# Journal of English Language Teaching

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

## Periodicity

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

## Contributions

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

Length : About 2000-2500 words for theoretical articles and for others about 500 words.

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

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

Articles should be sent only as an email attachment - **WORD DOCUMENT** - to JELTIndia@gmail.com and eltai_india@yahoo.co.in

CDs and hard copies will not be accepted.

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

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

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

## Objectives of the Association

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

- To help teachers interact with educational administrators on matters relating to the teaching of English.

- To disseminate information in the ELT field among teachers of English.

- To undertake innovative projects aimed at the improvement of learners' proficiency in English.

- To promote professional solidarity among teachers of English at primary, secondary and university levels and

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

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

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

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

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***Journal of English Language Teaching***

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**Padmasree S. Natarajan**
Founder Editor and Publisher

**Dear Reader,**

"If a child can't learn the way we teach, maybe we should teach the way they learn". A little introspection on the theories and methods we have been using for teaching English will bring to light the fact that we have overdone some of them and in the process many have taken back seats. Using translation method for teaching English is one such forgotten method and it is time to explore its impact on twenty-first century learners and revive its use if it benefits them. S. Vincent in *Translation as a Tool for Language Teaching* reviews the arguments, available in literature, in favour and against translation method. He further presents the issues a language teacher adopting translation method may confront and provides solutions to handle them. He also suggests some of the strategies that can be of use in the classroom for teaching communication skills. S. Vincent, a well-known author and translator, has authored many books related to the teaching of English including course books on spoken English. He has published two selfimprovement books in Tamil and has translated more than ten books from English to Tamil. His recent translation being Oliver Sacks's *The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat.*

Albert P Rayan's *Review of en.news app and One-on-One with Mike Elchik* has two parts. Part 1 is an extract of his article "Lessons that Engage" that appeared in *The HinduEdge.* In his article, Albert, reviews an online application, en,news managed by Mike Elchik. He presents its usefulness in terms of developing the language skills, vocabulary and pronunciation of the users. Part 2 is an interview with Mike Elchik in which Elchik answers to Albert's questions on the reasons behind launching the app, its uniqueness, material selection, user feedback and most importantly how an English language teacher can use it in the classroom.

Krashen et.al in *Some New Terminology: Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation and Form-Focusing Supplementation* explain the difference between promoting language acquisition and promoting conscious learning through new terminologies.

Madhavi Voleti and Y.Somalatha in *Teacher Workshop on Using ICT Tools and Digital Narratives-A Report* shares the outcome of the workshop held for school teachers as a part of the Action Research study emphasizing the role of digital narratives, prezi in particular, in enhancing productive skills. In *Vocabulary, an Indicator of Language Proficiency: A Perspective from the Review of Literature*, Jayanta Kumar Das highlights the correlation among vocabulary, four skills of language and grammar by delving into the existing literature.

R Rajeshwari in *Developing L2 Academic Writing: Going Beyond CLT and TBLT* emphasizes the need to develop academic writing skills and recommends explicit instruction while teaching writing. In *An Experimental Study Conducted in Kerala at Higher Secondary Level on the Application of ICT Vs. Traditional Model of Teaching of English,* Viju M J shows the effectiveness of using digital tools for teaching English language.

Aparna Roy highlights the need to have alternate system of testing language skills and also suggests a few methods that will promote acquisition of language skills and result in facing exams with more confidence.

With a view to encouraging short articles from contributors, this edition has included one in which Hakeem Rouf presents his observations on how language is taught in schools and emphasizes on the need to overhaul language teaching and testing.

Your suggestions and feedback are welcome. For any comments on the articles published, please write to the editor at jeltindia@gmail.com

**Dr R Jaya**

# Translation as a Tool for Language Teaching

S Vincent

Translation as an art and as an exercise' used to be one of the topics in the past for English optional students of the Bachelor of Education degree. After translation fell into disgrace along with the Grammar Translation Method, this topic also perhaps disappeared from the syllabus. There is now a possibility for reviving translation as an exercise in the school and college curriculum.

Even during the G-T era, translation was not taught in any systematic manner. However in my fourth form class (equivalent to the present ninth standard) in the early fifties of the last century, my English teacher used to ask us to translate prose pieces into my mother tongue. Perhaps it gave me some insight into the working of English language.

The next experience with translation in my academic work was when Mr Robert Bellarmine and I were askedto frame a syllabus in English for a new course at the Undergraduate level. It was in the early seventies and Wilkins had not come up with his Notional syllabus and we were still practising the structural approach to the letter. We introduced verb patterns and as a strategy for making the students assimilate the structures, we thought, we could have sentences for translation. These sentences would be based on the structures taught.

Later as a votary of Communicative Approach, I had forgotten all about translation as part of English language teaching. But in recent years as I got immersed in translation work both from English to Tamil and Tamil to English I started wondering whether we could have translation as one of the tools in English language teaching.

A look at the theories about translation may give us some insight into the working of translation as a process or product in which language activity has a primary function. Though there has been translation theory as long as there has been translation, as Peter Prince explains, translation studies is a recent arrival (I.a.1). Dryden's three models of translation, metaphrase, paraphrase and imitation, still hold good and translators even now choose the middle path. Translation Studies as a discipline was perhaps launched by J.S. Holmes in 1972.There have been varied definitions and norms for translation put forth since then and the major concerns are the aspects which will help us in drafting a course of action in having translation as a tool in language teaching.

The important elements in translation, according to some theorists, are language and form, as well as the context in which an utterance/ discourse is made. Yet another aspect for consideration is the cultural milieu of Source Language and the Target Language. These aspects will give us the framework for a translation course in ELT.

When the Direct Method and Structural Approach dislodged Grammar-Translation method, both grammar and translation were together dismissed from the ELT classroom. While grammar has been reappearing in one guise or another ( grammar games and grammar focused activities), translation has not been resurrected. Paul Kaye in his article lists the reasons for rejecting grammar and translation. Some of them are: students are engaged in using L1 in the classroom instead of L2 which hinders learning L2, translation activity is not suitable for beginners, translation by itself is difficult as it involves not only language and form but also register, style and idiom, it is difficult to set up a translation activity in the classroom, teachers cannot be proficient both in L1 and L2, it is time consuming and it focuses on only two skills, namely, reading and writing.The article points out the benefits of using translation, quoting many writers including Duffin. Translation has validity and value in the communicative classrooms. Kaye also suggests many activities.

Guy Cook in "OUP English Teaching Blog" remarks on 20 October 2011, "Using translation is surely a natural and obvious means of teaching someone a new language. It has lots of good effects. It can be used to aid learning, practise what has been learned, diagnose problems, and test proficiency. In any case, teachers can't stop student translating – it is such a fundamental basis for language learning."

GuyCook points out other benefits also:

"In addition, it allows learners to relate new knowledge to existing knowledge (as recommended by many learning theories), promotes noticing and language awareness, and highlights the differences and similarities between the new and existing language."

Mogahed M.Mogahed in his article, "To use or not to use translation in Language Teaching," cites the arguments summed up by Newson and Carareers against using translation as a teaching and testing language tool. He favours using translation as a teaching and testing tool for various reasons. He contends that the problem is not with translation as such but the teaching methodology that separated language from its communicative function. Quoting Titford, he points out that "Learners of foreign language do refer to their mother tongue to aid the process of acquisition of L2, in other words, they 'translate silently'."

Other arguments for translation as a language activity are that it is interesting to the learners and thus is a motivating factor, it can help comprehending L2 text better and it reduces anxiety and stress of the learner and eases the burden of memorizing texts or summaries. The skill of translation not only helps in day to day communication but also has adequate potential for job market. The visual media requires translators for translating sub-titles for commercial films and documentaries and advertisements. We need translators for translating literary works and academic texts from English into L2.

All said, the main problem is in devising activities and methodologies for using translation as a tool. Before considering the strategies that can be used in translation, we shall see a few issues that have to be tackled:

1. Teachers of English must not misconstrue that what they are at present doing in the classroom is translation. Most of the teachers of English will swear that they are following Grammar-Translation method as they teach grammar and they translate prose text into mother tongue in the English class. It is an open secret that teachers at the school level and even at the college level read the text aloud, translate the passage into L2 word by word or sentence by sentence and dictate summary. Such teachers must be specially trained in the objectives of using translation as a tool and the technique they have to adopt.

2. Which is better, translation from L2 into L1 or from L1 to L2? If your objective is teaching reading comprehension of the L2 text,L2 will be the source text. If your objective is student's writing skill while translating from L1 to L2, L1 becomes the source text and L2 the target language.

3. When do we begin to give translation exercises? It need not be started in the lower classes. Perhaps the sixth grade is ideal.

4. Which is suitable: single sentences or paragraphs or long narratives? The question itself has graded the types of passages. We can begin with short sentences, possibly as part of an activity in grammar. For instance if you teach present continuous tense

through some communication activities then single meaningful sentences in present continuous tense which do not require any contextualization may be given for translation. Next you can go to short paragraphs. At an advanced level even short stories can be tried. Not only absence of contexts but certain cultural elements also may cause difficulties. For example words like 'uncle', 'aunt' and 'cousin' may have multiple connotations in L1. Likewise there may be words in English for which mother tongue equivalents may not be available. Such words or phrases and even sentence structures must be avoided. As for paragraphs, getting at the sense of the passage and paraphrasing it can be accepted.

Let us now see some of the strategies that can be of use in the classroom for teaching communication skills.

An activity that can promote oral communication has been practised and tested by M.Lawrence. Students work in pairs. One of the pair gives a sentence in L2 and the other translates into L1. After sufficient practice the activity is set as a competitive rapid fire-game. Each pair is given two minutes and sentences are spoken rapidly which are translated. The number of exchanges is scored and the pair that gets the maximum point is rewarded. Sufficient warning must be given in advance so that students do not give culture specific or tricky sentences. Yet another activity will have three participants: one will be a person who knows only L1, another who is a foreigner who knows only L2, and the interpreter who

mediates between the two using L1 and L2.

At the sentence level exercise, meaning and usage of specific words that occur in the sentence may be introduced through various activities which may involve oral work. Students willsuggest a number of equivalents in a brainstorm exercise,and all the words will be written on the board. Students may make sentences using them. After this pre- lesson activity students will do the translation. This applies to translation of paragraphs also.

Translation exercise will help to improve the reading skill of the learners. DagilieneInge writes, "Translation might provide a guided practice in reading. Before starting translating a text, it should be read carefully and analysed in detail to determine the content in terms of what, how and why it is said. So careful text analysis improves students' reading competence and promotes vocabulary development."

After a written translation work is completed, the words used by the students can be put up for oral discussion for appropriateness and accuracy. Two teams work on a passage and after they make their own correction each version is put up for discussion. Alternatively after a passage is translated from L1 to L2 by one team it is retranslated into L1 by another and both versions are compared with the original.

Translation can be a stimulating and enjoyable exercise for improving communication. Students will definitely enjoy this task as it gives them confidence in handling the second language.Course designers must work on preparing various types of activities using translation as a tool, grade them and give them as packages for use in the English classroom.

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# Review of en.news app and One-on-One with Mike Elchik

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**Part 1:  Review of en.news**

(NB:  In the first part, extracts of the article "Lessons that Engage" that appeared in various editions of *The Hindu Edge* dated 26 November 2018 have been reproduced.)

Ever since access to high-speed Internet has become easier and the cost of it has become cheaper, the number of number of English language learners learning the English language online has been on the rise.   As smartphones are ubiquitous these days, online learning has become more popular than ever before.   A great demand for learning English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) among non-native speakers of English across the globe has resulted in experts and edupreneurs creating English learning apps. Though there are several advantages of learning English online, there are a range of challenges too.   The need to choose the right app is a huge challenge. Learners are not in a position to choose the right app that motivates them, sustains their motivation and enables them to make steady progress.

Recently, I came across an app called **en.news**.   The app, available on both web and mobile, is unique in many ways. The users of the app are provided with authentic materials pulled from CNN's latest news and articles on various topics including entertainment, sports, news, politics, travel and technology.   The materials are so appealing and compelling that users enjoy reading them.   As Dr Stephen Krashen, a well-known expert in second language acquisition, says the input (reading material / audio / video) must be comprehensible and compelling to have an effect on language acquisition and literacy development. According to Krashen, the input needs to be not just interesting but compelling and when it is compelling learners forget that it is in another language and are motivated automatically.

How innovative is the en.news application? The lessons are complete.  Each lesson helps learners to develop their reading and listening skills, acquire vocabulary in context, learn pronunciation of correct words, know the definitions of key concepts and practice the language in an engaging way.    The tool enables learners to learn authentic pronunciation and also recognizes their pronunciation.   The application supports full audio playback of articles.  A range of dialects and voices facilities, using the same voice technology as Amazon Alexa, are available to read the selected article out loud to the learner.
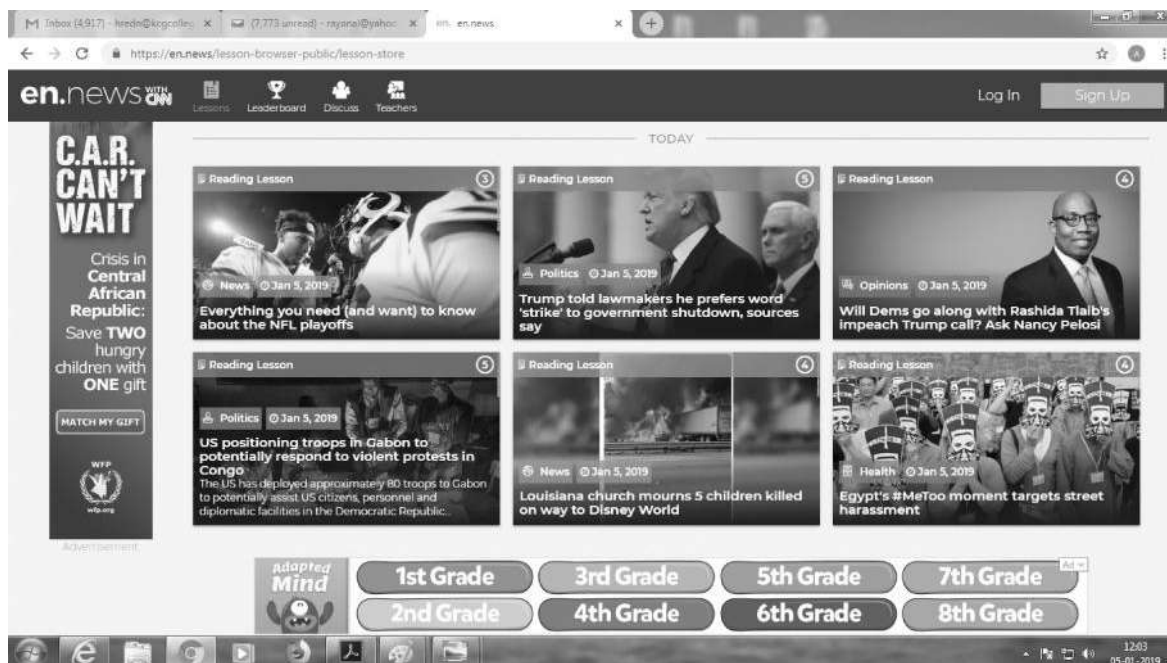
A typical lesson has an interesting reading text or video and based on that there are many useful reading, writing and listening activities. Each lesson is characterized by type (news, sports, entertainment,...), difficulty level (1 to 5 or CEFR A1 to C1), number of words, videos, meanings of words and phrases, interesting activities, etc. As the learner completes each part of a task, they score points and are thus motivated to do more exercises.

Skills focused are listening, reading, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Flash cards enable learners to learn the meanings of words and phrases in context. Learners can regulate the speed while listening to the reading of any text or watching any video.

en.news (https://www.en.news) is managed by Mike Elchik, the founder and president of WeSpeke, a global language technology company based in the USA and affiliated with the Language Technologies Institute at Carnegie Mellon University. WeSpeke has partnerships with CNN and The Wall Street Journal and together they use artificial intelligence technology to repurpose media content for English education for free.

**Part 2: One-on-One with Mike Elchik**

**Can you please share with me why the app en.news was launched? Who is your target group?**

en.news was launched as an innovative partnership between WeSpeke, a leading, global language technology company, and CNN. The intent of en.news is to provide a structured, fun and engaging way to use CNN content for English language learning. en.news is designed to automatically repurpose CNN news stories into English lessons that are pedagogically structured for

learning, levelled for proficiency and gamified to make English learning fun and personalized.

The predominant demographic for English language learners globally is 18 – 36 year olds. These are individuals that are required to have English skills to be admitted to a university, individuals that are required to have a baseline English proficiency for a first job, and individuals that are required to have a specified level of English to get a job promotion.

The target group for the initial launch was individuals with a baseline proficiency in English, the equivalent of B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). en.news now supports beginner (or CEFR A1 equivalent) lessons for native Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and Chinese learners of English. en.news supports English learners at all levels of proficiency, from beginner to fluent, with any native language.

**How many language learners across the globe use the app en.news?**

en.news was launched in late January 2018 and has quickly grown to 1.3 million users worldwide.

**On what basis do you select the text for each lesson?**

The en.news application generates 30 – 40 lessons per day. A patented algorithm is used to sort and filter every CNN article and video to select those best suited for en.news lessons, based on linguistic complexity, relevancy, trending interest and topics followed by en.news users. en.news turns today's news stories into today's English lessons.

**How is your app different from other English learning apps?**

The app is different from other English learning apps in the following areas:

• **Relevant real-world content**

Each lesson is based in authentic content—the world-class news and information on CNN—and organized in sections that match the needs and interests of learners. This makes the learning experience personalized and relevant. No nonsensical sentences or made-up stories.

• **New lessons every day**

Today's news becomes today's lessons on en.news, with new lessons published on a daily basis. That's like giving the world a new English textbook every day. For free.

• **Unlimited learning for free**

Learning a language is a lifelong journey and on en.news, learners can return as often as they want to take as many lessons as they want. There's no "end of a book" or "end of a course" which means the learning never ends.

• **Part of a daily routine**

en.news combines the habit of consuming news, checking sports scores and staying on top of the world of entertainment with the utility of learning English.

### How do teachers use this app to help their learners learn English?

en.news has a Learning Management System (LMS) for English teachers available at: https:// teachers.en.news/ This LMS allows English teachers to build a roster of their classes, assign English lessons based on news stories, and track student progress (e.g. lessons taken, average score, time on task, questions missed, etc.). We are continuing to build out our suite of features for English teachers, based on feedback from the teachers who are successfully using en.news to support their teaching.

### How positive is the feedback from users?

en.news has an app rating of 4.7/5 at both Google Play and the Apple App Store. Attached are reviews of the en.news application from Google Play and the Apple App Store. You are welcome to consider this feedback in your coverage of en.news.

**Recently, seeing my review of the en.news app in *The Hindu*, a leading newspaper in India, a reader sent this email: "I did not find the app very exciting. When you look from the perspective of a beginner, the contextual meaning in English is the biggest barrier. The solution could be a pictionary with AI based which should read the sentence and give the picture (wherever possible/applicable) and the context meaning/translation. This app (en.news) like all others gives just a dump of all meanings for the said word. I work in the field of skilling for hearing impaired community and the above limitation of our English apps put a big barrier to the**

learning. Have you come across any better app which is truly AI based?

### What is your response to the query?

We are not primarily targeting "beginners". When you consider the innovation of our AI technology combined with the partnerships we have established with CNN and Dow Jones / The Wall Street Journal, there is a baseline assumption of English skills, typically learned through formal education.

The scenario painted by your reader is an appropriate pedagogical approach and one that is typically applied towards English teaching to children. The Pictionary approach is used extensively in products, apps, games, etc. but it does not give real world context. By definition, our vocabulary is derived from news which provides the context. For level 1 beginner lessons on en.news, we limit the pedagogy to the words that comprise the title of the article or video. Each word that is relevant is then put into a series of exercises that give both meaning and context. Content from both CNN and Dow Jones / The Wall Street Journal, even at the most basic level, is not designed for children. We do not expect that 100% of English learners will embrace our approach, but the results (metrics data from the users) and feedback are that this is the world's premier application for online English language learning. Our challenge is to now scale this application and I am working with my team, my investors and our users to increase the global footprint.

I should also point out that the AI we are applying is in the automatic creation /

generation of the lessons. Our goal is to create the ultimate user experience for learning English and if AI can be used in support of this goal, then we will consider it as a feature.

**Some learners say that the listening part is not natural. Will such artificial/ mechanical way of listening (text read by the machine) not put them off?**

Text-to-speech technology has come a long way in recent years and will continue to improve on the axis of natural speech and dialect. While state-of-the-art is not perfect, it is regarded as "good enough" for learning activities.

**Will app-based learning be successful in the future? Will it promote learner autonomy?**

App-based learning is good and getting better every day. However, there will always be a need for teachers. We view our applications as an effective learning platform but also as an effective resource for teachers to integrate into their English curriculum. Motivation is a big part of learning effectiveness. We align the English learning with topics and content that is of interest to the learner, thus they are more likely to interact and engage leading to more effective results.

**What are your plans to improve the effectiveness of the en.news app?**

We break down our plans to improve the effectiveness of en.news in several categories: pedagogy, content and gamification are a few. There are many ways in which pedagogy can be improved but we have to balance each new method or feature with the user experience. Our English lessons for beginners typically take 5 – 10 minutes and the intermediate and advanced lessons can take 10 – 15 minutes. If you design a user experience that is longer than 15 minutes, you will likely lose their attention to other social apps, games, etc.

In terms of content, we see innovative partnerships that bring habits of consuming news, information and entertainment together with English learning. For example, what if we could turn every cricket match into an English lesson. Do you think users in Asia in general and India specifically would be interested? We think so.

In terms of gamification, there is an endless list of ideas to make users more engaged. On the example above, we could let users earn badges and points that are aligned with global tournaments such as the ICC Cricket World Cup.

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# Some New Terminology: Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation and Form-Focusing Supplementation

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## ABSTRACT

*We introduce two terms in order to facilitate research and clarify practice: Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation (CAS) is designed to promote language acquisition, while Form-Focusing Supplementation (FFS) is designed to promote conscious learning.*

*New terminology is needed to make a distinction that is at the core of second and foreign language acquisition theory and practice.*

*The new terms are the following:*

*(1)  Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation (CAS).*

*(2)  Form-Focusing Supplementation (FFS).*

*The purpose of this short paper is not to argue in favour of or againstthe use of one or the other of these kinds of supplementation,but rather to facilitate further discussion and research on the topic of supplementation.Our goal in this short paper was not to discuss all forms of supplementation, but only to focus on two types, CAS and FFS.*

**Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation**

Comprehension-AidingSupplementation (CAS) is consistent with the Comprehension Hypothesis (Krashen, 2003). Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation attempts to make input more comprehensible. At the same time, it can also serveto make input more interesting by adding detail and depth.

The primary means of aiding comprehension is adding context, either linguistically by supplying background information,

explanation, or a simple definition in the L1 or L2, or non-linguistically, through other modes of input, for example, visual.

There is no expectation of immediate mastery, nor any expectation by the teacher or student that the student will immediately be able to use previously unfamiliar items in output after CAS is applied. Also, there is no attempt by students to try to remember the previously unfamiliar item.

The assumption is that when students are engaged, when input is compelling,and as unfamiliar items; i.e. words, phrases, and expressionsare encountered in comprehensible contexts, they are gradually and firmly acquired.

**Form-Focusing Supplementation**

Form-FocusingSupplementation (FFS) is consistent with the Skill-Building Hypothesis and has been referred to as "targeting."

The goal of Form-FocusingSupplementation is conscious learning and mastery, and it is assumed that this can be accomplished in a short period of time, e.g. a few class periods plus homework. Also, the mastery is assumed to be so complete that the language learner is able to correctly use the item in output, on a written test, for written assignments, and even in unrehearsed speech.

FFS usually includes forced repetition in order to achieve a certain number of exposures to the unfamiliar aspect of language. "Forced" repetitions are not designed to aid comprehensibility or add interest to the message but are only meant to be a means to mastery. Natural language acquisition does not depend on forced repetition but relies on naturalrepetition provided by large amounts of comprehensible input.

FFS typically includes forced output, demands for production using aspects of language that have been consciously studied but have not yet been acquired. FFS usually includes correction of student output as well. Correction is thought to help language learners modify their consciously learned rules.

**Real World Supplementation**

Real world supplementation is typically Comprehension-Aiding Supplementation. When we look up a word in a dictionary while reading in a second language, our usual goal is to make the text more comprehensible, not to master the unfamiliar word.

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# Teacher Workshop on Using ICT Tools and Digital Narratives-A Report

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## ABSTRACT

*This article documents the teacher-researcher initiatives to share the experiences and reflections on the preparation, implementation and outcomes of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) oriented teaching modules. This is a report on the workshop held for school teachers as a part of the Action Research study emphasizing the role of digital narratives in enhancing productive skills. The formulation of need-based teaching modules using the technological tool Prezi and multimodal inputs were shared with a demonstration. A questionnaire was administered at the end of the session to know the teacher attitude and preparedness to use technology in their pedagogy.*

***Keywords:*** *Action research, Information and Communications Technology, Digital narratives, Multimodal inputs, Prezi.*

## Introduction

English has attained the status of global language and with the rising demands from the society and especially students; a serious impact is felt on the English teacher. A teacher's role has metamorphosed from a content renderer to a facilitator to the modern reflective practitioner or undertakers of Action Research. Craig A. Mertlerin his work on *Teachers as Researchers in the Classroom*, defines Action research as, "a systematic inquiry conducted by teachers, administrators, counsellors or others with a vested interest in the teaching and learning process or environment for the purpose of gathering information about how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how their students learn"(4).

Action research is gaining grounds in the educational arena around the world. The 'one-size fits all' mode of teaching is regarded as an out-dated method by the post methods theorists. They claim that pragmatic and eclectic teaching methodology leads to effective teaching and learning as it is based on the cognitive need of the student.

The workshop is based on the concept of eclectic method –the teacher choosing good techniques from all the teaching methods

based on the need. Kumaravadivelu believes that Eclecticism is constrained by methods (33) and that the theoretical ideas can only be realized by actual practice in the classroom. He further clarifies that "Principled pragmatism thus focuses on how classroom learning can be shaped and reshaped by teachers as a result of self - observation, self-analysis, and self-evaluation". He therefore strongly recommends 'principled pragmatism' which the teacher has to possess the 'subjective understanding' which is gained through experience as teachers (33).

Mertler in the book entitled *Improving Schools and Empowering Educators* points out that the last phase of any Action Research is the sharing of the process and results either by local presentations or academic journals as most of the studies are in the form of isolated theoretical reports, creating a gap between the research and application in the actual classroom. The researcher chose to conduct a workshop by collaborating with the local teachers as a means to disseminate the experience and reflections of the Action research study. This paper reports on the process of conduction and reflections on the workshop for teachers', initiated by the teacher-researcher in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh. The main aim of the workshop was

Ø  to introduce the technological tool, Prezi and digital storytelling to the teachers

Ø  assess the acceptability of technological teaching tools and teacher attitude toward integration of ICT.

## Participants

Sixteen teachers collaborated by means of snowball sampling, where subjects recommended useful potential candidates from different schools in the town.

## Procedure

Prior to the conduction of the workshop, it was necessary to understand their digital literacy level and their opinion on the concept of digital narratives. A questionnaire was planned and organized in two sections. The first section had questions regarding their personal profile and four general questions on their working hours. The second section had six close-ended questions using the Likert scale and two open-ended questions. The questions were related to digital narratives, Prezi and language skills.

After formal introductions, the intention and purpose of the meeting were explained. At this juncture, the questionnaires were distributed and the participants were instructed to fill the first section. The difference between a Prezi and a power point presentation was clearly explained. The focus was not only on the web tool called Prezi but also, on the backbone of the study, multimodality and use of multiple inputs in teaching.

A sample Prezi was designed and prepared based on two poems by A.D.Hope and Rabindranath Tagore. The session began with the demonstration of sample Prezi, a multimodal presentation tool, using a computer with an internet connection and

an LCD projector. The poems were presented as a digital narrative/story to the teachers using Prezi.

After the demonstration, the importance of productive skills in the present globalized world job market and the use of digital narratives to enhance productive skills were elaborately discussed. The queries by the teachers were answered after the presentation.  The questions were related to Prezi login procedures and its usability. Care was taken not to bias the teacher's opinions. The questionnaire prepared for the post-workshop session was distributed and the data was collected after completion.

### Reflections on the process
The workshop proved to be the best platform as the teachers openly shared opinions, experiences without any inhibitions. They expressed that syllabus completion and spending most of the school time in teaching as the reason for not preparing additional teaching material for students. They liked the concept of using Prezi and its compatibility of storing, sharing and using them multiple times by making necessary modifications.

### Findings

Most of the teachers (94%) said that they have six hours of teaching.The data shows that all the schools have language laboratories but teachers do not get an opportunity to spend much time. 75% of the teachers said that they use the lab to play the CDROMS provided with the text. To the question about teacher training programs,

only one of all the teachers said that she has attended a session. The questions in the next section were on the use of ICT teaching tools.

All the teachers strongly agreed that there is a need for the teacher to carefully design the tasks other than the ones given in the text according to the need of the students. Due to lack of free time, 80% of the teachers said that preparing extra teaching material was time taking and difficult to design.

After the demonstration of Prezi, 88% of the teachers felt that the features like zooming, twisting and panning movements which are not available in PowerPoint presentation makePrezi more effective and also that nonlinear movement of slides are user-friendly. Almost all the teachers strongly agreed that digital narrative techniques can be tailored or designed to suit different learning styles of the students. 75% were enthusiastic about group projects and collaborative learning.  25% of the teachers expressed doubts regarding the availability and use of technological equipment at the individual level.

The open-ended question on the use of additional teaching materials other than the textbook, 25% accepted that they use hand-outs and pictures and follow conventional method of teaching.

### Conclusion

The conclusions drawn from the findings show that, teachers are hard-pressed for spending quality time in the language lab and end up playing the CDROMS provided

with the text. Implementation of ICT integrated teaching material has not been successful as teachers require appropriate training in conduction of such activities. Almost all the teachers agreed to the notion that language skills can be enhanced using digital narrative techniques by giving regular oral presentation tasks and summarizing stories watched on the internet or listening to e-books. They believed that dramatization helps in making the task of narration interesting and motivating. Though they liked the concept of encouraging collaborative learning using group projects they believed that designing and implementation requires proper training and feared negative outcomes.

The teachers' enthusiasm and positive outlook in the course of discussions held regarding practical exposure to the challenges faced by teachers and ways of finding immediate solutions, gave an additional insight into the area of research.

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# Vocabulary, an Indicator of Language Proficiency: A Perspective from the Review of Literature

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Vocabulary is a fundamental language element. A mastery of vocabulary can help develop proficiency in language skills. To verify this statement, this paper tries to highlight the correlation between vocabulary and the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and grammar by delving into the existing literature. What can be understood from the review of literature is that vocabulary plays a vital role in determining one's general language proficiency.

**Keywords:** language proficiency, language skills, language components, vocabulary knowledge

## Vocabulary as construct of language proficiency

The importance of vocabulary in language use cannot be overemphasized. It is an aspect of language that plays a pivotal role in both language comprehension and production. In the last three decades much has been done in the areas of vocabulary relating to the nature of the bilingual lexicon, L2 vocabulary acquisition, lexical storage, lexical retrieval, and use of vocabulary. Now, it is a well acknowledged fact that vocabulary knowledge plays a decisive role in determining one's language proficiency. According to Schmitt (2010), there are high correlations between depth and range of vocabulary and general language proficiency or language skills. Further, Meara (1996) says, all other things being equal, learners with large vocabularies are more proficient in a wide range of language skills than learners with smaller vocabularies.

Keeping in mind the correlation between vocabulary and other language proficiencies, the following subsections discuss vocabulary and its relationship with each of the four language skills of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing, and grammar.

### Vocabulary and listening skills

For Nation (2001), vocabulary learning through listening is learning through meaning-focused input. For a reasonable comprehension through listening input, learners would need a coverage of 95% or 98% in the running words. In other words, for a better comprehension of oral text, learners should come across one unknown word in every 50 words or 2 or 3 unknown words per minute. According to Nation (2001) there are certain conditions that make learning of vocabulary through listening to stories more likely. And it is the responsibility of the teacher to create such conditions in the class. Some of these conditions are a) the content of the story should be interesting; b) story should be

comprehended; c) unknown words in the story should be understood and the meaning of those not yet strongly established should be retrieved; d) decontextualizing the target words; and e) thoughtful generative processing of target vocabulary.

There are numerous research studies which show that learners can learn new words as they are being read to. Brett, Rothlein and Hurley (1996) in their study found that the students who listened to two stories and were given a brief explanation of the target words learned significantly more new words and remembered them better six weeks later than students who heard stories with no explanation of the target words. In another study, Elley (1989) showed that the oral story reading constitutes a significant source of vocabulary acquisition, whether or not the reading is accompanied by teacher explanation of word meanings.In yet another study, Vidal (2011) compared the effects of reading and listening on incidental vocabulary acquisition. The results showed that although both academic reading and listening result in vocabulary gains, reading was a more efficient source of acquisition. This was especially true for low-proficiency students who appeared to have more difficulty coping with academic lectures which needed real-time processing and therefore could benefit more from written texts over which they had more control. The study also showed that this distinction in vocabulary learning through different modes of input was blurred with proficient students. That is to say, proficient learners could learn vocabulary in equal degree from both types of input.

**Vocabulary and speaking skills**

Vocabulary and speaking skills are invariably linked. In a classroom situation, a teacher can use several techniques and activities to facilitate this connection. Some such activities are *semantic-mapping, information transfer activities,* and *split information tasks*. According to Nation (2001), semantic-mapping can help bridge the gap between the receptive and productive vocabulary knowledge by making learners produce language while doing the task. Studies have shown that compared to writing which requires knowledge of a great stock of vocabulary, speaking requires a much smaller vocabulary. Nation (2001) reported that a good mastery of 2,000 most frequent word families which can provide over 95% coverage is helpful to understand 90% of the words used in spoken discourse. Crabbe and Nation (1991) came up with a list of 'survival' vocabulary which consisted approximately 120 words. The purpose of such a list was to help learners who intended to use another language for short periods of travel when they visited another state or country. The language functions that could be carried out using such words were greetings, requesting for food, expressing politeness, asking for help and directions, describing yourself and buying and bargaining for goods etc.

In a study with novice to intermediate Japanese learners of English, Koizumi and In'nami (2013) wanted to explore the degree to which second language speaking

proficiency could be predicted by the size, depth and speed of L2 vocabulary. The findings of the study showed that a substantial portion of variance in speaking proficiency could be explained by vocabulary knowledge, size, depth and speed. The findings also suggested that vocabulary knowledge is central to speaking proficiency. In yet another study, Daller and Xue (2007) investigated how *picture descriptions* and *C-test* as two lexical measures tapped the relationship between oral proficiency and vocabulary knowledge with two groups of learners. One group consisted of 26 Chinese students who had been studying in UK (UK group) and the other group was 24 university students in China who had EFL teaching as part of their degree course at a Chinese university(Chinese group). The findings demonstrated that in both the lexical measures it was the UK group who fared better than the Chinese group, suggesting that the UK group had more vocabulary knowledge and thus performed well on the tasks which involved oral description.

**Vocabulary and reading skills**

Among all the language skills, the relationship between reading and vocabulary is the most researched one till date. There are innumerable research studies which have investigated how reading helps in vocabulary learning and the vice versa. In what follows, some such studies are discussed in brief to emphasize how strong the relationship between reading and vocabulary is.

Research studies centering on L1 reading suggest that knowledge of vocabulary and the ability to comprehend a text are very closely related to each other (Stahl, 1990). The connection is not unidirectional. That is to say, reading can contribute to vocabulary growth and vocabulary knowledge can also help in reading (Chall, 1987). Several researchers (Hazenberg&Hulstijn, 1996; Hu & Nation, 2001) have proven that one's ability to read and comprehend is to a large extent influenced by one's vocabulary size. Laufer (1992) stressed the need for receptive knowledge of the most frequent 3,000 word families to understand unsimplified text. Further, Hirsh and Nation (1992) suggested that knowledge of at least 5,000 word families is necessary for reading to be pleasurable.

Paribakht and Wesche (1993) experimented the effects of reading only, and reading plus vocabulary exercises wherein learners had the opportunity to meet the same vocabulary repeatedly while reading. The results showed that learners learnt vocabulary under both the approaches. However, it was the reading plus exercise group which learned more vocabulary than the group which asked to read only. In another study in the context of Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), Qian (2002) investigated the roles of breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension in academic settings. It was found from the study that depth of vocabulary knowledge is as important as breadth of vocabulary knowledge in predicting performance in

academic reading, thus revalidating the natural connection between reading and vocabulary growth. Horst, Cobb &Meara (1998) in a study with thirty four Oman students who were a part of an intensive English program at Sultan Qaboos University in Oman found that the students recognized the meanings of new words and built associations between them as a result of comprehension-focused extensive reading. The text-length which was carefully controlled resulted in more incidental vocabulary learning and a higher pick-up rate than the previous studies that were carried out by then. The study also demonstrated that the students who had larger L2 vocabulary sizes gained more vocabulary through incidental learning. Waring and Takaki (2003) in their study with female Japanese subjects revealed that words can be learned incidentally through reading. However, it is the more frequent words which are learned easily and remained for a long time in mental lexicon. Their study also suggested that a massive amount of graded reading is required to learn new vocabulary.

**Vocabulary and writing skills**

Writing is the most complex of the four language skills. Being a productive skill, writing involves a number of cognitive processes. In many ways, the ability to write effectively depends upon a learner possessing a good stock of vocabulary. In reading, which is a receptive skill, a learner can understand the meanings of unfamiliar words from the larger sentential context. In the case of writing however, which is a productive skill, a learner has to have a reasonable amount of mastery over the language in general, and vocabulary in particular, in order to express themselves effectively. In writing, the learner must be able to recall appropriate words for the context quickly and effortlessly. Research studies show, learners will only be able to recall those words spontaneously which they have understood well enough or they have depth of knowledge on. To substantiate, Mayher and Brause (1986) state that "writing is dependent upon the ability to draw upon words to describe an event". The above discussion suggests that vocabulary has a deep relationship with successful writing.

Research studies (Laufer, 1994; Leki& Carson, 1994) have shown that there is a strong correlation between vocabulary knowledge and quality of writing. According to Nation (2001) one's vocabulary choice in writing is a strong indicator of whether the writer has adopted the conventions of the relevant discourse community or not.

Schmitt (2000) is of the view that a lot of vocabulary research has focused on exploring the relationship between reading and vocabulary. But, vocabulary is also equally necessary for the other three skills. Teachers when teach writing have a tendency to focus more on the grammatical well-formedness of a composition. However, they should focus more on the use of lexis in a composition as research has shown that lexical errors can impede comprehension more than grammatical errors (Schmitt, 2000).

## Vocabulary and grammar

Unlike listening, speaking, reading and writing (which are language skills), grammar, like vocabulary, is a language component. If grammar is considered to be merely a system of rules, then it becomes very difficult to demarcate between grammar and vocabulary because when it comes to word use, certain vocabulary rules or grammar come into play. For example, while learning a word, a learner must know what word-class a particular word belongs to i.e., noun, verb etc. Also, while learning verb forms like *enjoy*, *love*, *hope*, the learner needs to know if these words are followed by an infinitive or a gerund. Similarly, while learning phrasal verbs, the learner needs to be aware of the fact that some phrasal verbs are separable (Example: He **called up** Ramesh the other day. or He **called** Ramesh **up** the other day.) and others are non-separable (Example: The mother **looked after** her child., not *The mother **looked** her child **after**.).

Unlike the learning of grammar, which is essentially a rule-based system, vocabulary learning is largely a question of accumulating individual items. That is to say, there is no generative rules for learning vocabulary like grammar. If grammar learning is a matter of learning generative rules, vocabulary learning is a question of memory.

The vocabulary of any language can be divided into various word classes such as nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and determiners. Again, broadly all these word classes can be divided into two classes: grammatical class and content class. Word classes like pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and determiners fall into grammatical class of words and word classes like nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs fall into content class of words. To substantiate, words like *and / or* (conjunction), *them / you* (pronoun) and *under / to* (preposition) mainly contribute to the grammatical structure of a sentence and therefore are called *grammaticalwords* or *structural words* or *function words*. These words are closed words which imply that the number of grammatical words in language is static. On the other hand *content words* carry high information load and are open ended, which means there is no limit to the number of content words that can be added to a language. Traditionally, grammatical words belonged to the domain of grammar teaching, while the teaching of vocabulary was more concerned with content words. However, this rigid division has become blurred recently.

Apart from the four language skills and grammar, vocabulary knowledge also plays a role in determining some other language skills. Nasserji (2006) highlighted that EFL students having deeper knowledge of vocabulary were able to make use of lexical inferencing strategies more effectively. Watts (2008) examined the effects of word salience (the learner's evaluation of a target item's importance in the context of a reading passage) and syntactic complexity (presence of target items in independent or dependent

clauses) on the acquisition of word meaning and word grammatical class of Spanish-like nonsense words and found that word salience affected acquisition of both grammatical class and word meaning, while clause type affected correct acquisition of grammatical class. Pulido (2007), investigated the relationship between adult L2 text processing and vocabulary acquisition and reveals that as lower-level text processing operations become more efficient, lexical processing can become more effective and retention of vocabulary is enhanced; in particular, background knowledge of a text topic did not appear to moderate the relationship between comprehension and retention of target item meanings.

## Conclusion

The discussions from the previous sections clearly suggest that vocabulary knowledge is very much essential to be proficient in the language skills. It has also been observed from the discussions that vocabulary knowledge and language skills are complementary to each other. That is to say, not only vocabulary knowledge helps in developing the four language skills, but also while the language skills are at work, vocabulary can be learnt.

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# Developing L2 Academic Writing: Going Beyond CLT and TBLT

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**ABSTRACT**

*This paper aims at emphasising the importance of developing academic writing skills in students at the tertiary level through employing pedagogical instructions for the same in all areas: arts, humanities and sciences. The limitations in the existing pedagogy at the primary and secondary levels have been analysed so as to suggest necessary pedagogical instructions at the tertiary level. Emphasis has been laid on the establishment of writing centres in India, as Academic Writing finds little importance in college syllabi, except in some language courses. The analysis of primary and secondary level language syllabi and teaching methodology has been done based on research done by means of tutoring school students upto XII standard (CBSE) in Delhi. Statistical analysis of IELTS score of 2017 has also been done so as to show that writing skills require explicit instructions.*

**Keywords:** *ELT in India, Developing academic writing, Writing centres at tertiary level.*

## Introduction

The Institutionalisation of English Studies in India, chiefly by Thomas Macaulay, Trevelyan and Raja Ram Mohan Roy, has travelled far since the period of Imperialism; in the post-independence era through the Radhakrishnan Commission, the Kothari Commission and the Ramamurti Commission to its present status as a second language; from Raja Rao's opinion, "it is to convey in a language that is not one's own, the spirit that is one's own", to it (English) occupying one's mind and heart. India is a country of the 'outer circle' wherein English has attained the status of second language (Kachru, 1985).

After globalisation, English has made its way as an important language not only in pedagogy, but it has also become a communicative language in India. As it is required everywhere – schools, colleges, jobs etc., people have realised that for keeping themselves well informed about the worldwide knowledge, they need to become proficient in the global language which is English. Hence, English medium schools are the most opted for in India.

## Prevailing Language Teaching Methods

It is important to understand the methods followed till date for language teaching (L2). Various researches in language teaching in the 'inner circle' countries have provided

many methods (for us). As is well known, Grammar Translation Method was followed earlier, wherein students were encouraged rote learning. As there was lot of dissatisfaction in teaching the forms of the language instead of the function, Communicative Language Teaching found precedence. It was based on Dell Hymes' theory of 'Communicative Competence' (1966) which was propounded by him in resistence to Chomskian theory of Linguistic performance and Competence (1965). CLT plays an important role in teaching language as (according to Hymes) it is based on 'ethnography of Communication', i.e it is socially determined. In India, the importance attached to 'spoken English' and the mushrooms of institutes offering classes for the same are evidences to show that it is more important to know the functional aspect of the language than learn its forms. (Hymes).

Similarly, N.S.Prabhu's Task Based Language Teaching (1987) has gone a long way in teaching language as it is based on tasks which the learners are expected to perform following instructions provided therein. His tripartite model of information gap, reasoning gap and opinion gap was instrumental in changing pedagogical instructions at the school level in India.

TBLT has found a potential place in pedagogy. The CBSE position paper (2006) is a case in point, wherein the importance of teaching English through Comprehensible Input has been given prime importance. It also prescribes Teachers' Proficiency (TP) and organising Teachers'

Training programmes for this purpose. It also emphasises the importance of Task Based Language Teaching.

The increasing importance and role of digital technology in language learning and teaching (CALL – Computer Assisted Language Learning) has seeped in India too. In school pedagogy it has taken the form of Educomp and FlipLearn which are digital applications provided by schools to all the students. It is quite well known by such students and parents that these portals provide pre written answers to questions and exercises under the guise of providing the students with Comprehensible Input. This is hampering and hindering the writing creativity of the students to such an extent that it has turned out to be a substitute to the rote learning in the earlier Grammar Translation Method; and we are regressing instead of progressing. Comprehensible Input (CI) (Stephen Krashen,1981) is fundamental in language learning; but the role of Comprehensible Output (CO) and Feedback (by the teachers) (Swain, 1985) is irrefutable. Hence, production of language, oral or written, is essential for developing that aspect of language. It will be apt to refer to Nicky Hockley (2013) at this juncture. In his research he has studied the effect of Interactive White Boards in a language classroom. He has also called upon earlier researches on the use of technology in a similar context. He surmises that the mere introduction of technology in a classroom does not guarantee an enhanced learning environment.

CLT and TBLT have played their part in

inculcating 'awareness and understanding' of the (second) language in India. It is time to go further and realise the importance of developing the writing skills in English as a Second Language.

## Importance of Writing

Writing is an essential tool for the manifestation of thoughts which will prevail and not fly away as speech does. Therefore, writing finds an important place in the life of human beings, whether in curriculum or otherwise. Education, the ability to read and write, transforms lives and societies; being numerate and literate gives advantages to human beings.

In education too, the measuring scale of any exam, whether language or any other skill, is the writing ability of the student. If the student is unable to exhibit his or her knowledge through his/her writing, it does not find recognition. Hence the ability to write is important for first language as well as for second/foreign language learners.

## Literature study

Second language writing attained the importance and status for research since the 1950s and 60s with the aim of developing pedagogical instruments for the teaching and learning of second language writing for international students who started enrolling in vast numbers in English speaking countries; but it derives from studies and research in L1 writing.

Since beginning, the main aim of a writing task has been the product obtained thereof; but lately the focus has shifted to the process involved in writing. According to Jeremy Harmer (2004), process involved in a writing task is more important than the product obtained. She observes that to encourage an L2 learner to write, the product should be considered only as an impetus to develop the process. There has been a shift from grammar and spelling to coherence, cohesion, sentence structuring, organization of ideas, etc. Researches in academic writing have refuted the claim of Jeremy Harmer,as in the following study:

Figueroa et al(2018) , in their research on Academic Language and Academic Vocabulary on Chilean VIII graders have quoted Graham and Sandmel that the latter, in their research, found the process approach insufficient in developing writing quality. Hence Figueroa et al opine, "Therefore, the process approach appears to be explicitly overlooking the contextual dimension of writing, both at the level of writer diversity—according to their performance—and of writing as a situated practice." They also observe that writing, specially academic writing, requires high cognitive and linguistic efforts. For analysing the argumentative and explanatory essays of the students, they considered the following epistemic markers to be important: Syntactic structure, vocabulary, genre knowledge, idea development and discourse organisation

Halliday and Hasan's taxonomy has been instrumental in analysing writing. In 'Cohesion in English' (1976), they have established the important role played by cohesion in the 'texture' of the text. They

have used 'texture' synonymously with coherence. Coherence and Cohesion studies attained great importance in assessing writing tasks. Carrell (1982) acknowledges the importance of cohesive devices and coherence in a writing task; but she rejects Halliday and Hasan's claim and observes that a text can be coherent even without employing cohesive devices.

Ruegg and Sugiyama (2013) consider the importance of organisation of ideas in establishing the coherence of a writing task. Their research studies what raters are sensitive to while evaluating the writing tasks. They observe that organisation of ideas may be assessed at two levels- physical aspects of organisation such as paragraphing and the existence of organisation markers; and deeper textual aspects such as coherent flow of ideas. They have surmised that both cohesion and coherence are assessed while rating a text.

Hinkel (2013) has foregrounded the importance of teaching Grammar to L2 writers. According to him, L2 writers need to be taught such rules of Grammar which are required in academic writing; and not the entire range of grammatical rules which seldom find a place in use. He has also provided certain features which academic writers should refrain from using, e.g. subjunctives or noun clauses as subjects etc.

Hinkel has acknowledged the vital role played by grammatical structures in academic writing. "In recent years, in ESL pedagogy, the research on identifying simple and complex grammatical structures and vocabulary has been motivated by the goal of helping learners to improve the quality and sophistication of their second language (L2) production and writing." Many researches have established that grammatical accuracy is an essential component of academic writing and speaking (for L2 learners). It demands both instructions/teaching as well as intensive learning. Hinkel is critical of the methodology adopted for enhancing the communicative competence of the L2 learners as it focuses on personal experiences which is more fun instead of inculcating formal techniques of academic writing. Students are exposed to conversational language so much that they fail to differentiate between formal and informal register. In this article, Hinkel has given certain prescriptions for grammatical accuracy so as to improve L2 academic writing.

**Developing Instructional Design at the Tertiary Level**

The existing pedagogical pattern in schools imparts either a 'copy-book-ideal' environment or an informal language, owing to CLT, to students; hence when students go to colleges and universities they face the risk of plagiarism or the register in their lexican is not complex and academic. There is a strong need of formation of 'writing centres' in India. Other than a few language courses, colleges and universities seldom offer a course in Academic Writing in India, be it arts or social sciences or life sciences or technical sciences. To show that

development of writing skills requires exclusive instruction at the tertiary level, statistics of IELTS band score of students who attempted the exams throughout the year 2017 has been taken. (retrieved from https://www.ielts.org/teaching-and-research/test-taker-performance).

This score is of the students from all over the world. IELTS is assessed on a 9-band scale and reports scores both overall and by individual skill. Academic and general training test takers (2017) split between these two categories are as follows:

Academic – 78.10%

General Training – 21.9%

For this paper, the statistics in the category of Academic exam have been shown.

Table 1 shows Academic test takers' mean performance (overall and individually in all the four skills) by gender. (see Appendix A)

This indicates that both in male and female categories, the band score of writing skill is much less than the other three skills.

Table 2 shows the mean of overall and individual skill score of academic test takers from top 40 places of origin. (see Appendix B)

In this table, Indian students' test performance shows a lower score in writing as compared to the other skills. If we look carefully, this problem persists not only with Indian students, but other than one or two exceptions, this problem (of writing) persists with students of all the countries (as given in the table).

Table 3 shows the mean of overall and individual skill scores of test takers based on their first language. (see Appendix C).

Here, the writing performance of test takers with one of the Indian languages as the first language, again shows lower values as compared to the scores of other skills; other than the exception of Punjabi, wherein there is not much difference in the score of writing and the scores of other skills; because in their case, the score for Reading is lower than Writing. As for students with Marathi as the first language, their score for Listening has exceeded 7 band score, but the score for writing is quite low.

In fact, the writing score of students with English as the first language too shows a remarkable lower value as compared to the scores of their other skills because of which their overall mean has come down below 7 band score, in spite of the fact that their scores for Listening and Speaking are above the 7 band score which is not very easy to procure (as the statistics show).

It can be inferred that genre based instructions can go a long way in developing the writing skills of students at the under graduate and masters level. This will enhance the overall development of all the elements of writing. Studying through the different genres will provide the students with practical situations simultaneously with improving their academic vocabulary and grammar. Thus it is essential to develop both the macro and micro properties of the writing elements, namely:

Cohesion

Coherence (organisation of ideas)

Syntactic structures

Triad of CAF (complexity, accuracy, fluency)

Lexical density

Academic Language

Earlier researches in assessing academic writing have considered all these properties for evaluating the quality of academic writing. Therefore, it is inferred that college students in India need to be instructed for enhancing these elements in their writing tasks, so that the quality of their assignments/journal articles/research papers improves.

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### Appendix A
### Table 1. Academic test takers: Mean performance by gender

| Gender | Listening | Reading | Writing | Speaking | Overall |
|--------|-----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| **Female** | 6.26 | 6.18 | 5.66 | 5.97 | 6.08 |
| **Male** | 6.17 | 6.02 | 5.55 | 5.88 | 5.97 |

## Appendix B

**Table 2. Mean band score for the most frequent countries or regions of origin (Academic)**

| Country | Listening | Reading | Writing | Speaking | Overall |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bangladesh | 6.37 | 6.02 | 5.83 | 6.25 | 6.18 |
| Brazil | 6.74 | 6.91 | 5.98 | 6.72 | 6.65 |
| Canada | 7.09 | 6.78 | 6.16 | 7.15 | 6.86 |
| China (People's Republic of) | 5.9 | 6.11 | 5.37 | 5.39 | 5.76 |
| Colombia | 6.35 | 6.72 | 5.78 | 6.49 | 6.4 |
| Egypt | 6.74 | 6.43 | 5.87 | 6.46 | 6.44 |
| France | 6.95 | 7.04 | 6.02 | 6.56 | 6.71 |
| Germany | 7.76 | 7.52 | 6.6 | 7.36 | 7.37 |
| Greece | 7.43 | 7.16 | 6.27 | 6.76 | 6.97 |
| Hong Kong | 6.9 | 6.76 | 5.97 | 6.25 | 6.53 |
| India | 6.3 | 5.82 | 5.77 | 6.01 | 6.04 |
| Indonesia | 6.55 | 6.67 | 5.78 | 6.27 | 6.38 |
| Iran, Islamic Republic of | 6.24 | 5.98 | 5.58 | 6.43 | 6.12 |
| Iraq | 5.54 | 5.44 | 5.13 | 5.86 | 5.56 |
| Italy | 6.83 | 7.2 | 5.99 | 6.54 | 6.7 |
| Japan | 5.91 | 6.09 | 5.41 | 5.59 | 5.81 |
| Jordan | 6.27 | 5.89 | 5.47 | 6.35 | 6.06 |
| Kazakhstan | 6.17 | 6.16 | 5.57 | 5.91 | 6.01 |
| Korea, Republic of | 6.2 | 6.2 | 5.46 | 5.79 | 5.97 |
| Kuwait | 5.47 | 5.08 | 4.84 | 5.79 | 5.36 |
| Malaysia | 7.27 | 7.07 | 6.25 | 6.71 | 6.89 |
| Mexico | 6.54 | 6.78 | 5.81 | 6.54 | 6.48 |
| Nepal | 6.27 | 5.75 | 5.56 | 5.81 | 5.91 |
| Nigeria | 6.82 | 6.46 | 6.51 | 7.11 | 6.79 |
| Oman | 5.11 | 4.98 | 4.9 | 5.62 | 5.22 |
| Pakistan | 6.57 | 6.2 | 5.95 | 6.43 | 6.35 |
| Philippines | 7.27 | 6.8 | 6.2 | 6.85 | 6.84 |
| Romania | 7.03 | 6.89 | 6.12 | 6.78 | 6.77 |
| Russian Federation | 6.93 | 6.91 | 5.99 | 6.67 | 6.69 |
| Saudi Arabia | 5.26 | 5.05 | 4.78 | 5.69 | 5.26 |
| Spain | 7.02 | 7.16 | 6.11 | 6.71 | 6.81 |
| Sri Lanka | 6.6 | 6.15 | 5.9 | 6.49 | 6.35 |
| Sudan | 6.43 | 6.1 | 5.68 | 6.41 | 6.22 |
| Taiwan | 6.16 | 6.21 | 5.6 | 6.08 | 6.08 |
| Thailand | 6.25 | 6.03 | 5.46 | 5.91 | 5.98 |
| Turkey | 6.4 | 6.42 | 5.69 | 6.21 | 6.24 |
| Ukraine | 6.65 | 6.58 | 5.94 | 6.49 | 6.48 |
| United Arab Emirates | 4.88 | 4.7 | 4.48 | 5.27 | 4.9 |
| Uzbekistan | 5.63 | 5.63 | 5.27 | 5.61 | 5.6 |
| Vietnam | 5.97 | 6.17 | 5.59 | 5.71 | 5.92 |

**Table 3. Mean band scores for the most common first languages (Academic)**

| Language | Listening | Reading | Writing | Speaking | Overall |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arabic | 5.63 | 5.37 | 5.06 | 5.88 | 5.55 |
| Azeri | 6.42 | 6.16 | 5.58 | 6.12 | 6.14 |
| Bengali | 6.45 | 6.11 | 5.88 | 6.31 | 6.25 |
| Chinese | 5.97 | 6.15 | 5.41 | 5.46 | 5.81 |
| English | 7.21 | 6.71 | 6.35 | 7.14 | 6.92 |
| Farsi | 6.29 | 6.03 | 5.61 | 6.47 | 6.16 |
| Filipino | 7.31 | 6.86 | 6.22 | 6.87 | 6.88 |
| French | 6.91 | 6.95 | 6.03 | 6.59 | 6.68 |
| German | 7.8 | 7.55 | 6.62 | 7.39 | 7.41 |
| Greek | 7.35 | 7.03 | 6.24 | 6.73 | 6.9 |
| Gujarati | 6.18 | 5.71 | 5.63 | 5.86 | 5.91 |
| Hindi | 6.67 | 6.13 | 5.94 | 6.37 | 6.34 |
| Ibo/lgbo | 6.6 | 6.27 | 6.47 | 7.09 | 6.67 |
| Indonesian | 6.54 | 6.67 | 5.78 | 6.26 | 6.37 |
| Italian | 6.83 | 7.22 | 5.99 | 6.53 | 6.7 |
| Japanese | 5.9 | 6.09 | 5.41 | 5.59 | 5.81 |
| Kazakh | 6.06 | 6.04 | 5.51 | 5.81 | 5.92 |
| Khmer | 5.92 | 5.73 | 5.48 | 5.92 | 5.82 |
| Korean | 6.2 | 6.21 | 5.46 | 5.79 | 5.98 |
| Malay | 7.03 | 6.86 | 6.07 | 6.54 | 6.69 |
| Malayalam | 6.73 | 6.34 | 6.1 | 6.39 | 6.45 |
| Marathi | 7.06 | 6.49 | 6.23 | 6.69 | 6.68 |
| Nepali | 6.28 | 5.75 | 5.56 | 5.82 | 5.92 |
| Other | 6.6 | 6.29 | 6.18 | 6.96 | 6.57 |
| Polish | 7.36 | 7.25 | 6.29 | 6.99 | 7.03 |
| Portuguese | 6.86 | 6.94 | 6.04 | 6.8 | 6.72 |
| Punjabi | 5.92 | 5.47 | 5.56 | 5.67 | 5.72 |
| Romanian | 7.01 | 6.89 | 6.12 | 6.79 | 6.77 |
| Russian | 6.74 | 6.71 | 5.89 | 6.52 | 6.53 |
| Singhalese | 6.58 | 6.14 | 5.89 | 6.46 | 6.33 |
| Spanish | 6.65 | 6.89 | 5.93 | 6.62 | 6.59 |
| Tagalog | 7.17 | 6.68 | 6.14 | 6.8 | 6.76 |
| Tamil | 6.86 | 6.41 | 6.05 | 6.54 | 6.53 |
| Telugu | 6.34 | 5.8 | 5.75 | 6.08 | 6.05 |
| Thai | 6.24 | 6.03 | 5.46 | 5.9 | 5.97 |
| Turkish | 6.42 | 6.42 | 5.7 | 6.22 | 6.25 |
| Ukrainian | 6.62 | 6.57 | 5.94 | 6.48 | 6.47 |
| Urdu | 6.61 | 6.21 | 5.97 | 6.47 | 6.38 |
| Uzbek | 5.57 | 5.56 | 5.23 | 5.55 | 5.54 |
| Vietnamese | 5.97 | 6.17 | 5.59 | 5.71 | 5.93 |

* First language as self-chosen by test takers drawn from a wide range of nationalities

# An Experimental Study Conducted in Kerala at Higher Secondary Level on the Application of ICT Vs. Traditional Model of Teaching of English

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study discusses how far ICT (Information and Communication Technology) can be used to improve the quality of education by comparing traditional methods of teaching with ICT models of teaching English at Higher Secondary level in Kerala. Today, English is considered a global language but the future of English will be more complex, more demanding and more challenging for native speakers and second language users as ICT lies at the heart of policy making in education. Today's challenge in Education is to define the best use of ICT for improving the quality of teaching and learning. There is a great possibility for the application of ICT at Higher Secondary level, as it help to improve skills in English (LSRW), in a communicative method classrooms in India, especially in Kerala. The researcher conducted a survey among teachers and students in Higher Secondary sections in Kerala to understand their familiarity towards use of ICT tools. As the findings of the survey result were positive about ICT familiarity of teachers and students, the researcher conducted an experimental study on the effectiveness of ICT tools in teaching by teaching Robert Frost's poem "The Road Not Taken". The implications of the study are presented in the paper.*

**Key Words:** *Information and Communication Technology;* **ELT***: English Language Teaching,*

**CLL***: Communicative Language Learning,* **LSRW***: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing*

## Introduction

Bernard Shaw once said, "The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable man attempts to adapt the world to him. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man." Science and technology, like the unreasonable man, frequently, and often violently, move to change the world (qtd. in Prasad and Vijay Kumari, *Advanced Educational Technology* 107). ICT stands for Inform1ation, Communication, and Technology, and these three catch words are highly important in the modern highly technological world. Today, English is considered a global language its role in since it is mainly used for communication in the digital era the role of English in ICT age is a matter of debate.

## The Future of English in ICT Age

Graddol in his book *The Future of English* identifies significant global trends in Economics, Technology and Culture which may affect the learning and use of English internationally in the 21st century. (Graddol 2). Commentators vary greatly in their attitude towards and expectations of global English. At one extreme, there is an unproblematic assumption that the world will eventually speak English as that this will facilitate the cultural and economic dominance of native speaking countries. Crystal in this context observes:

The future of English will be more complex, more demanding of understanding and more challenging for native speakers and second language users of English. There has never been a language so widely spread or spoken by so many people as English. There are therefore no precedents to help us to see what happens to a language when it achieves genuine world status (138-139).

## The Scope of ICT in Education and ELT

According to Loveless, "Today, ICT lies at the heart of policy making in education" (*The Role of ICT* 37). Loveless and Viv Ellis' book '*ICT, Pedagogy and the Curriculum*', examines "the role ICT plays in challenging the construction of three subjects (core curriculum of UK") such as English, Mathematics and Science and also it reveals the importance of English in the curriculum world over by applying ICT in it (Loveless and Ellis, *Editors' Introduction* 5-6). It is painfully apparent that post-independent Indian Education system has failed to provide qualitative and meaningful education to every child born after the nation's 'midnight tryst with destiny'. But within the grove of the academia and the drawing rooms of the intelligentsia, there's rising expectation that the new wonder Information Technology (IT) may succeed where our system has failed (Shuchi, "Efficient Technology Usage in Classrooms" 40). Sagar in his book *Digital Technology in Education* discusses: "Today's challenge in Education is to define the best use of ICT for improving the quality of teaching and learning" (9).

## An Outline/Framework of Research Study on Application of ICT in ELT

A survey among teachers and students in Higher Secondary sections in Kerala was conducted to understand their attitude towards ICT tools. It was decided to conduct an experimental study on the effectiveness of use of ICT tools for teaching if both the students and teachers are aware of using them. The survey result on ICT operational skills of teachers and students was positive and hence the researcher used YouTube Videos to teach Robert Frost's poem "The Road Not Taken".

## Sample Data of the Survey

As part of the research study, a survey among 250 higher Secondary students and 300 teachers in Thrissur and Ernakulam Districts of Kerala was conducted.

## Results and Interpretations based on Higher Secondary Students and Teachers Survey

The survey conducted among Higher Secondary students regarding their attitude to IT and their awareness of its usage gave interesting results. The survey indicated a positive trend in the use and application of computers by the students for their personal, social and study purposes. Another remarkable fact is that there is not a marked digital divide between higher secondary teachers and students of today in Kerala. Also, 84% of students know how to operate computers when compared with their teachers. Another interesting fact is that 40% of students have memberships in social networks. The survey results also gave the information that 90% of students use IT for entertainment and only a few (10%) use it for study purpose. Another major impact of the survey is that 60% of students supported ICT integrated classes and 80% firmly believed that they could improve their listening, speaking, reading and writing (LSRW) skills by applying ICT in English language learning.

Having acknowledged through survey the distinct advantages ICT could confer on the teaching of English to improve learners' communication skills, the researcher proceeded with applying the theory practically in Higher Secondary English classrooms in selected schools by teaching a poem "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost.

**Sample Selected for the Experimental Study**

To compare ICT model teaching with traditional mode, the researcher selected two schools for his experimental teaching[3].The sample of students included in the experiment was classified based on their gender and subject of study (See Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1 Sex-wise classification of student sample in each subject**

| Subject | Male | | Female | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent | Frequency | Percent |
| ComputerScience | 42 | 37.5 | 14 | 32.6 | 56 | 36.1 |
| Commerce-Computer | 16 | 14.3 | 29 | 67.4 | 45 | 29 |
| Science-Bio | 30 | 26.8 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 19.4 |
| Commerce-Mathematics | 24 | 21.4 | 0 | 0 | 24 | 15.5 |
| Total Students | 112 | 100 | 43 | 100 | 155 | 100 |

Altogether, there were 155 students involved in the experimental study. Among this, 112 students (72.3%) were boys and 43 girls (27.7%). The entire sample was selected from four different batches. From the total sample, 56 (36.1%) were from Computer Science, 45 (29.0%) from Commerce (Mathematics), 30 (19.4%) from Bio Science, and 24 (15.5%) from Commerce (Mathematics). Figure 3.1a illustrates this information.
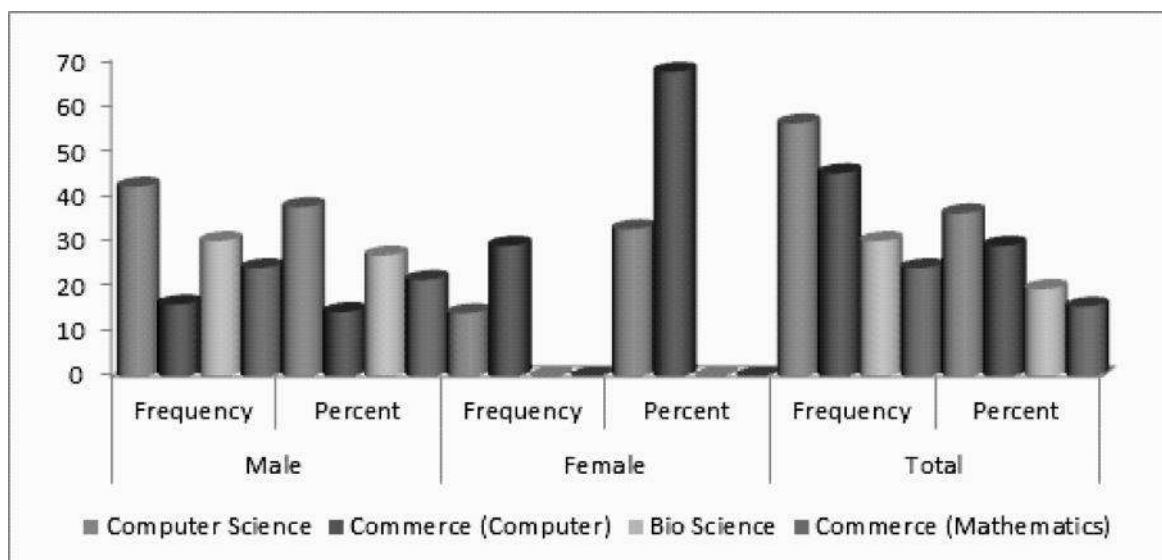
**Fig. 3.1a Male-female participation branch-wise**

**Effectiveness of ICT Method over Traditional Method**

The researcher conducted model class using ICT means for the selected student sample, using a Poem "Road not Taken" by Robert Frost prescribed for Higher Secondary (Plus One) course under Kerala State syllabus. Before undertaking ICT model teaching, he had conducted traditional model of communicative approach class for the sample. A test was conducted for the students after the traditional model class keeping all the objectives of evaluation in mind. The marks and grades of students of each school were recorded branch-wise with precision. A post-test was conducted after ICT model teaching and the scores were recorded.

Paired T-test was used to compare students' performance across the tests. Null hypothesis test was used to examine if there was any significant difference in the achievements of students before and after ICT method of teaching. The results of the test are given in Table 3.2.1:

**Table 3.2.1 Comparative achievements of students in ICT and traditional modes of teaching (N = 155)**

| Method | Mean | Std Error | T-value | P-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Traditional | 64.59 | 1.496 | 8.666** | <0.001 |
| ICT Model | 77.68 | 1.273 | | |

** significant at 0.01 levels

T-value obtained from the comparison of achievements of students after ICT method (8.666) was found to be significant at 0.01 levels. This result rejected the null hypothesis and found that there was significant difference in the achievements after the ICT method of teaching. The 'Mean' score of achievement increased from 64.59 to 77.68 which showed that ICT model teaching was more effective for achievements in English.

**Effectiveness of ICT Method over Traditional Method for Sub-Sample of Gender**

For the sub-sample of male and female population, the comparison of achievement after ICT method over the traditional method was done by using paired T-test. Null hypothesis tested here indicates that there is no significant difference in the achievement before and after ICT method of teaching for the sub-samples of males and females. Results of the test are given in Table 3.2.2a.

**Table 3.2.2a Comparative achievements of students in ICT and traditional modes of teaching for the sub-sample based on gender**

| Sample | Method | Mean | Std Error | T-value | P-value |
|--------|--------|------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Male | Traditional | 66.55 | 1.681 | 5.316** | <0.001 |
| | Total(10) | 75.09 | 1.562 | | |
| Female | Traditional | 59.48 | 3.047 | 8.948** | <0.001 |
| | Total(10) | 84.42 | 1.763 | | |

** significant at 0.01 levels

In the case of both male and female samples, T-value was found to be significant at 0.01 levels and the 'Mean' value of achievement was higher after ICT method of teaching in both the groups. Table 3.2.2b gives the results of independent T-test for comparing male and female students. Comparison was done by using both the scores of traditional method of teaching and ICT method of teaching. Null hypothesis tested signifies that there is no significant difference in the pre- and post- test scores between male and female students.

**Table 3.2.2b Results of independent T-test for comparing male and female students**

| Method | Group | Mean | Std Error | T-value | P-value |
|--------|-------|------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Traditional | Male | 66.55 | 1.681 | 2.141** | 0.039 |
| | Female | 59.48 | 3.047 | | |
| Total (10) | Male | 75.09 | 1.562 | 3.392** | 0.001 |
| | Female | 84.42 | 1.763 | | |

** significant at 0.01 levels, * significant at 0.05 levels

In the case of traditional method of teaching, T-value (2.141) was found to be significant at 0.05 levels. Hence, it can be concluded that there is significant difference in the achievement of male (66.55) and female (59.48) students. This shows that before undergoing the ICT method of teaching, achievement of males was higher than that of females. In the case of traditional method of teaching, T-value (3.392) was found to be significant at 0.01 levels. Hence, it can be concluded that there is significant difference in the achievement of male (75.09) and female (84.42) students. The 'Mean' score is higher in the case of female students which indicate that ICT method of teaching is more effective in the case of female students. In the case of boys, the achievement score increases from 66.55 to 75.09 whereas in the case of girls achievement score increases from 59.48 to 84.42. Increase is higher in the case of female students which also indicate that ICT method of teaching is more effective among girls than boys.

**Conclusion**

The use of ICT in English classrooms extends beyond its motivational value to address key outcomes of the syllabus and allows students to become competent users as well as consumers in English. Research suggests that incorporating ICT into English curriculum can improve learners'

(i) writing and reading skills,

(ii) speaking and listening skills, and can support their

(iii) collaboration, creativity, independent learning, and reflection.

As an interactive and collaborative medium, ICT allows responding, composing, and publishing to be easily shared and offers students the opportunity to explore the language of texts more creatively and develop as speakers, writers and readers for an ever-widening range of purposes and audiences. ICT can support them in their choice of genre for audience and purpose, identify key characteristics and features of text, and develop understanding of language and critical literacy.

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# English Language Teaching Needs an Overhaul

Hakeem Rouf

***Besides engagement of trained and competent language experts, there is an urgent need to put an end to archaic and ineffective methodology of English language teaching in our schools.***

Recently, I had an interesting interaction with the kids of my cousins at a social gathering. It was not a mere interaction but a good learning experience as well. I was startled by the proficiency and confidence with which the kids were conversing in English. The adequate language skills of these kids, enrolled in a not very renowned private school, not only fascinated and gladdened me but also left me pondering over how a few years at a school instilled in them an exemplary confidence and imparted such an impactful fluency in English language. I also pondered why students enrolled in less prestigious institutions lack the ability to converse and write in English without making grammatical mistakes. A bit more inquisitive interaction with these kids made me ascertain/gauge that the school does not have any magic wand to make the students effective speakers in a short period but adopts effective and applicative way of imparting English language skills. I realized the importance of the axiom, "Language is caught not taught" after getting to know that the school lays main focus on practical conversation activities by giving students ample opportunities to participate in real communicative activities besides routine class room teaching. The kids informed me that teaching of English language goes beyond the class room which helped them to acquire basic communication skills. They are motivated and encouraged to converse in English language outside the class room which instilled in them the confidence and attained fluency without much laborious efforts.

Teaching language by making students practice real life conversation is undoubtedly an effective way of imparting spoken English skills but unfortunately this way of teaching is rarely adopted in most of our schools. I am in teaching job for last couple of months, I have been observing that English language is taught as a subject but not as a skill both in elementary and higher classes. It is taught in a way that hardly enables the students to use it for communicative purposes though it makes them capable enough to pass the written examinations in the subject English. Instead of engaging kids in practical conversation activities/sessions, the students are bombarded with complex grammatical concepts from the very beginning of their educational journey which makes language learning a cumbersome and a boring process. In other words, most of our schools adopt grammar centric

approach and English language teaching is confined to the class room and text books. Grammar centric language teaching is ineffective, kills creativity and obstructs free expression.

English as second language is taught through literary texts to develop one's communication skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in addition to developing literary taste. It is quite upsetting that English texts like short stories, dramas and poems and other genres of writing are taught in a way that neither helps our kids to develop communication skills nor develop literary taste. The objective can be achieved only when the students are given opportunities to use the language. Instead of encouraging them to participate in practical communicative activities and creatively discuss and express the texts on their own, most of the schools both private and government, make learners passive listeners. Students are fed with sentence-wise word by word meaning of the texts in urdu, Kashmiri or any other regional languages. This doesn't serve the main purpose of imparting communicative skills. However, this is not true of all schools. There are schools, though small in number, which teach English language in a way the students acquire language skills.

English has become the language of opportunities. Having a good command over English Language is not only pivotal for the academic progress of a student but for employability prospects of the students. A good command over this language has now become a prerequisite for almost all jobs in government and corporate sectors. Poor communication skills is one of the major challenging issues that confronts our education system. Lack of proficiency in English among the students is a matter of serious concern which remains neglected. Lack of linguistic proficiency is one of the reasons for their abysmal academic performance in other subjects, that hampers the overall academic performance of the students and puts impediments to their career development.

The stark reality of communicative incompetence among the students reflects that the way language is taught in schools is quite archaic and moribund which needs urgent revamp. To address the issue of poor language skills among the students, there is an urgent need to overhaul the methodology of English language teaching especially in elementary classes, the stage when the kids possess innate capability of imitating and grasping things. Besides ineffective way of teaching English language, dearth of trained language teachers and inappropriate testing methods can be attributed to as the other reasons. It is necessary to engage competent teachers and provide periodical training to them. The evaluation of language skills should not be confined to testing knowledge of grammar rules but test communicative competence

through novel and realistic testing methods.

To conclude, our policy makers, educationists and the people who are at the helm of the department of education should take the issue of inadequate and pathetic language skills among students with utmost seriousness and take appropriate remedial measures to address it. Government needs to employ and engage qualified and well trained language trainers in schools to impart English language skills and also make it mandatory for the private schools. This will not only significantly uplift the educational standards of our schools but also ease teaching learning process, enhance job prospects of students and also open vast opportunities for them.

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Dear member,

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

    Course Management systems

Moodle, Edmodo, Collaborize classroom

    Social networking/Discussion sites

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

    Online Discussion Apps.

Collaborize classroom and Subtext

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

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# No Written Exam: A New Pattern of Assessment of Language (L2) in Hindi Medium Schools

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## ABSTRACT

*Examination is an important part of academics. Our education system is designed insuch a way that a learner needs to gain minimum prescribed marks to succeed in a particularsubject. But we cannot deny the fact that the whole system fails to find out an individual's ability through marks or grades, especially for language in vernacular mediumschools. By rote-learning, although they pass the exam, they fail to get command overthe language (L2). The present paper proposes a new pattern of assessment-Assessment without the traditional written exam. The paper suggests that exam shouldtotally be based on skill based activities. It would help the learners inlearning the skills as well as attempting the exams with more confidence. It would also helpthe teachers for a 'continuous & comprehensive evaluation' (CCE) of the learners.*

**Keywords:** *Examination, Assessment, Evaluation, Language-skills, Pattern, and Activity.*

## Introduction:

Examination is an important aspect in teaching-learning process. Different people have different opinions regarding the utility of examinations. In our education system, the traditional written exam is the only tool to evaluate or assess one's knowledge. To score minimum prescribed marks is the condition to pass an exam. But it is the matter of research that, whether a candidate belonging to vernacular medium schools who pass the English languagesubject, is really able to use all the skills of the language? In India, for High & Higher Secondary Classes, the assessment of language (L2) is still to a great extent, examination-oriented only. (Gupta, Shweta) Therefore, the vernacular learners focus on exams rather than learning skills.Usually the language teachers of Hindi medium or vernacular medium schools teach prose and poetry provided in the text- book with basic skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. They also teach a few grammatical portions. They providenotes to the students on essay-writing and letter-writing. To gain marks in the exam, the students learn the question-answers and vocabulary exercises given at the back of the lessons by rote. They memorize a few essays and letters based on their guessing forthe writing section. They also take the help of guides available in the markets. They manage to solve the Reading

section and Grammar section somehow. With the guessing technique and rote-learning, the learners pass the English language subject, but they fail to learn English language. Even the teachers, who evaluate them, fail to assess their command over the language (L2), especially for Listening & Speaking skillsthrough the traditional written exam.

## NewPattern ofAssessment: No Written Exam

Assessment is not a test. Assessment is an ongoing, interactive process.It is a strategy that is set to help students and teachers in the process of acquiring new knowledge and skills. But assessment is done in an inappropriate way.

In this paper,a new pattern of assessment, that is, "No written exam" is suggested.It has to be made clear here that the written examsindicates traditional written exams, where usually the test paper is divided into four sections, Reading section, Writing section, Grammar section and Text Book Questions & Vocabulary exercises.The benefit of introducing the new pattern is that the students stop learning by rote memorization. When the pattern of exam is redesigned in 'Activity Format, the students willtake interest in learning communication skills.

Here, the research team suggests a set of test paper:

| Skill | Set of Questions | Marks |
|---|---|---|
| Listening | a.Listen an audio and reply the questions. | 10 |
| | b. Listen an announcement and describe it in your own words. | 10 |
| Speaking | a. Give your introduction | 10 |
| | b. Prepare on a topic and give presentation | |
| Reading | a. Read a passage aloud with correct pronunciation and intonation. | 10 |
| | b. Read an article and respond the related questions | 10 |
| Writing | a. Prepare a notice/report on given situation | 10 |
| | b. Read the clues and complete the paragraph/write an application | 10 |
| Grammar | a. Underline the parts of the speech in given paragraph | 2 |
| | b. Punctuate the paragraph | 2 |
| | c. Go out and bring any two noun items and describe it with some adjective | 2 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | d. Change all the verbs in Past Perfect Tense into Present Continuous Tense in the given passage | 2 |
| | e. Look at the things: (water in the glass/ ball on the table/ bag under the chair) and describe it with using correct preposition | 2 |
| | f. Look at the following materials (papers, flowers, oil, water, table etc.) and describe it using with much/many/more/ some/few | 2 |
| | g. Reply the teacher's questions(interrogative sentences started with auxiliary verb) in negative sentence | 2 |
| | h. Listen an audio and pick out an incorrect sentence | 2 |
| | i. Read a passage and write antonyms and synonyms of underlined words | 2 |
| | j. Do as directed: | |
| | •Change the voice | 1 |
| | •Change the speech | 1 |
| | | 100 |

**Conclusion:**

Examinations should be fun and less stressful for the learners.The system should discourage the traditional methods of assessment, where a learner learns only to earn marks, but never could get command over the target language (L2) and encourage learners to acquire language skills.

**References**

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The AGM od our Association was held at 5 p.m. on Saturday, 22nd December 2018 at the Saradha Secondary School, Gopalapuram, Chennai.

**Minutes of the meeting is given below :**

1.  Resolved to thank Dr.S.S.Rajagopalan one of our donor members for his generous contribution of Rs.One Lakh for providing financial assistance to our members undertaking Action Research Projects. Considered and adopted the Annual Report presented by our National Secretary

2.  Considered and adopted the Audited Financial Statement for the year 2017-18

3.  The following members were unanimously elected for the Executive Committee for a two-year term as provided in our Constitution ie.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| President | - | Dr Sanjay Arora (Jaipur) |
| Vice President | - | Dr Shravan Kumar (Greater Noida) |
| Vice President | - | Dr Reddy Sekhar Reddy (Bangaluru) |
| Secretary | - | Dr K.Elango |
| Joint Secretary | - | Mr Ramakrishna Bhise (Mumbai) |
| Joint Secretary | - | Mr R.H.Prakash (Raichur) |
| Treasurer | - | Mr P.R.Kesavulu |
| Coordinator | - | Dr J.Mangayarkarasi |

**Regional Coordinators :**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| North | - | Dr Abha Pandey (Jabalpur) |
| South | - | Dr Ilankumaran (Kanyakumari) |
| West | - | Dr Mithun Khandwale (Ahmedabad) |
| East | - | Dr Anita Tamuli (Assam) |
| Central | - | Dr Naveen Mohini Nigam (Kanpur) |

**Special Invitees :**

Dr.P.N.Ramani

Dr.Mohanraj

Dr.C.Lal

Dr.Albert P.Rayan (Editor)

Dr.A.Joycelin Shermila

Dr. Uma Sivaraman

**Publications (Online)**

Dr.Xavier Pratap Singh

Dr.Praveen Sam

# JOURNAL OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Dear readers

The *Journal of English Language Teaching*, published by the English Language Teachers Association of India, is the oldest ELT journal in India. Launched in 1965, the journal has been a platform for teachers of English and scholars to publish their research work. Of late, globally well-known ELT experts and researchers including Stephen Krashen and Richard Smith contribute regularly to the journal. We need to constantly improve the quality of the journal in order to serve the ELT community in India better. We would like to get your feedback on the journal and your suggestions to make it a reputed journal. We do appreciate your feedback and suggestions. Please send your responses to the Editor at JELTIndia@gmail.com

1. Are you a member of the English Language Teachers' Association of India (ELTAI)?
   i) Yes   ii) No

2. Type of membership
   i) 1 year   ii) 3 years   iii) 10 years

3. How long have been subscribing to the Journal of English Language Teaching?
   i) More than 10 years   ii) 6-10 years   iii) 1-5 years   iv) Less than a year

4. Do you read ...?
   i)   All the articles
   ii)  Only the articles that you find interesting/relevant/useful
   iii) Undecided

5. What type of articles do you find very useful?
   i)   Research-based articles   ii)  Reports of action research
   iii) Interviews with experts   iv)  Reading /Writing activities
   v)   Book reviews   iv)  App reviews
   vi)  Any other

6. Have your articles been published in JELT?
   i) Yes   ii) No

7. Are you interested in getting your articles published in JELT?
   i) If 'yes', why?   ii) If 'no', why?

8. How would you rate the timeliness of the articles published in the journal?
   i) Excellent   ii) Good   iii) Fair   iv) Poor   v) Don't know

9. How would you rate quality of the articles?
   i) Excellent   ii) Good   iii) Fair   iv) Poor   v) Don't know

10. What are your suggestions for improving the quality of the journal?

# READING ACTIVITY

## Questioning* (Strategy for deeper understanding)

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

**Objective** : Enabling readers to raise questions at the pre, during and post reading of a text and at different levels to understand better and to remember it longer.

**Participation** : Individual.

**Material** : Any text. Example - **The Model Millionaire** by Oscar Wilde (a short story)

**Preparation** : Attempting consciously to formulate questions and at three different levels – literal, interpretative and applied - and answering them in one's own words and not attempting to memorize the chunks of texts, which is forgotten after a point of time.

**Procedure :**

• **Pre-reading questions** - start with questioning the title of the story. For instance, when you look at the title you could ask questions such as, who are the millionaires I know of?, what are their life stories?, how many of them belong to the category of rags to riches?, how many of them are known for their philanthropic activities?, how can a millionaire be a model? And so on.

• **While reading questioning** - begins from the first line of the story and goes on till the end. One could raise as many questions as one wishes to on any aspect of the story. As an illustration when one reads a sentence like, "Well. I think the model should have a percentage," cried Hughie, laughing: "they work quite as hard as you do.", one could ask questions like does Hughie really mean or is he merely joking?, what does it reveal about his characteristics?, are the models given percentage anywhere?, what sort of people become models? And so on.

• **Post reading questioning** - can take the whole story into consideration and raise questions within oneself and some of which can be, what is the theme of the story?, how are the characters portrayed?, is it an interesting story and how does the writer make it appealing to readers?, is it an imaginative or life story? And many more of this sort.

• One should be able to ask **different kinds of questions**, viz. a) literal questions – who is Alan Trevor?, what was he doing when Hughie visited him? And how did Hughie get to know that the "old beggar" was a millionaire?, b) interpretative questions - what made Hughie give away one pound to the model?, what made the millionaire to present a cheque for ten thousand pounds to Hughie?, and why do think the writer employs dialogues in the story?, and c) applied questions –has any millionaire today something similar to this?, how do some of them today contribute to the social causes? And why do some millionaires do not contribute to any noble causes? And so on.

The more number of questions one raises the better will be their understanding and appreciation.

**Learning outcomes:**

1) Learners understand that raising questions while reading compels them to focus their total attention on what they are to learn with clarity.

2) Learners realize that they think actively as they read and attempt to read between and beyond lines.

**Further activity:** Any material that they begin to read they need to start with questions right from the title till the last word and end with questioning the whole text.

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**\*Questioning:** As the questions generally given at the end of lessons and asked by teachers students are expected only to answer them. However, they need to be encouraged to raise questions within them and find answers to comprehend and appreciate the lessons better. Questioning should never be only teachers' domain and any question could have multiple answers., And, it develops critical and creative thinking.

The 5Ws and the H will be handy to enhance the skill to question and arouse curiosity.

# ELTAI Office-Bearers

**ELT@I**

**A forum for professional development**

*Journal of English Language Teaching (JELT)* is the official organ of the English Language Teachers' Association of India. It is a bimonthly, which offers a forum for teachers and researchers to voice their views on the teaching of English language and literature.