students showed for e-books. Here is one answer: "A lot of our students come from low income homes and don't have a way to read these titles." (p. 31).

Summary

Self-selected voluntary e-reading appears to result in language acquisition, but promoting e-reading may not close the achievement gap unless steps are taken to make e-books and e-book readers more affordable.

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Key Terms and Concepts in English Language Teaching and Learning

P.N. Ramani

Applied Linguistics

Linguistics is the study of human language in general. This includes the structure of language (i.e., grammar; phonetics and phonology; semantics; and so on). It also includes the purposes for which language is used in the real world. Combined with other disciplines, it has given rise to specialized fields, such as

- *historical linguistics* (i.e., the study of language change over time and region),

- *psycholinguistics* (i.e., the study of the relationship between language and the human mind),

- *sociolinguistics* (i.e., the study of the relationship between language and society),

- *applied linguistics* (i.e., the study of the applications of language study),

- *critical linguistics* (i.e., the study of the relationship between language and ideology),

- *corpus linguistics* (i.e., the use of databases of authentic language for language descriptions), and so on.

Applied linguistics is a branch of linguistics that deals with applying linguistic theory to solving language-related issues in the real world and, as such,covers many

fields. For instance, the field of *language planning* is concerned with issues – problems and challenges – relating to the planning and implementation of regional and national language policies. The field of language planning would address issues such as the following:

- the dominant language in a region or a country(e.g., the *lingua franca* or the official language);

- English as an International Language, Global English, Indian English, and so on;

- the language(s) to be taught and learnt in school, college and for jobs (e.g., two- or three-language formula; knowledge of and proficiency in the regional language for jobs in a particular state in the country like India; bilingualism;the role of the mother tongue-L1 in second language teaching and learning);

- the status and maintenance of other languages, including the minority languages; and so on.

Some of the other fields encompassed by applied linguistics would be *lexicography* (writing dictionaries), *forensic linguistics* (i.e., use of linguistic evidence in solving crimes),*speech therapy*, *translation studies*

and *language teaching and learning.* Application of linguistic theory in second and foreign language studies is perhaps the most common and significant field within applied linguistics. Formal programmes of study in applied linguistics leading to certification in language teaching and learning are likely to focus on language acquisition (including second language acquisition) and learning, curriculum and syllabus design, theories of language and language learning, approaches and methods (including the use of technology), testing and assessment, phonology and grammar, literacy studies, and so on.

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9. 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. Abstract in about 150 words

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Does Anxiety Affect Written Communication? A study of Engineering Students in Indian Context

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ABSTRACT

This research paper aims to identify types of written communication strategies (CSs) used and frequency of using them by engineering students with high and low level of anxiety. The data on students' anxiety level was collected by using Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) designed by Horwitz & Cope et. al. (1986). Three written tasks (letter writing, email writing, report writing) were given to select subjects of the study. Their responses were collected on plain papers. By using an advanced cell phone with strong audio recorder, students' retrospective interviews were audio recorded. To analyze the data taxonomy on communication strategies was adapted from the taxonomies of Arndt (1987), Wenden (1991), Victori (1995), Riazi (1997), and Saski (2000).

Results showed that high anxious students used planning, re-reading, revising, literal translation, word coinage, circumlocution, paraphrase, generalization and getting help; rehearsing and resourcing were used more by low anxious students. Repetition and using similar words were used equally by both high and low anxious students.

Keywords: *Written Communication Strategies, Anxiety, Engineering students*

Introduction

Writing has been described as having three main activities: plan-ning, formulating or composing and revising, which in the traditional understanding of writing was understood as a linear procedure, a strict "plan-outline-write" that had little to do with the complex activities that teachers observed in their writers' composing processes, as these were much more than building grammatically correct sentences (Peñuelas, 2012). However, observations of writers during the process of composing resulted in a large range of recursive activities, such as gathering ideas, writing them down, composing, editing, reading, rescanning and proofreading. Such activities became fundamental in the fields

of learning and educational psychology in an attempt to understand how people undertake learning tasks and how to provide strategy instruction so that students become successful lear-ners (Jones et al., 1987; Weinstein et al., 1988). It was the belief among cognitive psychologists that strategies are deliberate actions that learners select, implement and manage in order to carry out writing tasks. As Jones et al. (1987, p. 15) explained it: "an effective learner or good strategy user knows when to use a given strategy as well as when to abandon it and select another one".

Very less amount of research has been done on communication strategies used by low and high anxious engineering students in different written communicative situations in India. Most of the teachers are unknown about the importance of teaching communication strategies to their students. Hence, the present research, conducted in order to find out insights regarding communication strategies used by second year engineering students helps to make teachers aware of the crucial role communication strategies play in second language learning and to contribute to the research outcome in the field of communication strategies used by engineering students. The research also focuses on the type of communication strategies used by low and high anxious students.

Theories

Anxiety

Language Anxiety can bring about several problems in the process of language learning as it can hinder the students from mastering the language. Anxiety refers to concern and fear, especially about what might happen (Oxford dictionary, 1995, p. 16) and language anxiety refers to a type of anxiety unique to second language learning (Horwitz et al., 1991, p. 25).

What are the causes that hinder or stop learners to succeed in learning a second/foreign language? Most of the time, students' feeling of stress, anxiety or nervousness may impede their language learning and performance abilities. Theorists and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) researchers have reiterated that these feelings of anxiety are specifically associated with learning and speaking a second/foreign language, which distinguishes SL/FL learning from learning other skills or subjects. Both language teachers and students are aware and generally feel strongly that anxiety is a major hurdle to be overcome when learning to speak another language.

According to Horwitz et al. (1991) language anxiety means the feeling of nervousness, worry, or uneasiness experienced by foreign language students. Many students, especially in a classroom situation, find that learning a foreign language is stressful especially if they have to perform something using foreign language due to the fear of making mistakes, high feelings of self-consciousness, and the desire to be perfect when speaking (Foss et al., 1991).

There are three divisions of language anxiety: test anxiety, fear of negative

evaluation, and communication apprehension. "Communication apprehension is the fear or anxiety an individual feels about orally communicating." (Daly, 1991, p. 3). Formerly McCroskey (1970) viewed CA as a multi-based anxiety linked to oral communication. It usually occurs in a classroom situation. Students may avoid talking or writing in foreign language because they are unprepared, uninterested, lacking confidence, and because they are afraid of communicating. The characteristics of a person with high communication apprehension level are- they have difficulties in concentrating, become forgetful, and sweat much (p.3). Albert P'Rayan (2008) denotes CA as "an individual's level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons.

Communication strategies

"When language learners are unaware of how to say a word in English due to fear or anxiety, they can communicate effectively by using their hands, imitating sounds, inventing new words, or describing what they mean. These ways of communicating are communication strategies (CSs)". "Communication strategies are attempts to bridge the gap between the linguistic knowledge of the second-language learner and the linguistic knowledge of his or her interlocutor in real communication situations" (Dornyei, 1995).

As per Selinker's (1972) views, "Strategies of Second Language Communication" are the ways in which foreign/second language learners deal with the difficulties they encounter during the course of their speaking performances in target language when their linguistic resources are inadequate.

Many of the researchers proposed several definitions of communication strategies since the notion of 'communication strategy' was first introduced by Selinker (1972). But he did not deal with communication strategies in detail. Tarone, Cohen and Dumas (1976-1977), and Tarone, Frauenfelder and Selinker (1976) defined 'communication strategy' as "systematic attempt by the learner to express or decode meaning in the target language (TL), in situations where the appropriate systematic target language rules have not been formed". One of the definitions most often referred to is the one provided by Tarone (1980) that communication strategies are considered as "a mutual attempt of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations where requisite meaning structures are not shared".

The focus of the present research is to check the level of anxiety of the engineering students and find types and frequency of communication strategies used by them.

METHOD

Participants

Twenty four participants of this study were second year engineering students from various branches (like- Chemical,

Mechanical, Computer, IT, EXTC, Civil, etc.) from four engineering colleges of Ratnagiri district in Maharashtra, India. These students were selected by using stratified random sampling.

Context of the study

The present study was carried out in four engineering colleges from Ratnagiri district in Maharashtra, India. These colleges are in Konkan region and affiliated to Mumbai University. The students admitted to various engineering departments in these colleges are from Mumbai and other parts of Maharashtra. All selected students do not have the same level of proficiency in English. Generally, students from Mumbai have better communication Skills than those who are from rural areas. Students from English medium and convent background can complete written tasks properly on the other hand, vernacular medium students face many difficulties in writing letters, emails and report thus, they hesitate to write. Students are motivated and have desire to improve their abilities to write better.

Data Sources

Selected case studies were given all the tasks (letter writing, email writing, report writing). They were provided blank pages to write letter, email and report. After completion of these tasks pages were collected by the researchers. To collect data on communication strategies retrospective interviews were taken and students were told to share their experiences and the problems faced by them while solving given tasks. These interviews were also audio-recorded. The purpose was to identify and quantify the communication strategies used by low and high anxious students in selected written tasks. The retrospective interviews were held to obtain information from the participants about their internal thought processing while solving the tasks, and their knowledge of communication strategies. Observation notes were taken to study students' behaviors while completing written tasks.

Method of analysis

Students' written tasks were studied by the researchers rigorously to identify their use of various communication strategies. Students' retrospective interviews were also transcribed to know what planning they did to solve the given tasks.

Taxonomy of written communication strategies

Taxonomy for the written communication strategies has been adapted from the taxonomies of Arndt (1987), Wenden (1991), Victori (1995), Riazi (1997), and Sasaki (2000) as they are considered pioneer in written strategies research. The selected items in the taxonomy used in the present research are as follows.

1. Planning: This strategy involves deciding the task purpose which is very much useful for all language skills. The strategy of considering the purpose is an important one, because knowing the purpose for doing something enables learners to channel their energy in the right direction.

2. Rehearsing: It includes practicing ideas

and the language structures in which to express them. This strategy helps learners to produce contents needed to complete written tasks. It also gives students confidence to perform better.

3. Repetition: It means repetition of key words and phrases. This strategy is used by the learners when they cannot remember required lexical items.

4. Re reading: It includes re reading the content that has written down. This strategy provides benefit of editing and correcting mistakes.

5. Resourcing: Learners sometimes ask their teachers, researcher, or refer to dictionary for getting words/meaning/structure, etc. This strategy is very much useful as it helps learners not to leave task incomplete.

6. Revising: It involves making changes in plan, written text, making changes to the written text in order to clarify meaning. By using this strategy students can revise the inappropriate content and try to write correct and suitable utterances.

7. Reduction: This strategy is used to alter the message by omitting some items of information, make the ideas simpler or less precise, or something slightly different that has similar meaning.

8. Translation: Translating can be a helpful strategy for beginners in language learning. They need to use it carefully. It allows learners to use their own language to understand what they hear and read in new language.

9. Use of similar words: It means using synonyms or the words which seem to have the same meaning. Uses of synonyms or similar words help learners to continue the task.

10. Word coinage: This strategy means making up new words to communicate a concept for which the learner does not have the right vocabulary. For instance, Sanjana says *airball* to mean *balloon.* Rajiv does not know the expression *bedside table* therefore coins the expression *night table.*

11.Circumlocution: In this strategy the learner uses a circumlocution (a roundabout expression involving several words to describe or explain a single concept) or synonym (a word having exactly the same meaning as another word in the same language) to convey the intended meaning.

12. Paraphrase: It includes using other words for the same message/meaning. This strategy helps learners to write the message in simple words if they have grammar and vocabulary difficulties.

13. Generalization: In this strategy learners overgeneralize some rules of grammar and syntax. Learners use this strategy when they lack knowledge of grammar and vocabulary.

14. Getting Help: This strategy allows learners to ask for help from teachers, friends and others.

Findings and discussion

The **figure 1.1** below shows the percentage of overall use of CSs in written communicative situations.
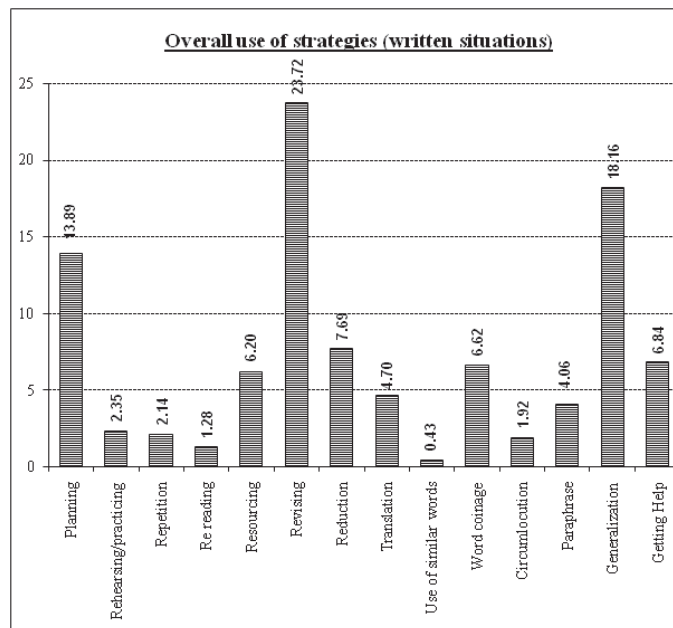
Figure 1.1 Overall percentage of use of CSs in written communicative situations

After analyzing the selected students' use of CSs in written communicative situations it is found that these selected engineering students used more strategies in letter writing task compared to email and report. In comparison with other strategies these students used revising (23.72%), generalization (18.16%), and planning (13.89%) frequently. As they got enough time to think low anxious students tried to make their task attractive by using different words; while high anxious and those who are poor in sentence construction and grammar tried to be grammatically correct by revising and restructuring utterances.

It was also observed that students have coined inappropriate words when they did not get suitable words. Very few students re-read the task after completion. Though they had time they did not take effort to re-read the task and correct their errors.

Most of the time high anxious students were thinking 'what would happen if they would make mistake'; 'is researcher going to ask them to read their task loudly'; 'if there are mistakes, other students would laugh at them', etc. So rather than completing task with full concentration these students were engaged in thinking such unnecessary things.

Almost all the students did planning to solve the tasks. Many times their planning steps were appropriate but while writing they made mistakes. According to some students they had thoughts in their mind but they were not able to express them in writing due to vocabulary and construction problems. Some students really knew the importance of practice of such task but other students practiced these tasks from exam point of view only.

Reduction (7.69%) was used moderately in all the tasks. It can be concluded that the students tended to reduce the content as they could not write grammatically correct sentences. Instead of using circumlocution and paraphrase the students choose to reduce the content. The percentage of paraphrase (4.06%) and circumlocution (1.92%) is less than the percentage of reduction (7.69%) in all the tasks.

Translation (4.70%) was used only in letter and email. The students were in habit of thinking in their mother tongue. So, they translated the content. But in report they did not use it. Getting help (6.84%) was also moderately used in all the tasks. The low anxious students initiated to clarify their doubts but high anxious students used reduction strategies rather than taking help. Resourcing (6.20%) was also moderately used strategy. Many of the selected engineering students were found not taking extra efforts to add correctness, and novelty to their tasks.

Comparing high anxious and low anxious students' use of CSs in written communicative situations

In written communicative situations high anxious students have used more strategies than low anxious students.

Low anxious students used planning for 46.15% and high anxious students used it for 53.85%. Low anxious students were found confident in written tasks also. While solving written tasks some of the low anxious students directly started writing their tasks. They did not plan their task

beforehand. But, as high anxious students had a kind of fear in their mind they first planned the task, thought over it and started writing.

Low anxious students used rehearsing for 72.73% and high anxious students 27.27%. Low anxious students were aware of the importance of rehearsing in writing tasks. But high anxious students were not found sincere about rehearsing.

Both types of students used repetition equally that is 50% each. It means repetition is useful for both high and low anxious students. Re-reading was used for 33.33 % by low anxious students and 66.67 % by high anxious students.

Low anxious students used 58.62% resourcing and high anxious students 41.38%. It can be concluded from this data that low anxious students took extra efforts to improve their knowledge of English language. In retrospective interviews they revealed that they use dictionaries and grammar books to solve their doubts in language problem.

Revising strategy was used for 20.72% by low anxious students and 79.28% by high anxious students. It was observed that high anxious students had revised some words and sentences frequently. It can be concluded from it that high anxious students might be confused and as they had sufficient time to write, they revised their utterances to make their task meaningful and grammatically correct. On the other hand, low anxious students were so confident that they used revising strategy less.

Low anxious students used reduction for 47.22% and high anxious students 52.78%. Whenever high anxious students found difficulties in explaining, they reduced the message instead of taking risk of writing. Low anxious students also tended to reduce the message but the reason for their reduction was different. They reduced content of their tasks because they were confident about clarity of the message conveyed.

Low anxious students used literal translation for 22.73% and high anxious students 77.27%. Low anxious students knew the structure and elements of all written tasks; those who did not know they got clarified their difficulties and completed their tasks. As their vocabulary and sentence construction was good they did not use literal translation frequently. But high anxious students' anxiety level was less in written tasks compared to oral tasks so they used literal translation frequently in written tasks.

Use of similar words was used equally by both types of students. Word coinage was used for 32.26% by low anxious students and 67.74% by high anxious students. High anxious students had problem of vocabulary. They did not get suitable words; so to complete tasks they coined new words. Most of the time those words were inappropriate.

Circumlocution was used for 33.33% by low anxious students and 66.67% by high anxious students. As high anxious students'

anxiety level was comparatively less in written tasks they dared to describe things and paraphrased some content also. So paraphrase, generalization, getting help these strategies they also used more than low anxious students.

Paraphrase was used 42.11% times by low anxious students and 57.89% by high anxious students. High anxious students used it more as they were not confident about clarity of their message as well as they were not able to extend their messages in more details. Comparatively, low anxious students paraphrased less as they were aware about the exact terminology to be used for transferring the message.

Generalization was used for 27.06% by low anxious students and 72.94% by high anxious students. Here also it is very clear that because of their low competence high anxious students tried to overgeneralize the rules of vocabulary and syntax.

Getting help was used for 31.25% by low anxious students and 68.75% by high anxious students. HA students most of the time depended on a kind of help from others for completing their tasks. Sometimes, they were right in selecting words and syntax. Still, because of high anxiousness and low confidence they sought for help from their peers.

Following graph represents strategywize overall usage of CSs in written communicative situations by HA and LA students.
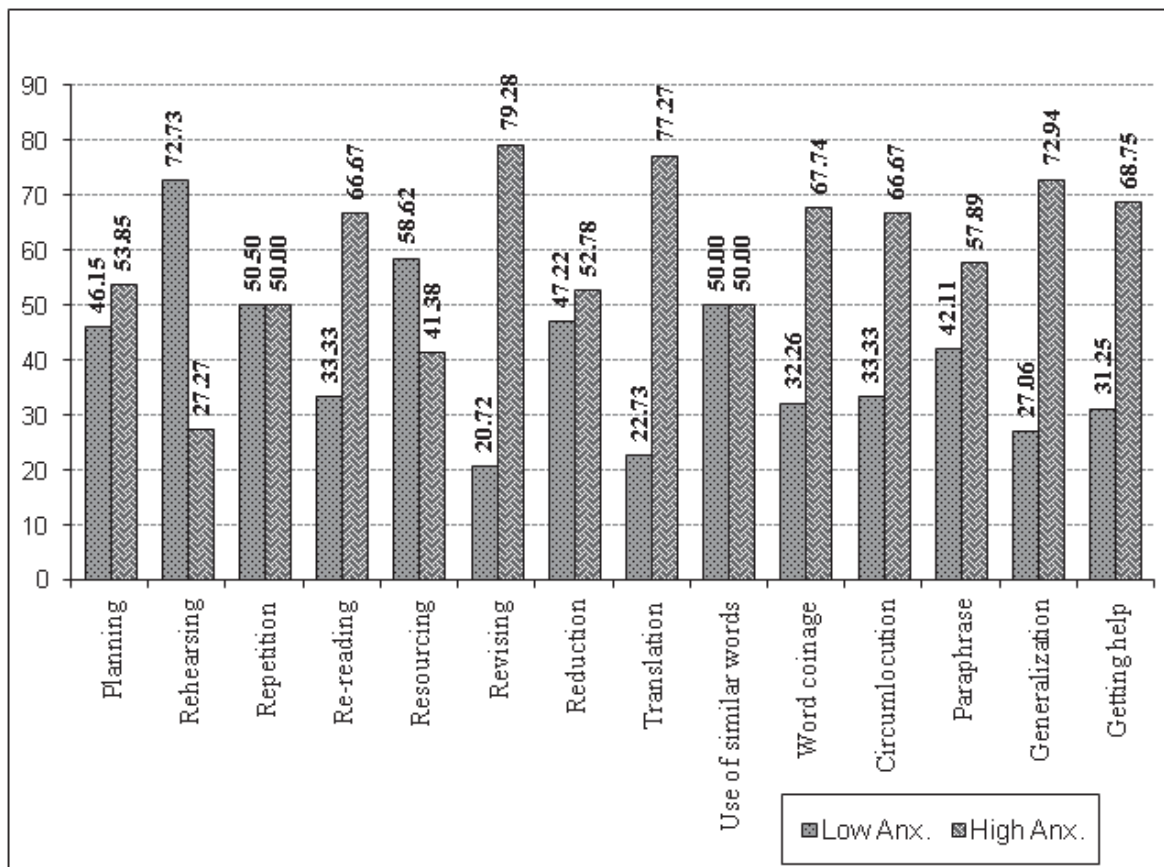
Figure 1.2 Comparison of overall usage of CSs (written situations) by LA & HA students

The above figure shows that planning, re-reading, revising, literal translation, word coinage, circumlocution, paraphrase, generalization and getting help are used more by high anxious students. Rehearsing and resourcing are used more by low anxious students whereas; repetition and using similar words are used equally by both high and low anxious students.

Conclusion

Amongst the written communicative situations, students experienced comparatively less fear in letter writing than in email writing and report writing. In comparison with other strategies these students used revising (23.72%), generalization (18.16%), and planning (13.89%) frequently.

The present research has remarkable pedagogical implications. The basic reason of students' poor performance in various written tasks is 'anxiety'. Therefore, if engineering students are made aware of reasons for anxiety in communication and certain remedies on them by implementing CSs that low anxious students use, it will help them increase their confidence level and performance in communication.

It will be better if a chapter on reducing anxiety and using communication strategies is included in the syllabus of engineering courses. This view corroborates Dörnyei (1995) who suggests that communication strategies need to be taught. He also suggests procedures for strategy training which will surely help engineering students reduce their communication anxiety and help improve their communication competence and performance.

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Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Let me first congratulate you on bringing out our journal that is rich in content for the benefit of teachers and researchers. The September-October issue carries two informative articles - one by N.S. Prabu on 'Re-thinking Language Pedagogy' and the other on 'The 'Scientific Language Teaching' by Richard Smith.

As one who has been a teacher at different levels and also a teacher trainer for a number of years, I would like to share my thoughts and experiences with our readers on the issues raised by the two learned authors.

It is true, as Prabhu says, comprehension and speaking cannot go hand in hand in L2. But at the same time we cannot forget our children even at the kindergarten level do easily learn to use certain expressions such as Good morning, Thank you, Please etc; and parents too want their children learn to speak English right from the kindergarten stage. Thanks to the use of technology, children may now quite easily be exposed to a quite a lot of listening experiences in English through well-graded exercises in podcasts. They would help them to speak English albeit sometimes incorrectly. But the point is even young children do learn to speak using at least limited vocabulary after their listening.

Our language pedagogy may be based on the theories of the Behaviourist school of Psychology or the Cognitive school. For a number of yeras it was the former that influenced the teaching of second languages like English in our country. Based on it the structural syllabus was introduced for the teaching of English in our schools. It listed the English structures to be taught - listed as 'teaching itms' - in each class or grade. W.S. Allen's '*Living English Structues*' and A.S. Hornby's '*A Guide to Pattern and Usage in English*' were of great help in framing the structural syllabus. Of course, it led to most teachers providing only mechanical drill to their students in the use of structures. What was known as the Substitution method came to be used resulting in the pupils learning the structures without understanding the meanings. In Chennai we had F.L.Billows, English studies Officer - British Council, who, through his Madras Language Teaching Campaign (MELT), trained quite a large number of teachers in using the structural syllabus. Later Alan Maley, too, of the British Council, brought out a number of lesson plans for the teaching of important structures in English

As opposed to the Behaviourist school, the Cognitive school psychologists such as Piaget', Bruner and Noam Choamsky—just to mention a few—are of opinion it is the *mind* that plays an important role in learning. It processes the information from any activity taking place in some situation or context and, as a result, thorough understanding follows. This is the basis of what are known as the communicative methodologies such as 'Task-based teaching' (TBT). According to them, no 'meaningful learning' can take place through any amount of drill or repeated practice

It is true that any activity-based teaching of English would interest our learners more than any other method and motivate them to learn the language better. At the same time we should not forget that our teachers are best told what exactly – in other words, which 'teaching items— should be taught to their students. It is here a structural syllabus would be of great help to them. Such a syllabus, apart from listing the different teaching items (structures) may suggest a number of communicative activities, too. So I would advocate a combination of the 'structural approach' and the 'Task-based approach for adoption in teaching English in our schools. Our teachers should be told 'what' language items they have to teach and also 'how' to teach them i.e through given 'tasks' or activities. In effect, it is nothing but the 'contextual or situational' teaching of given structures through activities.

As regards the teaching of grammar, Prabhu rightly says it should not be in the nature of 'medication' but nutrition'. This is possible if we teach 'functional grammar', not 'formal grammar' i.e. definitions of grammatical terms and rules. At the same time, the teaching of remedial grammar too is necessary and it is to be resorted to after a piece of free composition or independent writing has been done by our students. We have to deal with the common mistakes made by them and do remedial teaching. So, in such cases 'medication' becomes necessary. Don't you agree?

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ELT@I TIRUPATI CHAPTER

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16 & 17 February 2018

THEME

Recent Trends and Innovative Practices in Teaching English Language and Literature

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• History of ELT in India	Literature
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Book Review

The World as a Stage: Shakespearean Transformations by Dr. K. Chellappan

Emerald Publishers, 2016.

One wonders whether Shakespeare is more loved in India than in his homeland, Great Britain.

Dr. Chellappan's book is a tribute to the Bard of Avon, commemorating the four hundredth anniversary of his death. The author discusses an amazing variety of topics, which reveal his wide scholarship, critical acumen and originality.

The book consists of two parts. Part I traces Shakespeare's exploration of the relationship between drama and reality. The study applies the insights of Feminism, Marxism and New Historicism and relates them to Buddhist concepts. Part II studies transformations and translations of Shakespeare in Tamil, and also shows the affinity between Shakespeare's art and Indian thought, by comparing his plays with Indian epics and classical Sanskrit drama.

For Chellappan, Shakespeare is our contemporary. He says, "Shakespeare's plays give useful clues for developing communication skills, which are essential for success in the contemporary world order. Iago in Othello is a very successful communicator. By simply repeating Othello's words, he not only violates discourse conventions, but destroys Othello.

Iago: Indeed.

Othello: Indeed, indeed? Discern'st thou aught in that? Is he not honest?

Iago: Honest, my lord.

Othello: What dost thou think?

Iago: Think, my lord.

The interface between dream, drama and reality is discussed in the context of ***A Midsummer Night's Dream.*** "All art is dream, but also more real than reality. Similarly our life seems to be an illusion, but it also suggests a deeper reality. Drama provides the most effective metaphor and symbol to Shakespeare to show this illusion/reality syndrome in life and art." ***A Midsummer Night's Dream*** is a larger dream, and the stories are dreams within dreams.

The disguise convention is viewed in a new light here. "The urge of woman to be the "other" in the male dominated world takes different shapes and disguise is the most dominant expression of this craving for power or self-completion of woman in the early comedies; it becomes a cry for unsexing in the tragic universe of the later plays."

The discussion in ***The World as Theatre in King Lear and Tempest*** "examines Shakespeare's view of theatre as a metaphor and means of discovering the world, with all its unreal reality but which is also the only real reality which we can hope to have. Shakespeare has been asking the question,

"Was it a vision or a dream?"". All criticism has not answered it and the mystery of the world and Shakespeare are mysteries still.

In Part II, while comparing Shakespeare and Kamban, he says, "Shakespeare's heroes are fully human, though imperfect, but Kamban's Rama is perfectly human, perfect, but still human." The Tamil mind finds an affinity in the Shakespearean breeze that revitalized and humanized Tamil thought. Regarding Sanskrit drama, "Shakespeare and Sanskrit drama have successfully captured the boundlessness of space and time within the bounds of space and time of the theatre."

Here is a multi-faceted, insightful, scintillating treasure trove of Shakespearean criticism that should delight any lover of Shakespeare.

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READING ACTIVITY
READING A FAVOURITE AUTHOR* (To become an expert reader*)

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

Objective	**:**	Enabling a reader to read all the works of his/her favourite author to emerge as an expert on the author and his/her writings
Participation	:	Individual
Material	:	All the works (at least the major works) of one's favourite writer (J.K. Rowling)
Preparation	:	Reading the works of a writer and the available critical materials on them.

Procedure :

After identifying an author of your liking start reading the works, if possible, the order in which they were written. If the writer has written in different genres the reader has to read all of them to have a firm grounding on him/her. J.K. Rowling, for instance, although was initially known for the Harry Potter series, has works in the genres of fantasy, crime fiction (Cormoran Strike), drama (The Casual Vacancy), tragicomedy, screenplay (Potter films) and so on. Familiarity with all the writings alone can offer deeper understanding and greater insights into a writer.

Read the critical materials on the works from all possible sources such the exclusive books, chapters in books, journal and magazine articles, websites (blogs, YouTube, PPTs), and interviews of the writer and this will facilitate a reader to shape his/her own authoritative perspectives. Being familiar with the existing critical materials would force a reader to generate views which would be uniquely his/her own. Along with it, the honours and awards won by the writer could add spice to any discussion.

Read also the biographical details including the author's childhood to the creative process and to varied interests, not confining to merely writings, to have a comprehensive knowledge. J.K. Rowling, to illustrate, is deeply interested in politics, charity and several other social issues and this will enable a reader to have a rich repertoire of information about her. Some of the tidbits such as her real name, Joanne "Jo" Rowling, and pen names J.K. Rowling and Robert Galbraith and the reasons for adopting different names can be matter of interests to all. An expert reader possesses a thorough knowledge of the writer and his/her words are final in any controversy.

Discussing a writer even with those who are not familiar would get them interested and, which may lead them to reading their writings. Experts always pass on to others the passion they have for a writer/subject.

Learning outcomes:

1) Learners realize that reading one or two works of a writer at random does not help them much to formulate thoughtful perspectives about them.
2) Learners recognize that possessing an authoritative knowledge about an author and the woks would make them valuable and interesting conversationalists.

Further activity:

Reading all/major works of a writer(s) and the materials available on the writer and his/her writings.

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*Favourite author: It varies from reader to reader and even with the same reader it varies from time to time depending on his/her interest. J.K. Rowling is one of the best selling living writers and has fans all over the world across the age groups.

*An Expert is someone who is very knowledgeable about an area and in this case, about Rowling and her works.